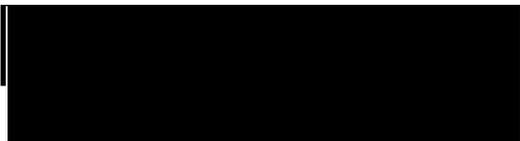

Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools



A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education of the University of
New England, NSW, Australia
August 30, 2010

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Underwood, G. 2011. Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools,
EdD Dissertation, University of New England, NSW.

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Acknowledgements

Over the years, many individuals have influenced and shaped my interpretation of the world around me, thus contributing to the production of this work. My sincere thanks to you all for your advice, friendship and support. A few specific thanks are necessary:

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the following three sets of people who contributed significantly to me developing my academic potential. My parents, David and Gloria Underwood, for supporting me during my formative years, and providing me with the wonderful experience of growing up in Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. My initial thirst for a good book and love of knowledge was fostered by my dad, and this contributed to a well-developed imagination that led me along an inquisitive path, leading to where I am now. Carole and Dr. Bill Monteith, for mentoring me during my undergraduate years at Massey University. My appreciation for commonsense on spiritual and worldly levels was enhanced under your guidance; as well as an appreciation for my 1/8th Irish heritage! Dr. Maynard Yutzy, for putting faith in me when appointing me to my first principalship, and for mentoring me during those early administrative years.

Secondly, thanks to all my friends and colleagues through the years who supported me when some disparaged, encouraged me when the going was tough, and who did not allow positions or distance to get in the way of friendship. A special friend is one who is always there when you need them, and who makes your world a better place.

Thirdly, my doctoral supervisors, Dr. Peter Nannes, and later Dr. Thomas Maxwell and Dr. Laurence Tamatea, for their guidance during my pursuit of knowledge, and this culminating dissertation. A special thanks to Tom and Laurence for their patience and understanding in the last stages when time was short, there was much to complete, and I did not leave them as much review time as I should have.

Fourthly, thanks to all who contributed practically to this study – questionnaire and interview respondents, personnel in the International Baccalaureate who provided information and answered my questions promptly and willingly, IB colleagues whose thoughts I gratefully received, and the University of New England teaching and

support staff (especially tech and library services!) who cheerfully and professionally taught me and/or helped me when I needed it.

And finally, I want to thank my family who supported my studies over the years through sacrifices both financially and with my time, allowing me to complete this work while also working full time. I could not have finished without that support.



This study was carried out with the generous support of a scholarship from the Commonwealth Government of Australia, administered through the University of New England. My grateful thanks to those involved in granting me this scholarship.

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Front Cover: A 'wordle' (wordle.net) word cloud of words frequently used in this dissertation.

Abstract

Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools.

There are widespread concerns in the educational field about the ability of schools to provide students the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to succeed in our rapidly changing technology/information society. One initiative is the development of age-appropriate programmes to suit the middle years of schooling. A particularly interesting example of a programme which intends to fit within this structure is the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP).

This largely qualitative research investigates the discourses surrounding the benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP. Literature on 'effective schools' and 'best practices' is used to provide a basic framework with which to compare the discourses, enabling the MYP's effectiveness in practice to be determined through the perceptions of practitioners. This affords a broad exposé of multiple aspects of the MYP, both academic and life-skill related.

Data were collected from MYP practitioners around the world and analysed using critical discourse analysis, with the assistance of the qualitative analysis programme, NVivo. The findings indicate the MYP is considered an effective programme by the majority of practitioners surveyed. The discourse analysis highlighted a number of areas considered beneficial to student learning in both academic and affective life-skill areas such as study skills, critical thinking skills and relating learning to life experiences. Areas considered by some to be drawbacks were also identified, such as time, costs, and complexity of the programme; and suggestions for improvement to further the goals of the programme are made.

Research findings are discussed in depth with the aim that they will be of use to schools implementing or using the MYP, and the IB itself, to promote positive change in schools and improvements in the programme by aiding understanding on how the MYP is perceived to benefit and promote learning, and how the implementation process can be facilitated.

Candidate's certification

I certify that the substance of this dissertation has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this dissertation, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this dissertation.

Signature: _____

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Background

This section contains a clear statement of the issue addressed, its context and the conceptual framework.

1.1.1 Statement of the Issue

Primary and secondary education systems in western countries are largely informed by assumptions about learning from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but the 'old factory model of education does not equip young people with the skills they need to thrive in the global workplace' (Abbott & Ryan 2000:6,178). With the advent of the technology/information revolution and advances in the social sciences, discrepancies in current learning practices have been identified, and traditional systems are being challenged on many fronts. The increase in educational research has yielded a sometimes bewildering array of suggestions for educators, yet successive implementation of numerous concepts remains an elusive goal for many schools.

One organisation which has gained a reputation for its rigor and success in preparing balanced school graduates who cope well in university is the International Baccalaureate (IB), also known as the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) prior to re-branding in 2007. This is exhibited by the number of universities around the world now accepting the Grade 12 (age 18) IB Diploma for admissions, and by the media who have reported the IB Diploma Programme as 'the Cadillac of college-prep programs' (Gehring 2001:14-15). This research focuses on the IB Middle Years Programme for students aged eleven-sixteen (grades six-ten), one of the two younger siblings of the Diploma Programme. While a key objective of the Diploma Programme is to prepare students for colleges, the MYP provides a framework, and is all-inclusive to students without regard to their intention to continue on to university or not.

The IB offer three programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP). Each programme is independent of the other and different in structure, however, they share educational philosophies. The IB programmes have shown consistent growth in a surprisingly diverse number of countries and claim to be underpinned by research-based practices with links to member schools and research institutions to maintain structures for constant feedback for ongoing programme development. In addition to this, my experiences observing the IB programmes in schools lead me to believe their success is also very much related to how the IB has packaged them, making them feasible for a diverse range of schools in many different systems.

The **purpose** of this research is to investigate the MYP's effectiveness in practice, by analysing discourses relating to the benefits, promotion and implementation of the programme. My premise for undertaking the research is that it will be used by educators to promote positive change by aiding understanding on how the MYP is perceived to benefit and promote learning, and how the implementation process can be facilitated. As a practitioner in an MYP school, I have experienced firsthand the effects of how going through the process of implementing the MYP can be an agent of change for improvements in student learning; as well as learning how to deal with the challenges an implementation brings. By drawing on these and my other educational experiences, I believe this research will be of benefit to the educational community, not just by contributing towards my own understanding and that of continued improvement of the programme in my workplace, but also to practitioners in other MYP schools around the world and the IB itself. As the study makes reference to 'effective schools' and 'best practice' research, non-MYP schools or schools implementing new programmes will also find the study of use if they are interested in looking at school effectiveness or school change as a whole.

1.1.2 Context of the Issue

The **underlying context** of my research topic can be posed as a broad guiding question; *what factors contribute towards making a school effective?* Based on this underlying context, I developed the research topics I was interested in examining. Initially my interests included looking into the related fields of effect of the MYP in schools, the effect of MYP teachers on learning, holistic trends in education, and

comparisons between MYP and non-MYP schools. I realised this encompassed far too broad a field to investigate in one study, so I narrowed down the research topics to include three related areas, which later led to my research questions:

Topic 1: Perceived benefits of the MYP

Topic 2: Discourses used in the promotion of the MYP

Topic 3: Discourses surrounding the implementation of the MYP

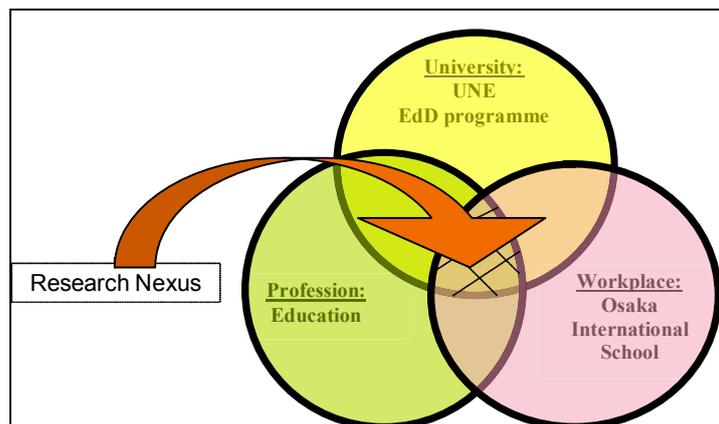
These three interrelated topics still contained elements of all four original key areas of interest, but by refocusing the research topics, I was able to maintain my interest areas in a manageable way.

1.1.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework of this study can be depicted following the hybrid curriculum of the professional doctorate after Lee, Green and Brennan (2000), on which the University of New England (UNE) Doctor of Education (EdD) professional doctorate programme is modelled (Maxwell 2003:285). My research combined my profession and workplace with the UNE EdD programme so as to make use of my position and context, with my research nexus at the intersection of these three areas as depicted in the modified hybrid curriculum model in Figure 1.1 below:

Figure 1.1 A Conceptual Framework of Study:

Personalised application of the hybrid curriculum model of the professional doctorate at UNE after Lee, Green and Brennan (2000), depicting the scope of my research at the research nexus.



I considered my options for a framework for my research. There is a large body of literature on the characteristics of ‘effective schools’ and ‘best practices’, although very little on how these specifically relate to the MYP. As I found the MYP makes use of many of the attributes associated with effective schools and best practices, I

decided this would provide the desired framework. By identifying what the effective schools and best practices literature is saying as the framework, I could attempt to link the discourses from my research findings to that framework, with the ultimate aim of enabling me to identify research-based strategies from the data, and so contribute to a better understanding of the MYP – or more specifically, be able to answer the questions on how is it beneficial, promoted and implemented.

1.2 The Research

1.2.1 Significance of the Research

Our global society is changing rapidly on many fronts. Technology in particular is forcing society to make choices to either ignore advances or change the way things are done, and some of these changes have a significant implications for the way our society currently interacts. Genetically modified crops, energy sources, cloning, and information storage, transfer and display are but a few areas currently undergoing vast transformation. Furthermore, much of this change is occurring at a rapid pace when compared to the longer history of mankind. In this '21st century climate' we have created, a formal education system that that prepares young people to handle change is imperative for not only our current students, but indeed, for the future of our society as a whole. Where schools have many influences from different cultures, religions, political regimes, educational theories and so on, this is a difficult task indeed.

With this in mind, my research reflects the importance of ongoing work into educational thought and practice, to ensure education catches up to the needs of our changing society and keeps applying new knowledge to better learning practices in schools. The IB is but one organisation that is attempting to do just this, as indicated in its latest strategic plan: 'Strategy A: to improve continuously the quality of our curriculum, assessment and professional development' (IBO 2004c:4).

My intent is not to prove the MYP is necessarily any better than other programmes, but that research into the MYP could be of value to educators as a whole as an enlightening discourse into if, and why, the MYP is a programme which prepares students for further study, and how research-based practice and theory can be

integrated into a programme that can be implemented by schools worldwide. My stance as a practitioner in an IB school leads me to believe that aspects of the MYP provide a valuable guide to schools as an example of how student learning can be enhanced using a programme based on current educational research, and packaged in a manner that is “doable” in a variety of schools around the world. My research will investigate discourses that will either confirm or deny this proposition; but either way, the investigation will contribute to the literature surrounding the MYP and effective schools.

One major reason I think the MYP is worth investigating is its focus on internationalism. As an example of the importance of this, we can consider intercultural awareness and communication, two of the fundamental concepts of the MYP, and how they relate to society. One aspect of this broad issue that is becoming obvious to educators in the global community is the increasing importance of linguistic and cultural understanding, not just for the positive contributions towards globalisation that it brings, but also as a critical learning factor for many students. UK language researcher David Graddol (*Japan Times* 28 February 2004 p.8) was reported to state his belief that the idea of English becoming the world language is outdated. Rather, while English will remain an important common language, a multilingual population will become the norm, and ‘English-only speakers may find it difficult to fully participate in a multilingual society’. The importance of a mother-tongue is another facet of this issue gaining recognition as an area of concern for optimal language acquisition in schools, and the all-too-common resulting ‘subtractive bilingualism’ (development of a second language at the cost of the first language) which hinders second language learners. The IB promotes awareness of such issues as evidenced by Drennen who stated:

The role of language, one’s mother tongue, and the study of other languages in this context have a special place in any programme’s design. It is through language that we access our own and others’ culture. The role of language acquisition and development from early childhood in order to foster bi- and multi-lingualism is fundamental to any sequence of programmes (IBO 2004b).

In many schools, and international schools in particular, there are a large proportion of multi-lingual students. Through the fundamental concept of intercultural awareness, the MYP is designed to address the issue, in part by fostering the acquisition of

advanced levels of second languages while maintaining the mother tongue. Similarly, the emphasis on interdisciplinary teaching in the MYP assists in the constructivist learning process used by many international schools (that is, at least Western philosophy-based schools).

1.2.2 Relationship to Other Research

There is a growing body of research on the IB programmes, however, to date, the majority has been on the Diploma Programme (DP). In terms of structure, the DP is significantly different to the MYP particularly with regard to assessment methodology. As the underlying philosophy of the DP is shared, however, some of my research findings may be useful for DP practitioners and schools considering implementing the DP as well as the MYP. For example, a number of researchers have studied why students choose to do the DP. Paris (2003) investigated public and private schools in South Australia, and looked at reasons why Year 10 students chose the DP instead of the South Australian Certificate of Education. Information on the benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP will add to such studies, and be of benefit to administrators attempting to understand the differences and similarities of both programmes.

As the MYP is an IB programme, certain discourses will also be transferable to other programmes, such as those dealing with the perceived reputation of the IB. For instance, Mackenzie, Hayden & Thompson (2003) studied parental priorities in the selection of international schools, and while not specifically researching the IB, the study contained IB schools in its survey and the findings could be considered useful by a wide variety of schools.

A search of the available literature indicates there has been limited research on the MYP, most likely because it is relatively new. The MYP was first offered in 1994, and as of April 2004 when this study commenced, while there were 1,123 schools offering the DP, only 259 schools the MYP, and 138 the PYP (IBO 2004c:3). It has been interesting to note the steady growth of the IB programmes, with 2,172 schools now offering the DP, 789 the MYP, and 688 the PYP (International Baccalaureate 2010b).

The limited amount of literature available which discusses aspects of the MYP pertinent to my research questions are discussed in Chapter 2. The extensive documentation on the MYP provided by the IB was also a valuable source of information. A critical discourse analysis of official IB literature was undertaken prior to the collection of data for this study in order to gain experience in carrying out a CDA; to contribute towards my understanding into the background of the MYP; and to identify discourses promoted by the IB itself so as to be identify textual strands and compare them with those to be obtained from my questionnaire.

With my varied experiences in the IB community over the years as an MYP coordinator in an implementing school, an MYP authorised school principal, MYP workshop leader, and as a past member of the IBO Professional Development Committee, I have had the privilege of extensive access to IB literature and personnel, from which and whom I have drawn extensively when exploring and evaluating the aspects of the MYP as they relate to my research.

The 'effective schools' and 'best practices' literature provide an ideal base of information with which to establish a basic framework of desirable standards that can be used as a benchmark to identify aspects of the MYP beneficial to student learning. A quick literature search yields a plethora of literature on effective schools, and while much of it is generic or school (or school system) specific, the common traits effectively enable comparisons with the discourses surrounding the MYP.

Due to the limited research available on the MYP and the continuing expansion of the programme (an interesting issue in itself), my research will be useful for examining aspects of the programme's success, areas which hold it back, and challenges it faces for the future. In 2004, the IB noted on its website that during the early years, 'these [the PYP and MYP] programmes were not yet fully formed, and the IBO has developed them so that they are now well rounded and complete' (IBO 2004a). While it is true the IBO has made strides in the development of the programme, a browse through the comments on the IBs online curriculum centre subject forums is one indication that there are still areas requiring development. This statement is misleading as it suggests development is 'complete' – yet curriculum development is an ongoing process, and a relatively new programme like the MYP will need constant developing for many years as we continue to find out more about effective ways of learning, and as students adapt to our evolving society. I commenced this study in

2004, the same year the MYP celebrated its 10th anniversary and thought it was an appropriate time to research the programme, having had time to overcome initial implementation challenges, address major problems and become popular enough to have a number of schools available for research. It has been interesting to see the significant developments in the programme over the years of the study, and these are discussed in relevant sections within this study.

As per the spirit of the 'New EdD at UNE' professional doctoral research (Maxwell 2004:9, 18), there is also a contribution to my workplace. Osaka International School (OIS) was founded in 1991 with a unique 'two schools together' belief, where OIS shares facilities and selected courses with a private Japanese middle/high school catering largely for returnees (Japanese students returning to live in Japan after living abroad). Intercultural awareness is very much a daily necessity as is communication and holistic learning through the IB programmes. This unique learning environment has much to offer in terms of strategies and ideas for educators, and it is my intent that my research will contribute by providing knowledge regarding aspects of the MYP that will be useful for not just my own workplace, but also for schools worldwide. Drawing on my diverse experiences in education, I have observed that many schools still employ largely traditional practices either through choice or circumstance, and that while research on best practices is plentiful, implementation is not always forthcoming. Abbott & Ryan report:

Our work has revealed a mismatch between what scientists and researchers are saying (and what very many parents and teachers know through intuition), and the current political mantras which stress centralised, standardised, accountable systems of formal learning based exclusively on classroom teaching (Abbott & Ryan 2000:5).

My research looks into implementation discourses and solutions to overcome problems associated with implementation. This will, it is hoped, contribute to overcoming this mismatch.

Drawing loosely on theories from Habermas and Foucault, Hargreaves (1989:43-45) proposes a social theory to explain how education has changed over time, and discusses three critical phases British education had gone through at the time of writing. An especially interesting quote attributed to Emile Durkheim (cited in

Hargreaves 1989:42) was: 'in educational changes of considerable scale, one can usually find reflections (and refractions) of broader transformations within society as a whole'. If this is true, then the IB has the ability to have an impact on society via their programmes. Relating this to my research, I recognise that the IB can respond to societal needs more quickly than governments due to its independent, international make up and non-profit status; and can minimise any negative impact or restrictions a national government may try to impose on IB educational policies. Thus, the IB has the potential to be more able to adapt to beneficial educational research results and may not be so constrained by social, economical, and especially political factors which may be present in local economies, or exposed to national agendas.

1.2.3 Background to the Research

In summary, the International Baccalaureate Organization was established in 1968 by a group of school leaders seeking to develop a common curriculum and a university entry credential for geographically mobile students' (IBO nd:1). Initially offering just the university preparation Diploma Programme (DP) for the last two years of secondary school, the IBO added the Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students aged 11-16 in 1994 and the Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged 3-12 in 1997. In addition to providing curriculum and assessment support, professional development activities, and carrying out evaluation and authorisation visits on member schools, the IBO conducts and supports research, frequently in collaboration with other research organisations (IBO 2007).

The MYP uses a framework which intends to provide schools with sufficient flexibility to meet local educational requirements, while meeting the objectives of the programme. Three fundamental concepts underpin the development of the MYP: *holistic learning in context*, *intercultural awareness* and *communication* (IBO 2002b:1). Central to the MYP are five areas of interaction (AOI) which 'encourage students to link what they learn to the real world and to global issues, and to reflect and act on their learning' (IBO nd:8). Each AOI is highlighted within each of the eight subjects, and the interrelatedness of concepts and knowledge in the subject groups are highlighted by the use of interdisciplinary teaching. In the last year of the MYP, students complete a personal project, which is designed to reflect a 'personal

understanding of the areas of interaction and the application of skills acquired through approaches to learning' (IBO 2002d:9).

Maxwell (2004:21) notes 'almost all Professional Doctorates have *experience* as a prerequisite to enter the course', and raises questions of how such experience can be incorporated in the dissertation. I was interested to note Maxwell found the inclusion of the researcher's background in a successful EdD dissertation assisted the examiner's reading of the text, and that the examiner found the text more credible: 'It was evident that the positioning of the researcher, or the voice of the researcher, could considerably add to the quality of the writing' (Maxwell 2004:21). I chose the MYP as a focus for my research because my personal and professional background has provided me with unique experiences that have enabled me to gain a good insight into the MYP. It is interesting to note I initially posited myself in a way that concealed my experiences with the MYP, in an attempt to avoid giving the perception that my research was biased by what might be seen as a pro-IB author. As I narrowed down my research questions, however, I realised this delimitation would change the scope of my research, and I would be limiting the type data I could collect. Advice given by my supervisor and unit coordinator at the time (Dr. P. Ninnis and Dr. T. Maxwell respectively) was acknowledged, in that no one is neutral, and being open will allow the reader to read accordingly. If I were not to do this, I could end up with essentially the same problem I was trying to avoid – the dismissal of the research, this time due to a perception of covering up a hidden agenda. As I read more on voice, I learnt instead the value of acknowledging my unique experiences in a way that would contribute to the study in an open way, and therefore add to the credibility. Accordingly, I provide an outline of my experiences below:

I was a '**Third Culture Kid**' (TCK) - a child who spends a significant period of their formative years outside their home country (Pollock & Van Reken 1999:19). Being born and raised in Papua New Guinea as a child afforded me unique experiences and qualities. The significance of this is:

the classic profile of a "TCK" is someone with a global perspective who is socially adaptable and intellectually flexible. He or she is quick to think outside the box and can appreciate and reconcile different points of view (Van Reken 2008).

I have a vast range of **international experience**. In addition to living in PNG for 10 years altogether, I graduated from Port Moresby International School after going to school in both PNG and NZ. After completing my undergraduate studies and teaching in NZ, I then lived in Japan for 16 years, and have recently moved to Belgium. I have travelled to numerous countries both as a tourist, and on study and business trips. This international exposure has contributed to a breadth of knowledge and appreciation for differences in cultures. Having a multi-national family has also enhanced this understanding.

I have varied **educational experiences**. As a pre-tertiary student, I studied in schools following PNG, NZ and Australian curricula. After gaining my Bachelor of Agricultural Science (Massey University) and Diploma of Teaching (Christchurch College of Education) in NZ, I completed my Master of Education degree through the US (College of New Jersey); and am now in the process of completing my Doctor of Education degree in Australia (University of New England). I have worked in NZ public schools, a Japanese private school, and international schools for over nineteen years as a teacher and administrator.

I have eight years of **MYP experiences** in a variety of fields associated with the MYP. After six years as an MYP coordinator, I relinquished that role to enable me to focus on my middle/high school principal role. I lead the implementation of the MYP and subsequent evaluation four years later, and oversaw the MYP and DP in an IB World School which also offers the PYP. I am an MYP workshop leader, and a school authorisation/evaluation visiting team member, with experience giving workshops, hosting workshops, and visiting schools for the IB in the Asia Pacific region. I was an invited member of IB continuum meetings held at the IB curriculum headquarters in Cardiff in 2007; and was a member of the IB Professional Development Committee in 2008/9 before the committee became defunct due to restructuring. I also served as founding Chair of the MYP East Asia Group Network in 2007-9; as well as Chair of the Association of IB schools in Japan and Korea in 2007-9.

To summarise, these unique experiences have been a prerequisite to my being able to undertake this research. The lack of any of the areas above would have detracted from my ability to navigate the intricacies of the data gathered. There is still much to learn, however, so as suggested by Maxwell (2004:23), my purpose in giving these

details is to portray my experiences authoritatively in order to add to my credibility, and trustworthiness

One social aspect of the IB philosophy which initially concerned me was the issue of equity, and the discourse that the IB was 'potentially prestigious and possibly inequitable' (Paris 2003:241). These criticisms seemed to stem mostly from the rigour and cost of the DP, but the discourse extends to the PYP and MYP, and is an area which has been receiving, and needs to continue to receive, attention. Despite such criticisms, however, there is a widespread view that 'the IB has developed into an international curriculum for schools around the world, which has had a positive influence on the establishment of the ideal of global villages and world citizens' (Paris 2003:241). The development of the IB also supports its reputation as a programme that deals with the issues many educationalists are questioning, such as those raised by Abbot and Ryan (2000) concerning 'going with the grain of the brain' in regard to applying research-based learning practices to educational policy. The literature review in Chapter 2 (page 28) discusses these issues in more depth.

An important aspect of the MYP to note is that it is a framework, not a complete curriculum or syllabus. More specifically, this means the IB provides a programme framework of eight required subjects with subject aims and objectives and corresponding assessment descriptors, and schools adapt their own content syllabus. The MYP framework ensures necessary structures are in place to promote the programme's essential philosophies, yet allow for the flexibility needed by schools from different systems to adapt the programme to individual school and local constraints. I argue that this flexibility is a key feature in allowing a diverse range of schools to implement it successfully but this is an empirical issue for this research.

Finally, the experiences I have had with the IB lead me to conclude the MYP is the least well understood of all three IB programmes for a variety of reasons. Despite this, based on consistent growth over the years, indications are the MYP has the potential to eventually become established and accepted as a reputable programme for the middle schooling years.

1.3 Research Questions

Focus 1. Perceived benefits of the MYP

Research Question 1. How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be beneficial for student learning?

- *Study focus: What benefits/drawbacks do practitioners perceive the MYP to have?*

Focus 2. Discourses used in the promotion of the MYP

Research Question 2. How is the MYP being promoted in schools?

- *Study focus: What arguments and rationales are being used to promote the MYP in schools, and what kinds of ideas do these arguments and rationales draw on?*

Focus 3. MYP implementation - discourses and solutions

Research Question 3. What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when implementing the MYP and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?

1.4 Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations

One major assumption was that my experiences with the MYP were correct in leading me to believe that the MYP, on the whole, is a worthwhile programme for students to learn through. My experiences and the practices of the programme using research-based theories gave me confidence to make this assumption, however, I did note the need to continuously challenge my beliefs when exposed to conflicting data. This assumption also comes with the understanding that there are aspects of the MYP which will not suit all situations, and that there are areas for continued improvement.

Another assumption I had to make was my research would be valuable a number of years after I had collected my data. Working full time and having a family with young

children make it extremely difficult to get extended periods of time to carry out an extended study such as this, so I knew the dissertation would take a number of years. Any research has to be bounded in time, however, so this was to be expected, and significant changes were noted.

Data collection was a limitation, as trying to gather data from busy professionals is challenging. As I was collecting discourses surrounding change, I expected some resistance, which most likely translated into nil response to requests for data. These limitations were minimised by sending an anonymous questionnaire that was easy to complete online. I also attempted to give an opportunity for all English-speaking MYP school coordinators and teachers around the world to participate to ensure I gather enough data to ensure the discourses identified held a sufficient level of validity through representation.

A delimitation I initially considered applying to my research was to formulate my research questions in a way that did not overtly identify my own positive experiences with the programme. The reason for this was to attempt to limit participants (and any subsequent dissertation readers) perceptions of my research being biased by what could be viewed as a 'pro-IB author'. As I narrowed down my research questions, however, I realised this delimitation would change the scope of the research drastically and I would not be able to get usable results for the areas I was interested in. Advice given by my supervisor and unit coordinator (Dr. P. Ninnis and Dr. T. Maxwell) at the time was acknowledged, in that no one is neutral, and being up front would allow the reader to read accordingly. If I were not to do this, I could end up with essentially the same problem I was trying to avoid - the dismissal of the research - this time due to a perception of covering up a hidden agenda. Upon further readings of voice and identity, I came to realise that contrary to my first impressions, writer identity is actually desirable (Ivanic 1998 cited in Nelson & San Miguel 2000:93), and the *Ethos* or character of an author is important in allowing the audience to build confidence in who you are (Aristotle cited in Thompson 1998:85-86). Furthermore, in keeping with the philosophy of the hybrid curriculum model used in the 'New EdD at UNE' (Maxwell 2003), the researcher's voice (Maxwell 2004:21) is important to indicate to the reader the contributions one brings from their profession and workplace. This local knowledge is especially important for action research and context-centred knowledge (Greenwood & Levin 2000:97).

Despite the hegemony of quantitative methodology, the quantitative research options available simply could not provide the data I required in order to answer my research questions. At a fundamental level, I believe we are all constructivists. As Schwandt (2000:197) puts it, 'we are all constructivists if we believe that the mind is active in the construction of knowledge'. Empiricists may argue we are not constructing knowledge, rather discovering knowledge, but while this (arguably) may be true for some 'truths' such as scientific laws, when dealing with the complexities of life, society, and knowledge as we know it, humans are forced to construct meaning from the 'knowledge' presented to them, even if this occurs at a subconscious level.

As the majority of my research deals with discourse analysis, I find this also puts me in the poststructuralist and social constructionist paradigms, which have developed within the postmodern line of thought (Zeeman et al. 2002:96). Further discussion on these paradigms is covered in Chapter 3.

1.5.3 Research Methodology

In order to best answer my research questions, I chose a multi-method approach highlighting the use of different types of surveys. Case studies and action research were considered, but not pursued due to limitations with the time and amount of data this would have entailed. Of special importance was the use of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a research tool. The qualitative data analysis programme NVivo was used to aid analysis of the data.

An online questionnaire was distributed to practitioners in English-speaking MYP schools around the world via *SurveyMonkey*, and results collated and downloaded for analysis. Interviews with experienced practitioners were transcribed to provide further textual data for analysis, and focus groups and/or in-depth interviews were planned as a backup for further data if required, as well as to act as triangulation. As it turned out, follow-up questions to selected practitioners and IB personnel was satisfactory to provide enough data for the analysis and subsequent outcomes.

Through readings and dialogue with my initial supervisor, Dr. P. Ninnes, I became aware of the power of using CDA, and how it can be a useful tool to provide a more

comprehensive exposé of why (and how) the MYP is perceived to be beneficial, promoted, and implemented. ‘Critical discourse analysts have achieved considerable success in showing how the discursive “fabrication” of identities and realities works through the textual fabric itself – that is the “stuff” of everyday talk, reading and writing’ (MacLure 2003:186). As CDA is a reflexive process, in this search for ways to understand the data, I expected to be able to generate new ways of explaining the ‘meanings’ and different ways to understand the ‘perceived truths’. A discussion on the findings of the research data CDA is found in Chapters 4-6, addressing each of the research questions examining discourses surrounding the benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP respectively.

1.6 Outline of Chapters in the Dissertation

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 1 outlines the focus of study and the background to why this particular topic was chosen, the research questions, and why the research is significant. The IB and MYP are described in brief, and an overview of the research methodology is presented. The chapter concludes with this outline of the chapters making up the dissertation.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Chapter 2 acknowledges other work done in areas relating to my research and provides links as a basis for the analysis of the research data. Related research is examined, and a basic conceptual framework focusing on ‘effective schools’ and ‘best practices’ literature is developed to inform the discourse analysis findings. The research questions are explained in relation to the conceptual framework, and reasons why my research is beneficial are detailed.

Chapter 3 Research methodology

Chapter 3 explains why and how I collected and analysed my data, and details steps taken to ensure confidence in the quality of the data. Areas covered include the research context and research tools and methods used (qualitative research methods, critical discourse analysis and surveys, focusing on interviews and questionnaires).

Chapters 4 - 6 Research topic findings

Research findings on the research questions are discussed in Chapters 4 through 6. Results are explained, compared and contrasted with reference to the effective schools and best practices framework developed in Chapter 2; as well as the results of the CDA on MYP literature reviewed in Chapter 4. Research findings and discussions are detailed in each chapter as follows:

- Chapter 4 Perceived benefits of the MYP;
- Chapter 5 Discourses used in the promotion of the MYP; and
- Chapter 6 Discourses surrounding MYP implementation.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

Chapter seven summarises the conclusions drawn from the findings, with the findings related back to research questions to ensure the focus remains on answering them. Significant findings are reiterated with implications for practice. The usefulness of the methodologies employed, and recommendations for future research stemming from the results are made.

1.7. Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 has provided the background to this research, by stating the issues being dealt with in the context of the research. My research answers the broad guiding question '*what factors contribute towards making a school effective?*' by looking at discourses of MYP surrounding perceived benefits of the MYP, promotion of the MYP and implementation of the MYP; with a framework of effective schools and best practices with which to make comparisons to.

The research questions are introduced, and serve to focus the research:

1. How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be beneficial for student learning?
 - *Study focus: What benefits/drawbacks do practitioners perceive the MYP to have?*
2. How is the MYP being promoted in schools?

- *Study focus: What arguments and rationales are being used to promote the MYP in schools, and what kinds of ideas do these arguments and rationales draw on?*
3. What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when implementing the MYP and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?

The significance of the research and its relationship to other research is discussed in light of the background to the research in order to highlight the contribution the study will make to the IB and MYP practitioners around the world. With very little research available on the MYP, this investigation will fill the current gap in the field with its use of qualitative analysis of MYP discourses based on a framework constructed from effective schools and best practices literature. Assumptions, limitations and delimitations of the research were also discussed.

Discussion that follows explores the literature related to the investigation of the research questions.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Axford et al. (2004:11) list the three general elements of a typical literature review as: locating a variety of relevant sources, critiquing those sources for pertinent information, and synthesizing the findings for the purpose intended. The main purpose of this project's literature review was to find the gaps in the literature that my research would fill. When I started this literature review chapter, I therefore began searching for literature to address these three general areas with this one purpose in mind. The task was a little daunting as there is much official documentation on the MYP and a number of articles on various areas surrounding the MYP; as well as much discussion and polemic about the many aspects surrounding the MYP, but little research. The official literature is constantly being updated as the programme develops. My first conclusion was to carry out a critical discourse analysis (CDA) on official MYP literature available at the time (2004). This CDA was carried out manually prior to the commencement of this study, and examined what discourses the official literature was attempting to promote, thus providing me with a good background of the MYP to inform my research analysis on respondent discourses.

A timely introduction to an illuminating chapter on writing literature reviews, 'Persuading an octopus into a glass: working with literatures' by Barbara Kamler & Pat Thomson (2006:28-44) provided fresh insights on how to structure this chapter. Kamler & Thomson (2006:34-35) offer an interesting critical discourse analysis on the term 'literature review', highlighting the differing preconceptions associated with the term. Kamler & Thomson (2006:28-29) explain 'there is no one correct way for the literature to be interpreted', and offer helpful analogies and advice for students to use the literature review as a way to position themselves as 'agents who use and evaluate the research of others, in order to make a place for their own work' (Kamler & Thomson 2006:35). Of particular help was their use of exemplars to demonstrate effective and ineffective excerpts from actual literature reviews, and the expanding of the general elements of a typical literature review to include key tasks that should be accomplished:

- 1 sketch out the nature of the field or fields relevant to the enquiry, possibly indicating something of their historical development; and
- 2 identify major defects and define contentious terms; in order to
- 3 establish which studies, ideas and/or methods are most pertinent to the study; and
- 4 locate gaps in the field; in order to
- 5 create the warrant for the study in question; and
- 6 identify the contribution the study will make (Kamler & Thomson 2006:35).

Accordingly, the goal of the literature review was to use and evaluate the research of others, articles, media reports, and selected IB literature; in order to make a place for my own work (Kamler & Thomson 2006:35).

In order to help answer Research Question 3, I provide a basic conceptual framework for my findings by outlining an overview of characteristics of 'effective schools' and 'best practices', and especially those relating to middle years schooling (covering grades six-ten). This basic framework is not intended to validate MYP theories. Rather, as I am dealing with discourses, it provides benchmarks for reference. As the MYP 'encourages the use of a variety of teaching and learning methodologies suitable for different age groups, to produce a climate where students discover how they learn best in different contexts' (International Baccalaureate 2009c:10), one would expect a good number of links to the proposed framework. It is therefore an important step to provide such a framework to help position the findings of my research outlining the discourses surrounding MYP benefits, promotion and implementation (Chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively). A comprehensive review and critiquing of best practices and effective schools, however, is out of the scope of this study.

I arranged the structure of the literature research to systematically ensure the six key tasks in a literature review as outlined by Kamler & Thomson (2006:35) above were accomplished. The first section after this introduction focuses on the IB and the MYP to sketch out the nature of the field. The second section looks at aspects pertaining to the MYP philosophy and practices in order to identify any major defects and define contentious terms; and establish which studies, ideas and methods are pertinent to the study. The third section highlights key points from the best practices and effective schools literature to provide a basic framework to help position my research findings.

Any gaps in the field are identified throughout in order to highlight the need for my research. The chapter summary then summarizes the key points, and identifies the contribution the study will make to the field.

2.2 The International Baccalaureate (IB) and Middle Years Programme (MYP)

2.2.1 Introduction

The International Baccalaureate Organisation was established in 1968 as a non-profit educational foundation registered in Geneva, but serving schools worldwide. It was facilitated by a group of visionary individuals and schools 'seeking to establish a common curriculum and a university entry credential for geographically mobile students' (IBO nd:1). The aim of the practicing teachers and administrators who developed the programme was 'to develop a curriculum encouraging international awareness in young people with emphasis on skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to participate in an increasingly global society' (International Baccalaureate 2009c:1). The IB mission statement states:

The International Baccalaureate (IB) 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 IB 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 other people, with their differences, can also be right (International Baccalaureate 2009c:iii).

The last line of the mission statement caused considerable debate when it was introduced. Some practitioners, considered the clause 'other people, with their differences, can also be right' to mean everyone had the right to be 'right', and so it meant tolerating even cultural issues which are considered 'wrong' in most cultures, but accepted in others (for example, the genital mutilation practiced in some African cultures, and the annual drive-hunting of dolphins in a national park in Taiji,

Wakayama prefecture, Japan). For some, the perceived over-stating of tolerance was a license to ignore ‘universal truths’. This raised further debate on how a truth qualifies as a ‘universal’ truth, and if there is even such a thing. Two things led me to conclude the statement was in fact a well worded, subtly provocative statement deliberately challenging the hegemonic attitudes of many of the ‘leading’ nations of the world. The first is the use of ‘*can* be right’ – not necessarily that they are, but can be – as a reminder for all to at least attempt to understand opposing positions and question one’s own stance. The second point is the premise that IB students are taught to be inquiring, knowledgeable, caring and compassionate lifelong learners; and given opportunities to learn the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for them to be able to make ethical, caring decisions (International Baccalaureate 2009c:5) with the goal of creating ‘a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect’ (International Baccalaureate 2009c:iii). This sounds idealistic, but the IB has always been ‘unapologetically idealistic in believing education can foster understanding...’ (IBO 2002c:7). At the same time, it must be remembered that ‘tolerance ceases to be a virtue, indeed is in danger of becoming a vice, if it amounts to not caring for truth, ignoring what is morally good or not appreciating the values of the community’ (Lobkowitz 1998:56-57, cited in Abbott & Ryan 2000:67).

To increase awareness and recognition, the IBO created new brand identity guidelines (International Baccalaureate 2007b) following the re-branding of its name to the International Baccalaureate (IB) in 2007 (see Figure 2.1). The new logo ‘represents the planet we live on’, and is an ‘umbrella that unites the IB community’ (International Baccalaureate 2007c:28, 29). As my research spans this rebranding period, both ‘IBO’ and ‘IB’ are used depending on the time of writing or the publishing date of the literature being referred to. Post-2007 publications and writings will use the new acronym, the ‘IB’.



Figure 2.1 The old (above) and new (below) IB logos for use by IB World Schools (©International Baccalaureate)

The **IB Learner Profile**, a key recent document, was introduced in 2006, and is the IBO mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century (International Baccalaureate 2006b:1). These attributes originated from the ‘PYP

student profile' and aims to develop coherence between all three programmes. It 'provides a clear and explicit statement of what is expected of students, teachers and school administrators in terms of learning' (International Baccalaureate 2006b:1). IB Director General Jeffrey Beard and Deputy Director General Ian Hill (Beard & Hill 2008:1-3) outline the essential skills for the 21st century listed in reports from the National Centre on Education and Economy and the Association of American Colleges and Universities, as: *creativity and innovation, self-discipline and organisation, leadership, teamwork, cross-disciplinary knowledge, communication skills, analytical reasoning and real-world problem-solving skills*. These skills, they argue, are evident in the IB Learner Profile, which are the attributes that IB programmes are seeking to develop in all students.

In addition to providing curriculum and assessment support, professional development activities, and carrying out evaluation and authorisation visits to member schools, the IB conducts and supports research, frequently in collaboration with other research organisations (IBO 2007). The IB Diploma, the IBs flagship programme, has gained a reputation for its success in preparing balanced graduates who cope well in universities around the world. This is depicted in the media for example, by the dubbing of the DP as the "gold card" of college placement' (MacDonald 2004, cited in *Times of India*, 22 June 2004). Further evidence is provided by the many universities around the world who not only accept the IB Diploma as a recognized qualification for admission (IBO 2005), but also the many admissions officers who 'respect the IB' (Lewin 2010) and believe it provides 'the best preparation for students to thrive at university programme' (Kay 2009:19).

A beneficial aspect of the IB is the effort made to include input from multiple sources (and in particular practitioners themselves) to ensure the programmes keep developing to adapt to new research on education, and the needs of member schools in the different countries. The governance structure ensures this through the Board of Governors (previously the Council of Foundation), which appoints the Director General, and is comprised of a membership representing cultural and geographical diversity (International Baccalaureate 2010b).

Recently, however, concerns were voiced by a number of international school heads (The Academy for International School Heads 2009) for the 'diminishing voice' of international school heads regarding the future direction and practices of the IB. With

International schools now comprising less than 50 percent of IB World schools, much concern stems from the increasing numbers of national schools within the IB since its inception, and the potential impact this may have on the international focus of the three programmes.

The IB has gone through considerable change over the past six years. The unprecedented growth, averaging almost 18 percent each year, has brought opportunities, challenges and responsibilities with it (IBO 2006a:2). The strategic plan of 2004 presented three bold new initiatives to promote the development of quality, access and infrastructure (IBO 2004c:4). The access goal was further articulated in a Council of Foundation retreat near London in 2006 (IBO 2006a), with resulting strategies developed to address specific growth plans and challenges.

In a paper written to contribute to deliberations on the access strategy at the IB Board of Governor's retreat in February 2008, education development specialist Terrice Bassler (2008) suggests a prominent new role for the IB as a global citizen in the world of education. The suggestion to do more to influence and inform international debates on education and national education systems raises conflicting thoughts. On one hand it makes sense for the IB to wield its considerable influence to make contributions towards the advancement of global education practices. On the other hand, the concentrated focus on providing an international education and the relatively apolitical nature of the IB has been a defining feature. One could argue the apolitical stance of the IB has contributed to its reputation, and if it were to now use this reputation in a political manner, it would expose itself to criticism. The opportunities to contribute are real, but the IB would need to be very careful when using such influence in order to preserve its reputation.

2.2.2 The Programme

The MYP framework prescribes study in eight disciplines, with flexibility for individual schools to include locally required subjects. A central feature of the MYP is the integration of five areas of interaction (AOI) designed to encourage students to (1) make connections between subjects they learn to the real world and global issues, (2) encourage reflection and (3) act on their learning. Another feature of the MYP is the undertaking of a personal project by students in their final year. The personal project

is an extended self-chosen topic, designed to enable students to demonstrate their experiences with the areas of interaction (IBO 2001).

MYP teachers are expected to use a variety of assessment tools to gauge student progress towards IB published descriptors which describe levels of achievement in specific subject criteria. Training in all aspects of the MYP is provided by the IB at workshops held worldwide, and further support is provided by a password protected on-line forum for IB teachers, the On-line Curriculum Centre (OCC), and two administrative platform (the newer IBIS and the older IBNET which is still in use for some functions) for IB coordinators.

2.2.3 The Continuum

Initially offering just the pre-university Diploma Programme (DP) for the last two years of secondary school, the IB added the MYP, a five year course covering grades six-ten (ages eleven-sixteen) in 1994, and the Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged three-twelve in 1997. The three programmes are separate with the same underlying educational philosophy, yet maintain different structures to best address age-level appropriate teaching methods, and the specific aims of each programme. The IB (2008c:2) state a 'consistent philosophy about teaching and learning' will be recognised through the 'common educational framework' of the three programmes. The programmes are not compulsory for any school and schools can choose to offer any combination of the three programmes (IBO 2001).

Related to the development of the MYP are the continued development of the IB continuum and the coherence of the three IB programmes. The coherence of the MYP and DP was discussed in detail by Stobie (2007), who provides a tentative answer to the broad question of 'what characterizes a coherent and consistent international curriculum?'. The answer was provided by Stobie (2007) under the following areas: an identifiable and agreed philosophy with clearly specified aims and objectives; administrators, teachers, students and parents having buy-in and living the internationalist philosophy; internationalism permeating the ethos of the school; a curriculum where any discontinuity is planned and potential tensions recognized in order to be worked on; and meaningful ways of assessment to record and measure non-tested components of the curriculum.

The production of the guide '*Towards a continuum of international education*' (International Baccalaureate 2008c) attempted to clarify the shared philosophies of the three programmes, and at the same time highlight the difference in nature and structure of each programme and how this is related to teaching and learning practices of each programme. Hayden and Thompson (2001:xvii) note the advantage of the IB in providing a balanced curriculum arises from 'the opportunity to plan, on an uninterrupted basis, for continuity and progression with respect to some of the central features that are shared by all three programs'.

2.2.4 Historical Development

The MYP began as an initiative of the International Schools Association (ISA) and was developed in the 1980s as the International Schools Association Curriculum (ISAC) before being packaged as the MYP by the IBO 1994. The IBO has since developed, and continues to develop the programme under the original philosophy and basic framework.

Over the years, considerable development has occurred and some of these have potential impact upon this research. One of the most significant developments in terms of this research was the introduction of the *MYP: From principles into practice* document (International Baccalaureate 2008b). This guide made far-reaching attempts to clarify programme principles and clearly state school requirements for practice. It is significant that my research data was collected before the introduction of this guide as a number of the developments outlined in the guide have attempted to address some of the concerns raised in the questionnaire. The other major development since the start of the study was the introduction of the Learner Profile (International Baccalaureate 2006b). Upon completing the findings chapters, I noted that the majority of findings appeared to still be relevant even though attempts had been made in the published documents to address some of the discourses prevalent at the time the data were collected.

2.2.5 The Fundamental Concepts

The three fundamental concepts of the MYP are (1) holistic learning in context, (2) intercultural awareness and (3) communication (IBO 2002d:1-3). As these concepts underpin the MYP practices, it is not surprising to find a range of opinions surrounding each of them.

2.2.5.1 Holistic Learning

When developing the DP, Peterson (2003:47) observed the tendency of students at the time was to study different subjects in ‘watertight compartments’ – and yet only about 5% of all them went on to become professional academics in specialised fields. ‘For the remaining 95% the ability to see inter-connections between different specialised approaches to an intellectual problem is very important’. The importance of holistic education was therefore evident in the IB from the very beginning, and with the introduction of the MYP, was instituted as one of the three fundamental concepts. The holistic concept in general is not disputed. The research indicates it contributes to student learning (as highlighted in the effective schools section below), but, in practice, schools in many countries such as Asia are still using largely traditional methods of education which are not very holistic. To keep a regional balance, it should be remembered that Westernised countries also have critics of some of their school practices. Bill Gates (2005:2-3) for example suggests high schools in the United States are obsolete, and in fact, ‘even when they are working as designed – cannot teach our kids what they need to know for today’. Gates (2005:1) even goes so far as to state the barrier to college extends beyond being able to pay for it, and now includes ‘the barrier of being prepared for it’.

What is debated is how, and how effectively, a school can employ the principles of holistic learning. Drawing on my years of experience with the MYP, I think the IB itself promotes an ethos which is fundamentally holistic, with the mission statement, learner profile, and standards and practices all explicitly promoting holistic principles in practice. For the MYP, holistic learning is addressed specifically via five areas of interaction, the personal project, and required interdisciplinary teaching strategies. In addition, holistic principles are reflected implicitly through the requirement of a

balanced field of study (eight subject groups), with accompanying objectives relating to assessment criteria for each of the subjects.

The central core of the IB programme model consists of the learner profile, surrounded by five areas of interaction: *approaches to learning, human ingenuity, community and service, health and social education, and environments*. In the model (see Figure 2.2), these five areas of interaction symbolically connect the development of the individual learner (located at the centre) with the educational experience in all subject groups (at the outer points of the octagon). These interactive areas are common to all disciplines with each subject developing general and specific aspects of the areas so demonstrating the interdisciplinary potential of the MYP (Boix-Mansilla 2010:5).

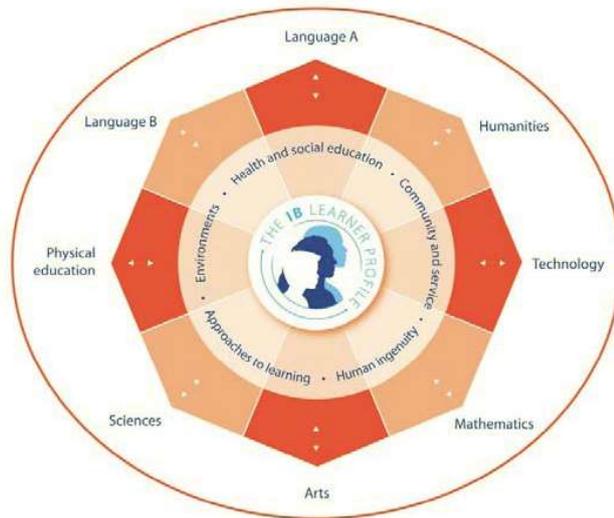


Figure 2.2 The IB MYP programme model

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In the MYP, interdisciplinary learning is defined as ‘a process by which students come to understand bodies of knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines or subject groups and integrate them to create a new understanding’ (Boix-Mansilla 2010:13). Interdisciplinary learning is required by the MYP as an explicit way to promote holistic learning, so as to facilitate students to make:

meaningful connections across subjects in order to understand, and act in, the world. By placing students at the centre of the learning process and building a holistic view of students and knowledge, the MYP seeks to cultivate student’s involvement in their own learning (Boix-Mansilla 2010:3).

How this is done in practice varies, however. Typically, in addition to the inherent connections present in all subjects, teachers will purposely plan to build on their own discipline and introduce a ‘productive relationship’ (Boix-Mansilla 2010:16) with

another discipline so as to deepen students' understanding of the topic. This obviously necessitates more planning and collaboration amongst teachers than traditional disciplinary study would require.

Hare's (2006) research on holistic education in the MYP presented some interesting *outputs of holistic education* to help identify what holistic education is; and uses the *values and behaviours* from these outputs to develop a *person profile* of a student emerging from a holistic program such as the MYP. The key indicators in Hare's (2006:313-315) *person profile* were:

- acts with social and academic maturity and integrity;
- takes ownership of their own development and learning and through planning, prioritization and their own determination, delivers tasks in a timely manner;
- demonstrates flexibility and a creative approach to problem solving;
- through interpersonal skills develops and maintains relationships;
- demonstrates a reflective approach and attitude of continuous improvement;
- demonstrates effective written and oral communication skills;
- demonstrates good meeting management and involvement behaviours;
- seeks to bring clarity to decision-making;
- through an understanding of their subject areas, their interdependencies and interrelationships can take a global view of issues and appreciate and debate global issues and the impact of human activity on the environment; and
- uses effectively information resources made available to them that persist and the acquisition of knowledge and its application.

Interestingly, the IB learner profile (International Baccalaureate 2006b) was also released in 2006. Hare (2006:302) noted the apparent advantages of the holistic perspective are 'the student is positioned as an active, participatory and critical learner who perceives and understands him/herself in a changing world and in a variety of local and global scenarios'.

2.2.5.2 Intercultural Awareness

The importance of intercultural awareness to student learning is highlighted by the correlation between teachers' cultural sensitivity and minority students' achievement

(Cruickshank 1986 and Banks 1987, cited in Deering 1997). This correlation works both ways, with a lack of familiarity or insensitivity making the learning process difficult, and culturally understanding and sensitive teachers being more successful (Sleeter and Grant 1986, cited in Deering 1997).

A common concern in the literature is the threat of losing local influences that are important in maintaining the cultural heritage of the host country. Delors et al. (1996:16) noted the 'tension between the global and the local' recognising not just promises of globalisation, but also the risks. They go on to state 'people need gradually to become world citizens without losing their roots and while continuing to play an active part in the life of their nation and their local community'. Pinir (2006:39) furthers this argument, in that 'while internationalism supports transnational communication, it is important for each nation (and/or region) to cultivate its own indigenous and consequently independent proof in their arising, enquiry, and research'. Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore (Akademi 1996:268) articulates his perception of the dangers of internationalism, objecting to the 'artificial arrangement by which this foreign education tends to occupy all the space of our national mind and thus kills, or hampers, the great opportunity for the creation of a thought power by a new combination of truths'. The danger of neo-imperialism influencing international education then is a perceived threat that requires attention. The transnational nature of the IB organisation does put it in a good position to be vigilant to this threat, although a review of the history of the development of the IB (such as by Peterson 2003) exposes the IB roots as being developed largely from Westernized educational philosophies. This Western perspective needs be considered when definitions regarding internationalism are made. I also argue that there are similarly strong influences on curriculum development from national governments and various interest groups such as universities, and these pose a similar threat to developing curriculum that balances international features with local needs.

In a study on why students were choosing to undertake the DP over the local curriculum, Paris (2003:241) noted the IB has developed international curriculum 'for schools around the world, which has had a positive influence on the establishment of the ideal global villages and world citizens'. At the same time, his research indicated the IB was seen by some as being 'potentially prestigious, and possibly inequitable' (2003:241). Findings such as these suggest the IB needs to continue to wrestle with

defining how internationalism is celebrated, yet not promoted at the expense of local cultures. The Learner Profile goes a long way to be an 'embodiment of what the IBO means by "international-mindedness"' (International Baccalaureate 2006b:1).

Tarc (2009) explored the 'International in the International Baccalaureate', by conducting a critical discourse analysis on the IB and related literature with the aim of 'excavating the dynamics' of three structuring tensions in the founding years of the IB 1) citizenship tension, 2) curricular tension, and 3) operational tension. Tarc (2009:236-237) proposes these tensions, which emerged when the original visions of the IB came up against the practical demands of producing the DP, remain relevant today.

2.2.5.3 Communication

A practical aspect of intercultural awareness which overlaps with the communication concept as well is the issue of languages. The MYP actively promotes bilingualism by the very requirement of two languages in the programme of study. The programme's philosophy supporting language acquisition and development is explicit via the standards and practices. Documentation highlights that 'the ability to communicate in a variety of modes in more than one language is essential to the concept of an international education that promotes intercultural understanding' (International Baccalaureate 2008a:3). Even with the cognitive benefits from bilingualism and the social advantages for global citizens to understand a second language (and therefore much of the culture as well), language development in the MYP remains a debated issue for educators around the world. Carder (2002:236-241), for example, notes three components of a good ESL programme, and makes some specific suggestions for improvement to the MYP, such as a 'set of specific language objectives for ESL students in the MYP', much along the lines of an 'A2' (or second) language course as currently practised in the DP.

With this backdrop of enhanced awareness of multilingualism in the IB, it was interesting to note a study on parental priorities in the selection of international schools in Switzerland revealed the desire by participants for their child(ren) to be educated in the English language emerged repeatedly as 'one of the most crucial factors in parents' choice of school' (Mackenzie, Hayden & Thompson 2003:302,

311). It was remarkable that this factor was ranked higher than the good impression, curriculum used, reputation of the school, the desire to have an international education, the presence of the DP, or the quality of the school facilities, which were the next highest factors ranked. Reflecting on typical international school profiles where a significant percentage of students are non-native English speakers, this finding seemingly highlights the perceived importance of English to parents of non-native English speakers at least in Switzerland. Detailed analysis, however, indicated that at least in the Swiss schools surveyed, it was British and North American parents who 'valued an English language education very much more highly than an international school education'; with Swiss and European parents rating these two factors equally and expressing a somewhat greater interest in English language education respectively (Mackenzie, Hayden & Thompson 2003:310). More needs to be done, however, on this issue in a range of other countries.

2.2.6 Comparative/Competing Programmes

The MYP is a distinctive programme in terms of philosophies and practices. Many of the philosophies and practices used are widespread in non-MYP schools, but rarely to the same extent or mix, and not presented as a complete programme in the same way. The structure of the programme is similarly distinct, spanning both traditional middle and high school levels over the five years of the programme, from grades six through ten (or years seven through eleven in a one-thirteen year system). This structure makes it difficult to make comparisons to the MYP, contributing to the fact there is little comparative research available at present.

Arguably, the closest programme that can be considered a competing programme is the British-based International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). The competition, however, is limited to the final two years of the MYP, as the IGCSE only provides a two-year programme over grades nine and ten. The differences between the two programmes are many and marked. Guy notes:

The IGCSE developed directly out of a British-oriented, examination-focused system to meet the continuing needs of British overseas or ex-colonial schools and parents seeking to retain measurable educational standards when 'O' levels were phased out (Guy 2001:17).

The major incompatibilities reported by Guy (2000, 2001) centred around the differences in fundamental philosophies, and the ramifications of the IGSCE being based in examinations. Comparatively, the MYP utilises a more contemporary philosophical approach with a strong focus on international awareness as demonstrated by the fundamental concepts. The MYP also has a criterion-related assessment system coupled with moderation rather than external exams. Some schools prepare students for both, and Guy's conclusion regarding the compatibility of the two programmes is:

attempting to provide a dual programme places an additional and unnecessary, perhaps even harmful, burden on students and teachers as they wrestle with the demands of the MYP personal project and other innovative assessment schemes, and, at the same time, prepare themselves to pass the formal and more traditional examinations of the IGSCE (Guy 2001:11).

Despite such recommendations, many schools do run the MYP and examination-based curriculum concurrently. Two schools, for example, were reported at an international symposium in Oman in March, 2004, to have implemented a hybrid grade 9/10 integrated curriculum which 'offers the best of both worlds' (Taylor & Nashman-Smith 2004:16). These examples were notable in that they deliberately attempted to address the incompatibilities noted by Guy (2000, 2001), with the MYP's constructivist pedagogy governing the instructional methodology and formative assessment and reporting, while the students simultaneously prepared to take up to nine IGCSE examinations. To date, it remains a controversial issue with schools wanting to offer both programmes free to do so. More research on the effect of the compromises made by each programme when offering them together is required to clarify the matter.

Within the United States, relatively poor student performances on international comparisons (such as the PISA standardised tests run by the OECD) have raised concerns that the US educational system is not serving all students well. Stanford University School of Education's Professor Michael Kirst (2004:51) notes 'disconnected education systems are undermining students' college aspirations', and students are not getting the information they need about what it takes to succeed in higher education. Not surprisingly, statistics regarding student attrition rates are

startling, and particularly those from the lower socio-economic quartile (Kirst 2004:51-52). The American Diploma Project has even gone to the lengths of calling the typical high school diploma 'little more than a certificate of attendance', noting the reason for this is simply that 'too few high school students take sufficiently challenging courses in math and English' (Broman 2004:1,19). It is no surprise, then, that the number of MYP schools in the US is growing fast.

In the upper high school grades, one alternative to the DP is the Advanced Placement (AP) programme, which 'was designed for high school students, and offers them the opportunity in the high school level to take college-level courses taught by secondary teachers' (Nugent & Karnes 2002:30). This programme is markedly different from the DP, however, in that it offers stand-alone exam-based courses, while the DP is a programme requiring six subject groups in a theoretical framework shared with the MYP and PYP.

2.2.7 The Development of the Programme

Armstrong (2005:16) suggests one good question to ask when judging progress in the development of a 'liberating and inspirational' programme such as the MYP is, 'has the MYP become a force for improving student learning attributes and the promotion of global citizenship that we all hoped for in the early days of the programme?'. Armstrong's answer in 2005 was, 'overall there could be doubts'. While I found Armstrong's claim of needing a 'fresh curricular vision' to keep the programme at the forefront of good educational practice a little dramatic, I do agree that at that time, there was a feeling amongst at least some practitioners that there was too much ambiguity resulting from the flexible nature of the programme – even though that very flexibility was appreciated in many schools as it allowed them to use the programme in ways that suited them. Armstrong would be happy to know the specific areas he noted (that is, a clearer promotion of global citizenship/internationally-minded students, improved planning of lessons and units of work, revitalising and clarifying approaches to learning and making assessment procedures more school friendly) have all subsequently receive attention, as evidenced by the large number of guides and clarified practices, and in particular the *MYP: From principles into practice* (International Baccalaureate 2008b), released since 2005.

2.2.8 Implementation of the MYP

A number of articles have been written over the years with helpful snippets of information, but to date, there is still no one comprehensive guide covering all aspects of an implementation. Codrington (2002:19, 21) gives a good example of the challenges experienced when implementing the MYP in a school in Australia. In addition to time, costs and the perceived need for change, the school report contained a comment which served as a warning: 'teachers are asked to prepare students for a changing world, and yet themselves can be quite resistant to change... reactions of anger, threat and so on, are normal'.

A report investigating operational issues involving the implementation of the MYP and PYP by a school already offering the DP was published in the IB Research Notes bulletin, and focused on transition and continuity issues (Millikan 2001). The following insight is illustrative:

All schools "rise or fall" on the quality of the personnel, particularly those in key leadership roles, which in turn affects both classroom teachers and specialist support personnel. Ongoing professional development of staff is essential, and ways of arresting the rapid turnover of staff should be investigated. The influence of their board chairman, director, or principal of their subdivision can quickly and significantly bring about change, or ensure that change does not happen (Millikan 2001:6).

Millikan (2001:7) also suggests the IB consider the formulation of a 'permanent "education squad" which would work with schools leading up to accreditation'. Currently this role is covered by the programme managers in each region. Financially, the suggestion may be difficult to support, however, with advances in technology and video-conferencing in particular, the question to the IB: 'Is there scope for a global implementation support team to assist implementing schools with their implementation largely via virtual technology?' is less problematic.

Some articles raised specific challenges identified by particular schools, providing valuable insights to other implementing schools. One such issue is the broad debate

on how to define the 'middle years'. McPhee (2002) gives an example from Washington International School (WIS) where the MYP does not align itself with the standard middle school (grades six-eight) and high school (grades nine-twelve) structure in the US. This issue also affects schools outside of the US who follow the typical US structure, as well as schools in countries which use different school section structures. For example, elementary (primary) schools in some states of Australia include grade six, and traditional high schools in Japan cover only grades ten-twelve. A difficulty noted in the WIS example was high school teachers trying to balance the 'holistic, child-centred philosophy of the MYP' while preparing ninth and tenth graders for the DP. WIS Upper-school MYP coordinator Neil Macdonald (cited in McPhee 2002:40), further explained that the 'upper-school faculty members struggled with the cross-disciplinary focus required by incorporating areas of interaction into a strong curriculum that, in their opinion, must now focus on the development of discrete disciplinary skills'. Such specific issues require thought and a debate on the pros and cons of the MYP five-year structure (although it should be noted there are flexibility options for schools that require them).

Considering the number of comprehensive guides produced by the IB on the MYP to date, the lack of one comprehensive guide covering all aspects of an implementation is noticeable. By "implementation" I mean to include all aspects of an implementation, such as those covered by Fullan's (2005:32-33; 2001:50-51) theory of change stages (initiation, implementation and institutionalisation). Many implementation aspects are covered to an extent, but they are located in various guides, and deal largely with curriculum development and programme practices; and lack information on change management and typical implementation challenges. In contrast, the curricular requirements of the MYP are well detailed in the *MYP: From principles into practice* guide. One of the desired outcomes of my research, therefore, was to use the findings to contribute to the literature on implementation.

Ironically, it was not until just before the submission date of this dissertation that I was referred to a set of reports ('Notes from the field') specifically written for schools implementing the MYP. While these reports fall short of the comprehensive guide for implementing schools suggested above, they do provide a valuable 'Roadmap' to authorisation in the MYP covering three stages: the consideration phase (International Baccalaureate 2009h), the candidate phase (International Baccalaureate 2009g) and the authorisation and beyond phase (International

Baccalaureate 2009f). These three reports provide feedback from between five to seven principals, coordinators and teachers who had recently been authorised to offer the MYP; with advice collated in sections specifically for principals, prospective coordinators/coordinators and teachers. The report for the candidate phase also included ten suggestions from all respondents for candidate schools to consider. These reports are difficult to find as they are located on the 'Blogs' section of the IB website, and not in the IB Online Curriculum Centre where practitioners are usually referred to for resources.

The IB blogs site also contained an interesting school self-assessment rubric designed to 'foster reflection and guide discussion about IB implementation and access' (International Baccalaureate 2009i). The document provides activities organised around nine dimensions related to the goal of increasing participation and success in the IB, and was adapted for the *High School Design Rubric* produced by The Great Schools Partnership (International Baccalaureate 2009i:1).

2.2.9 Other Related Research on the MYP

As noted earlier, it is not surprising the amount of research on the MYP is limited due to being a relatively young programme. With the exponential growth the MYP is experiencing, however, the corresponding increase in numbers of implementing schools highlights the need for more research to inform programme development, implementation, and expansion.

Two significant studies by the IB have provided an indication of the potential of the MYP for academic success and why the MYP is chosen for implementation; and satisfaction levels of heads and coordinators of IB schools. The former was a project called *MYP: Avoiding the gap* (International Baccalaureate 2009e:3) that aimed to investigate the MYP as preparation for the DP. From surveys sent to IB World Schools, the following were identified as important and influential factors in selecting the MYP: the smooth transition the MYP provides into the DP (93%); pedagogy (constructivist approach) (88%); philosophy (83%); academic rigour (79%); quality assurance (78%); and the ability and flexibility to develop course content (70%). The main concerns were: programme recognition with governments and universities; the reliability and validity of external validation of MYP assessment; and the need for

more explicit guidance for the effective transition of students between programmes. Data from the DP exam also showed MYP graduates 'performed well' in the DP exams of 2008. For example, 44% of MYP graduates obtained grade A or B in the theory of knowledge (TOK) course in the DP, with 85% obtaining an A, B or C (International Baccalaureate 2009e:3). The influential factors noted are useful to compare to my research results, however, a limitation of the academic data given was there were no comparative results given from non-MYP graduates, so a figure of '27% of MYP graduates gained more than 35 points in the DP' (International Baccalaureate 2009e:3) is meaningless unless one is well versed in typical DP scores and percentages of total numbers of students who earn 35 points in the DP.

The second study of note was an independent IB World School satisfaction survey carried out by the strategic planning department (International Baccalaureate 2006a), which aimed to identify strengths and areas in need of improvement. 90% of the 1,156 responses agreed or strongly agreed that considering everything, they were *very* satisfied with service the IB provides their school (International Baccalaureate 2006a:2). The survey covered the following areas (with percentage of strongly agree or agree in brackets): curriculum (96%); assessment (84%); professional development (80%); programme evaluation (76%); and support (88%) (International Baccalaureate 2006a:3). These results are useful to compare with my research results, although it should be noted this study reflected numeric survey results, while my results (with the exception of the benefits and drawbacks tables) reflect thematic areas derived from a critical discourse analysis of textual responses. I found this report significant not just for the results, but also as the report provided a comprehensive analysis of the data and noted service improvement priorities based on the correlation to overall satisfaction. The survey was planned to be repeated, however, I was unable to gain access to any later survey results.

Reimers (2004b:11-18) carried out one of the earlier quantitative studies of the MYP, attempting to find the impact on the scores of DP graduates of students who participated in the MYP. Reimers' (2004a:50-51) conclusion was 'The data revealed that MYP participation had little if any influence on final Diploma results', and recommends schools choosing to implement the MYP to do so for reasons other than raising Diploma scores. Reimers (2004a:53) states in her conclusion, 'the Diploma program is a content driven curriculum, unlike the MYP that has no curriculum'. This is arguably a misleading statement. As a framework the MYP does not offer content

standards and benchmarks, but it does provide subject aims and objectives for the school to use to frame their own content. Using the standards and practices, a school could not pass authorisation if it had 'no curriculum'. The study also received rather harsh criticism due to a lack of methodological rigour (Caffyn & Cambridge 2005). Overall, I found the study useful as it highlighted the difficulties inherent in trying to make conclusions from a complex learning process with so many variables using quantitative data.

In a similar study comparing achievement levels of students in an MYP school with students of similar ability in non-MYP schools, Jackson (2006) found the average Standards of Learning scores of the total MYP student group were 'higher' than the mean scores of the total non-MYP group in all areas. However, as there were no *statistically significant* differences, the results cannot be used as evidence that there are any differences. An ethnic dimension comparing test results of black, Hispanic and white students similarly indicated no statistical significance in the Standards of Learning achievement scores in this study. One limitation of the study was that test scores were compared at the grade eight level, with test scores from grade five used as a baseline. While care was taken to select only students with qualified MYP teachers, it is not clear if those selected had been in MYP classes in grades six and seven as well. As with Reimers' study above, Jackson's study again highlights the limitation of simply looking at test results. Jackson (2006:6) acknowledges this, stating, 'To date, minimal formal research has been conducted to ascertain the IBMYP's effectiveness in improving student achievement on standardized tests because the IBO does not consider standardized tests as a measure of program success'. Despite this, she goes on to validate her study: 'For reasonable decisions to be made about the effectiveness of school programs such as the IBMYP, however, it is necessary to provide school leaders and administrators with quantitative achievement data on the students participating in the programs'. With holistic education being such a big part of the MYP, further research is desirable to consider more than just student achievement based on standardised test since the IB is not specifically preparing students in the way some traditional programmes do.

In addition to giving insight on transition issues for primary students entering the middle years, O'Boyle's (2009) study on student perceptions in the first year of the MYP highlighted two related points that contributed to my study. Firstly, the study supports other research findings which indicate there are benefits to student learning

when a school listens to student 'voice'. This is discussed further in the best practices section regarding school community below (section 2.4.3). O'Boyle notes:

students' perspectives of schooling have been largely ignored until relatively recently', and this needs to change, as 'authorising students perspectives in conversations about educational reform allows us to achieve a closer match between students' experiences in school and what we hope their experiences will be, with the hope that we better serve their emotional, social and cognitive needs (O'Boyle 2009:31).

Secondly, this study provided an MYP specific example in support of how involving students in their learning is desirable. O'Boyle (2009:52) reports, 'changing students' perceptions about learning involves dialogue, both verbal and written, and may also include teachers justifying their pedagogical philosophies'. In the MYP, this is encouraged by, and facilitated through, the approaches to learning area of interaction.

To conclude, there has been little research carried out on the MYP, and what has been conducted has largely attempted to compare the MYP with other programmes quantitatively; or examine aspects unique to the MYP such as holistic learning. The number of research projects and related articles on the MYP are growing steadily, however.

2.3 Effective Schools

A section heading such as this immediately begs the questions, how do you define 'effective' and exactly what is an 'effective' school? The objective of this section is to answer this question, and identify research-based effective practices noted in the literature which contribute towards improving students' learning.

Before delving into the literature on what authors find to be best and effective, it is useful to reflect on the big picture to ensure an understanding of the context. In order to determine whether a school is effective, a clear understanding of what the school is attempting to do is necessary. This question turns out to be a Pandora's Box, as while the answer appears to be loud and clear, responses to the answers are often

alarming slow and ambiguous. A selection of literature attempting to answer the question, '*what is the purpose of schools*' is given below.

Elkind comments on two educational discourses introduced in Armstrong's (2006) book that guide and direct pedagogical values, thoughts, and practices:

What is the aim of education? Is the primary goal of schooling to train young people to pass tests and get good grades, or is it as Jean Piaget once put it, "to train young people to think for themselves and not to accept the first idea that comes to them" (Elkind in his Forward to Armstrong 2006:vii).

The Academic Achievement Discourse currently dominates the educational scene, and addresses the first aim. The Human Development Discourse addresses the second aim, and adapts the curriculum to the developing needs, interests, and abilities of the students – this is what Armstrong refers to as the 'Best Schools' (David Elkind in his Forward to Armstrong 2006:vii). Armstrong goes on to detail assumptions and consequences of both discourses, giving much useful insight into not only the aims of schools and discourses surrounding the issue, but also identifying attributes of 'Best Schools'.

It is also useful to examine carefully what appears to be failing in schools so as to highlight the mismatch between the supposed purposes, and practice in reality. As is highlighted by Armstrong's (2006) two discourses, the consensus in much literature is 'the world is changing - schools are not' (Littkey & Gabrelle 2004:32). Abbott and Ryan (2000) call it the 'unfinished revolution' in the title of their book, and provide evidence supporting the mismatch between what scientists and researchers are saying, and the traditional (albeit Western) classroom which was developed under an industrial-age model. Goleman (1998:3) echoes this warning, noting rules in the workplace are changing, and the new rules 'have little to do with what we were told was important in school'. Coming from a backdrop of criticism of US education since the mid-60's, Marzano (2003:6), balanced this view somewhat by highlighting the positive effects of effective schools, and states 'the research on the effectiveness of schools *considered as a whole* paints a very positive image of [an effective school's] impact on student achievement'.

The key issue being identified time and time again is the changing needs of our society. 'Society is asking our graduates for skills and fast-paced communication, and schools are still giving them facts and one-way lectures' (Littkey & Gabrelle 2004:31). I have yet to meet an educator who does not agree in general with these claims - and yet, change in schools has been extremely slow on many fronts. Renowned change and reform specialist Michael Fullan notes:

The urgent reasons for reform are now familiar. The global society is increasingly complex, requiring educated citizens who can learn continuously, and who can work with diversity, locally and internationally. Although the source of blame varies, it is now an undeniable conclusion that the education system and its partners have failed to produce citizens who can contribute to and benefit from a world that offers enormous opportunity and equally complex difficulty finding one's way in it (Fullan 2007:7).

While attempting to draw attention to relationships between language and representation, and their effects on curriculum material, Nannes (2009:100) notes 'most people assume that education is either about transmitting and/or constructing knowledge. At the end of the school day, students are meant to know more than they did at the beginning of the day, we assume'. As one way forward, Rohlen suggests:

In essence, the message is that our schools need to teach learning processes that better fit the way work is evolving. Above all, this means teaching the skills and habits of mind that are essential to problem solving, especially where many minds need to interact (Rohlen 1999:251-252, cited in Fullan 2007:7).

To be more specific, the aim of education for many educators is for students to acquire the attributes (knowledge, skills and attitudes) we desire students to have when they leave school, and that assist them in their lives after school. However, it is debatable how much effort some schools are putting in to ensure the school's ethos reverberates with echoes of these attributes. The IB have developed a list of such attributes called the Learner Profile, and go to lengths to ensure member schools are not just paying them lip-service. Littkey and Gabrelle present a similar list of fourteen attributes they believe constitute the real goals of education:

I have decided I want [my students] to: be lifelong learners; be passionate; be ready to take risks; be able to problem-solve and think critically; be able to look at things differently; be able to work in independently and with others; be creative; care and want to get back to their community; persevere; have integrity and self-respect; have moral courage; be able to use the world around them well; speak well, write well, read well, and work well with numbers; truly enjoy their life and their work (Littkey & Gabrelle 2004:1).

Attributes such as these, then, are arguably what schools need to be focusing on to facilitate student s to learn within the human development discourse of education.

2.3.1 Characteristics of 'Effective Schools'

"What's the only test of a good comedian?" Answer: "They Laughed."

So what's the only test of a good school? You can fill in the answer for yourself. It's a truism that the purpose of the school is making learning happen.

(M. Skelton, quoted in Bartlett 2010:1)

It seems so simple, yet there is so much debate over how we can best make learning happen in schools. Bartlett goes on to question what he terms the 'Big Fat Lie' – that is, many schools would have to answer 'no' to this question: "Do schools consistently and systematically provide for all students with flexible tools for learning, using research-based, common strategies in every classroom?" (Bartlett 2010:14). My experience leads me to agree with Bartlett, although many schools do try hard to succeed in this endeavour.

One way of defining effectiveness is to identify the characteristics of what is commonly termed 'effective' practices in the 'effective schools' literature. We humans seem to have a proclivity for lists, so it is not surprising to find the effective schools literature abounds with them. A few examples are given, concluding with the list I found most comprehensive and research-based, the 'correlates of effective schools'.

National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) president Patrick Bassett (2005:1-5) introduces the four 'Hallmarks of 21st C. Schools' as: *proficiency, fluency, performance and multicultural literacy*, and then presents '15 Design Issues for 21st C.

Schools': *time, multiculturalism/globalism, technology, service, performance assessments, finance, teacher recruitment/compensation/evaluation, values, curriculum, architecture of school facilities, research-based schools, homework, marketing better, full-service schools and leadership*. Bassett's lists are comprehensive and applicable, yet are far too broad to encapsulate the key features of what an 'effective school' is. Other lists, on the other hand, are too specific, such as 'Life Tasks for Effective Schools' covering social areas present in functional schools and classrooms: *physical maintenance of members, socialization of members; motivation maintenance; social control maintenance; and selective boundary maintenance* (Nicoll nd-b).

Barton carried out a meta-analysis on research data and identified fourteen factors that correlated with achievement measured by test results:

Before and Beyond School: *birthweight, lead poisoning, hunger and nutrition, reading to young children, television watching, parent availability, student mobility and parent participation;*

In school: *Rigor of curriculum, teacher experience and attendance, teacher preparation, class size, technology-assisted instruction and school safety.*

(Barton 2004:8-13)

The interesting feature of Barton's results was it identified life experiences and conditions associated with achievement in schools, and looked at statistics that indicated whether the experiences differed on the basis of race, ethnicity and income. For race and ethnicity, gaps existed in all fourteen factors. Data by income was only available for 12 of the factors, and a gap existed for 11 of them. Implications for the developmental environment, home learning conditions, student mobility, home-school connection and the six school factors identified were covered, and provide a valuable perspective on socio-economic factors to the effective schools debate.

McEwan (1999) provides a helpful list of ten traits schools must have to be highly successful, highlighting such school will have *all* of these traits, not just one or two spectacular ones:

A strong, knowledgeable principal; superior teachers; motivated students; involved and committed parents; standards of learning for which students are

held accountable; a solid academic curriculum; high achievement on the part of students; and academically focused mission; strong communication; and a safe environment for students and staff (McEwan 1999:20).

McEwan's '10 traits' list provided a concise yet comprehensive summary, however, her focus was more towards parents so they could know if their school was a good one.

Another good list summarising eleven factors for effective schools was outlined by Sammons et al (1995:8): professional leadership; shared vision and goals; a learning environment; concentration on teaching and learning; purposeful teaching; high expectations; positive reinforcement; monitoring progress; pupil rights and responsibilities; home-school partnership; and a learning organization.

And the lists go on. From 'seven standards of postmodern professionalism for teachers' (Goodson & Hargreaves 1996:20-21 cited in Carder 2007:73); to lists expounding on specific traits such as 'high expectations for all students' (Landsman 2004:32). These lists are all useful in their own way, but the list I chose as it best encapsulated the effective school characteristics in a way I thought would be useful as a framework is one used by a number of professional institutions such as the Principal's Training Centre (www.theptc.org) and a number of states in the US (see Lunenburg & Ornstein 1996:346-353 for examples). This list is called the 'Correlates of Effective Schools' (Intermountain Centre for Education Effectiveness & Centre for Effective Schools 2001) ('correlates' because they correlate to student achievement) and is most concise and useful (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Correlates of Effective Schools (Intermountain Centre for Education Effectiveness & Centre for Effective Schools 2001)

Correlate	Description
A safe and orderly environment	The effective school has an orderly, purposeful, businesslike environment, which is free from the threat of physical harm. Desirable student behaviors are consistently articulated and expectations are clear. Students help each other and want what is best for all. This environment nurtures interaction between students and teachers that is collaborative, cooperative, and student centered.
A clearly stated and focused mission	The effective school has a clearly articulated mission. The staff shares an understanding and commitment to the mission and the instructional goals, priorities, and assessment procedures it projects. The staff accepts responsibility and accountability for promoting and achieving the mission of learning for all students.
Instructional leadership	The effective school practices that the principal is the "leader of leaders" not the "leader of followers." The principal and all adults must take an active role in instructional leadership. The principal will become the coach, partner, and cheerleader.
High expectations for all students	The effective school expects that all students can attain mastery of the essential school skills. In order to meet these high expectations, a school is restructured to be an institution designed for "learning" not "instruction." Teachers and students must have access to "tools" and "time" to help all students learn.
Frequent monitoring of student progress	The effective school frequently measures academic student progress through a variety of assessment procedures. The assessment procedures must emphasize "more authentic assessment" in curriculum mastery. Assessment results are used to improve individual student performance and also improve instructional delivery. Assessment results will show that alignment must exist between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum.
Maximise learning opportunities	The effective school allocates and protects a significant amount of time for instruction of the essential skills. The instruction must take place in an integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum. Effective instruction time must focus on skills and curriculum content that are considered essential, that are assessed, and most valued. There should be abandonment of less important content.
Positive communication - school, home, community	The effective school builds trust and communicates within the school, with parents and the community. Forming partnerships with the parents and community enables all stakeholders to have the same goals and expectations.

This list stood out due to its origins and development as a researched-based formulation of attributes developed over time, and is now generally accepted in the literature as central to the 'effective schools' movement. Lezotte (nd:1-2) outlines the history of the list as stemming from the 1960s, with the original list first formally identified by Ron Edmonds as the 'correlates of effective schools' in 1982, and subsequently developed over the years. The list was developed by identifying existing effective schools that were successful in educating all students regardless of socio-economic status or family background. Common characteristics of these effective schools were then identified - in other words, what philosophies, policies, and practices these schools had in common (Lezotte nd:1). Lezotte notes:

The Correlates are critical to the effective school because they represent the leading organizational and contextual indicators that have been shown to influence student learning. In other words, the extent to which the Correlates are in place in the school has a dramatic, positive effect on student achievement. Furthermore, the individual Correlates are not independent of one another, but are interdependent (Lezotte nd:4).

Lunenburg and Ornstein (1996:349) point out that 'several individuals and agencies have gone even further in refining and modifying research to identify characteristics of unusually effective schools'. One such modification which I thought useful was to provide evidence for the presence of the attributes in a school (Lunenburg & Ornstein 1996:351). Marzano (2003:19) has also included versions of the correlates of effective schools in a comparison of school factors across researchers. Marzano aligns his lists to other authors' lists by categorising them into five school-level factors: *guaranteed and viable curriculum; challenging goals and effective feedback; parental and community involvement; safe and orderly environment; and collegiality and professionalism*. Marzano's comparison is useful to consider not only as it highlights the similarities between results from leading researchers; but also as he ranks the factors in order of impact on student achievement.

There are critics of the effective schools movement such as Thomas and Bainbridge (2001) who identify 'five fallacies' of the effective schools movement. However, the movement has gained popularity as evidenced by consistent reference to it in educational literature and administrator textbooks (such as Lunenburg & Ornstein

1996). There is still a danger in how these attributes are interpreted, however, particularly if indicators are too general or accountability is lacking. Fertig warns:

It is clear that the majority of school effectiveness studies have centred primarily on explorations of pupil's cognitive outcomes in areas such as public testing and examinations. These outcomes have been used as the criteria against which to judge whether or not a school could be considered 'effective'. Few studies have paid attention affective or social outcomes for pupils, an issue that bears heavily on the broader aims espoused by many international schools in, for example, their mission statements (Fertig 2000:150).

It was interesting to discover Lezotte (1999) goes on to outline 'second-generation correlates'. Educators need to keep in mind that school improvement is an endless journey, and once a school has successfully accomplished the first generation correlate standards, the second-generation correlates attempt to incorporate recent research and school improvement findings to offer an even more challenging developmental stage to which schools ought to aspire (Lezotte 1999:1). It is outside the scope of this literature review to go into further detail, however, it is interesting to note some of these second-generation correlates outline specific attributes which are already present within the MYP. For example, Lezotte (1999:5) suggests a move towards curricular-based criterion-referenced measures of student mastery and the alignment between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum in correlate six, frequent monitoring of student progress. As such introducing the MYP may be considered a rather sophisticated change.

Contemporary literature on attributes of effective schools thus provides a basic framework which allows comparisons to be drawn between the discourses provided by questionnaire respondents and the correlates of effective schools. An informed conclusion can then be drawn on which discourses surrounding the MYP reflect identified traits of effective schools.

2.4 'Best Practices'

Armstrong (2006:2-3) uses the term 'developmentally appropriate practices' to define attempts to describe best practices in education based on what we know about human development. Educators, Armstrong argues, are:

required to pay close attention to the vast qualitative differences that exist in the physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual worlds of preschoolers, elementary school students, young teens and high school students, and to develop educational practices that are sensitive to these differing developmental needs (Armstrong 2006:3).

This is a huge task, as best practices will include all aspects of the correlates of effective schools. For the purpose of the desired framework to compare MYP discourses then, this section will focus on the identification of best practices surrounding the areas of *leadership, teaching, curriculum and school structure, and community*. These were chosen as they cover the major areas involved with running a school. A brief overview of select literature covering the applicable areas will be made rather than detailed commentary or comprehensive coverage of the available literature. Connections to the MYP will be made.

2.4.1 Best practices in School Leadership

The effect of leadership ability was correlated with an increase in student achievement by Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005:10-11). The meta-analysis of related research indicated 'a highly effective school leader can have a dramatic influence on the overall academic achievement of students'.

Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005:41-43) go on to identify specific actions or behaviours related to principal leadership which affected student achievement, and came up with 21 categories that they refer to as 'responsibilities'. After reviewing a wide range of literature on best practices for school leaders and reflecting leaders that I have known, I found this list the most specific, comprehensive, and practical to use as a framework. The 21 responsibilities are set out in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: The 21 Responsibilities (Marzano, Waters & McNulty 2005:41-43)

Responsibilities	Description
1. Affirmation	Recognizes and celebrates accomplishments and acknowledges failures.
2. Change agent	Is willing to challenge and actively challenges the status quo.
3. Contingent rewards	Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments.
4. Communication	Establishes strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students.
5. Culture	Fosters shared beliefs and the sense of community and cooperation.
6. Discipline	Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus.
7. Flexibility	Adapts his or her leadership behaviour to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent.
8. Focus	Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals at the forefront of the school's attention.
9. Ideals/beliefs	Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.
10. Input	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.
11. Intellectual stimulation	Ensures faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture.
12. Involvement in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.
13. Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, construction, and assessment practices.
14. Monitoring/ Evaluating	Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.
15. Optimiser	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations.

16. Order	Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines.
17. Outreach	Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders.
18. Relationships	Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff.
19. Resources	Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of the jobs.
20. Situational awareness	Is aware of the details and our undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems.
21. Visibility	Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.

All of these responsibilities have a statistically significant relationship with student achievement (Marzano, Waters & McNulty 2005:62). The authors list the 21 responsibilities alphabetically in order to highlight that they are all important, however it is interesting to note that the rank order changes when there are viewed from different perspectives. This can be useful to identify which responsibilities have stronger relationships with student achievement, and which may be most important for leading change (Marzano, Waters & McNulty 2005:63, 69). The length of this list highlights the complexities involved in being an effective school leader. Marzano, Waters and McNulty (2005:101) propose a solution to address all of these behaviours more effectively: change the focus of the school leadership from a single individual to a team of individuals, and create a strong school leadership team. Accordingly Lambert (2003:15) outlines the purposes, roles, and establishment guidelines for such a leadership team, as well as providing details on how to develop 'emerging teacher leadership' throughout the school. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) have also been increasingly popular (DuFour 2005:31) to advance the collaborative leading of learning for all in schools. 'The PLC concept operates from the premise that leadership should be widely dispersed throughout the school, and thus developing the leadership potential of all staff members is imperative' (DuFour, Eaker & DuFour 2005a:23).

As with the effective schools traits, each of the 21 responsibilities lead to literature expounding on each responsibly, I resist the urge to outline them all here for the sake of time, space, and in order to maintain focus on providing a basic framework. That being said, my research question number three explores discourses surrounding implementation of the MYP, and therefore necessitates mention of school leaders being change agents (number two on the list of 21 responsibilities above). Reeves notes:

Failure in change strategies need not be inevitable. In fact, it is avoidable if change leaders will balance their sense of urgency with a more thoughtful approach to implementing change. If we have learned anything about the effect of change in schools or any complex organization, it is that neither managerial imperatives nor inspirational speeches will be sufficient to move people and organisations from their entrenched positions. Fortunately, there are practical steps that leaders can take to maximise their probabilities of success (Reeves 2009:7).

The problem is many people do not like change. 'In truth, any change will meet resistance, because change is loss' (Reeves 2009:45). With loss comes the stages of grief as described by Kubler-Ross (1969 cited in Reeves 2009:45): *denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance*. Reeves notes:

Even the most productive and essential changes represent the death of past practice; therefore, for people to have genuine enthusiasm to change, we must believe that they have an enthusiasm for death and loss - a premise that demands challenge (Reeves 2009:45-46).

My immediate reaction to this statement was to recall certain people I have known who actually do seem to like change. I find the statement too absolute, as perhaps due to my Third Culture Kid childhood, I find myself quite comfortable with organised change. Furthermore, I know I am not alone in finding some types of change bring a certain sense of excitement. Those who like change, however, may be in the minority, and with regard to school change, it would be wise to heed Reeve's (2009:46) considerable experience and emphatic warning that 'change is loss, and leaders who do believe in the myth of the popularity of change had better start searching for the Change Fairy'.

It is also important to be aware of leadership styles. Goleman (2006:78) notes 'best practices for learning include having teachers, school staff, and leaders all contribute to a positive school environment typified by trust and caring relationships'. Fullan (2007:4) likewise states, it is 'abundantly clear that one of the keys to a successful change is the *improvement of relationships*'. The Hay Group (2000 cited in Goleman 2006:79) highlighted the importance of understanding leadership style in a study that found a leader's personal style strongly affected both the climate of teachers and, in turn, students' academic achievement. In order to understand the potential range of leadership styles, Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee (2004, cited in Goleman 2006:78) identified six leadership styles that are useful to consider (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Leadership Styles (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2004, cited in Goleman 2006:78)

Leadership Style	Description
Visionary	Inspires by articulating a heartfelt, shared goal; routinely gives performance feedback and suggestions for improvement in terms of that call.
Coaching	Takes people aside for a talk to learn their personal aspirations; routinely gives feedback in those terms and stretches assignments to move towards those goals.
Democratic	Knows when to listen and ask for input; gets buy-in and draws on what others know to make better decisions.
Affiliative	Realises that having fun together is not a waste of time, but builds emotional capital and harmony.
Pacesetting	leads by hard-driving example and expects others to meet the same case and high performance standards; tend to give Fs, not As.
Commanding	Gives orders and demands immediate compliance; tends to be coercive.

Each style can be useful in a specific situation, and the more of these leadership styles a school leader can exhibit as needed, the better the achievement scores of the schools they led, Goleman argued. The first four styles help create a positive climate in which people feel energised to do their best. The last two styles tend to

sap motivation but can be useful for certain kinds of followers in certain situations. The best leaders can deploy four or more of these leadership styles as needed; the poorest leaders tend to overuse the last two (Goleman 2006:79).

On a related note, Hoerr (2005:68-78) introduced a concept frowned upon by some in the collaboratively-minded educational arena, and that is how to wield power. In the leadership context, power is the ability to cause others to do what you want them to do, and if leaders lack the power, or fail to use the power they have, chaos ensues (Hoerr 2005:68). An awareness of power bases is helpful for leaders when considering change. Typically a leader will possess more than one type of power and use these powers in combination. The five kinds of power outlined by Hoerr (2005:68-78) are set out in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: The Five Kinds of Power (Hoerr 2005:68-78)

Kind of Power	Description
Reward	Based on an individual's ability to give rewards, either tangible or intangible.
Coercive	The reciprocal of reward power; the power arising from the ability to punish (or to remove a reward).
Legitimate	Power determined by an individual's title and position (positional power).
Referent	Power that an individual has because others esteemed them can identify with them.
Expert	Power based in one's knowledge or expertise.

Hoerr notes:

Expert power is the most important power for school leaders and the one that they can most easily develop. If we are willing to show that we are knowledgeable, not by an edict but by demonstrating what we know, we can earn the trust of our teachers, and they will give us expert power (Hoerr 2005:79).

What leaders do and say is a reflection of their values, and these are being observed by those being led. Meaningful change begins with cultural change, and 'the single

greatest impediment to meaningful cultural change is the gap between what leaders say that they value and what leaders actually value' (Reeves 2009:37).

Reeves (2009:41-59) suggests that it is constructive for change leaders to deconstruct some of the popular myths of change leadership, and offers seven deconstructions to consider which I include here as they are pertinent to the framework (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Popular Myths of Change Leadership (Reeves 2009:41-59)

Myth	Description
#1: plan your way to greatness	Spending time on planning could be inversely related to student achievement if it is not done well.
Myth #2: just a little bit better is good enough	Research shows implementation of change initiatives that were moderate or occasional was no better than implementation that was completely absent. Only deep implementation had the desired effect on student achievement.
Myth #3: we want you to change us... really	Any change will meet resistance.
Myth #4: people love to collaborate	Effective collaboration is not something that people seek or particularly enjoy - at least not in the early stages. To be effective professional collaboration requires time, practice, and accountability. Collaboration requires practice, not merely instruction.
Myth #5: Hierarchy changes systems	Today's principal is widely expected to be both the instructional leader of the school and the administrative manager. The role of the hierarchy in organisational change is typically to communicate the essential message of change.
Myth #6: volume equals VOLUME	Opposition is inevitable and the search for universal buy-in is a chimera, but keep it in perspective. Surveys on change initiatives show 17% of teachers it were willing to lead effort, 53% were willing to model the change efforts, 28% were aware of the change initiative but not yet implemented it (the fence-sitters), the toxic 2% were either defiantly unaware of leadership expectations or actively opposed to them.
Myth #7: the leader is the perfect composite of every trait	The complexities of change leadership require not the perfect composite of every trait, but rather a team that exhibits leadership traits and exercises leadership responsibilities in a way that no individual leader, past or present, possibly could.

To conclude this review of literature dealing with leading change, Fullan, Cuttress & Kilcher (2005:54) give a timely reminder that the history of educational reform is full

of examples of good ideas or policies that are successful in one situation but not in another, and in most cases the reason is due to lack of appreciation and use of change knowledge. They go on to note 'the presence of change knowledge does not guarantee success, but its absence ensures failure' (Fullan, Cuttress & Kilcher 2005:54). Table 2.6 outlines eight 'drivers' of change they propose are keys to create effective and lasting change. These are worthy of note here to provide a frame of reference to the change required in MYP implementation.

Table 2.6: Drivers of Change (Fullan, Cuttress & Kilcher 2005:54)

Drivers	Description
1. Engaging people's moral purposes	The why of change, in education it is about improving society through improving educational systems and thus the learning of all citizens.
2. Building capacity	Increase people's collective power to move the system forward. This involves developing new knowledge, skills, and competencies; new resources (time, ideas, materials); and a new shared identity and motivation to work together for greater change. Capacity must be evident in practice and ongoing. Front-end training is insufficient as it does not translate into improvements in the daily cultures of how people need to work in new ways.
3. Understanding the change process	Making change work requires the energy, ideas, commitment, and ownership of all those implementing improvements. Ownership is something created through a quality change process. Shared vision and ownership are more the outcomes of a quality change process than they are a precondition. The change process is about establishing a condition for continuous improvement.
4. Developing cultures for learning	Involves a set of strategies designed for people to learn from each other (the knowledge dimension) and become collectively committed to improvement (the affective dimension). Successful change involves learning during implementation. There is a necessity for professional learning communities, which can be powerful in helping develop new cultures of learning in order to improve. When schools systems establish cultures of learning, they constantly seek and develop teacher's knowledge and skills required to create effect of new learning experiences for students. Knowledge sharing and collective identity are powerful forces for positive change.
5. Developing cultures of evaluation	To sort out promising from not-so-promising ideas. Assessment for learning incorporates accessing/gathering data on student learning; disaggregating better for more detailed understanding; developing action plans based on the previous two points in order to make improvements; and being able to articulate and discuss performance with parents and external groups.
6. Focus on leadership for change	Learning what kind of leadership is best leading productive change. Leadership, to be effective, must spread throughout the organization.
7. Fostering coherence making	A never ending proposition that involves alignment, connecting the dots, being clear about how the big picture fits together. Above all, coherence making involves investing in capacity building so that cultures of learning and evaluation through the proliferation of leadership can create their own coherence on the ground.
8. Cultivating tri-level development	We're talking about system transformation at three levels - not just about changing individuals but also systems at the school/community level, district level, and state level in. We need to change individuals but also to change contexts. We need to develop better individuals while we simultaneously develop better organisations and systems.

With Marzano's (2003:72) research indicating teacher factors account for nearly double the percentage gain in student achievement compared to school leaders, the leaders need to keep in mind a key aspect of their job is to hire and retain and assist developing the best teachers; and provide ongoing support. Walker (2007:40) highlights this point: 'Of all the qualities that I admire in leaders, the one I think most desirable is their capacity to make consistently high-quality staff appointments'.

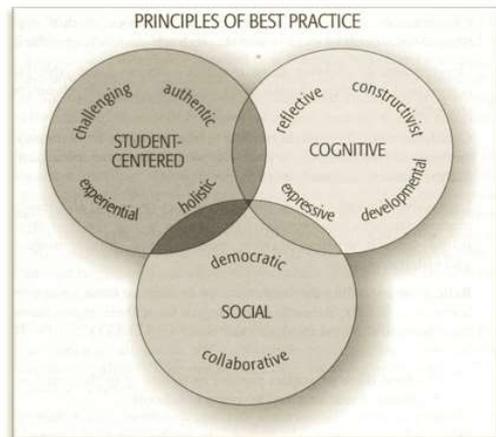
2.4.2 Best Practices in Teaching

The effect of individual teachers on student achievement is well documented. Perhaps the most prominent literature highlighting the importance of good teachers and schools is that provided by a meta analysis carried out by Robert Marzano (2003:72-73), who found: 'on the average, the most effective teachers produce gains of about 53 percentage points in student achievement over one year, whereas the least effective teachers produce achievement gains of about 14 percentage points over one year'. Miller (2003:1) reported that McREL research (carried out by Marzano) found 'school-level [7 percent] and teacher-level [13 percent] factors account for approximately 20 percent of the variance in student achievement. Student characteristics - home environment, learned intelligence/background knowledge, and motivation - account for 80 percent of the variance in student achievement' (see also Marzano 2003:73-74). Thirteen percentage points does not seem so significant when put in this light - yet Marzano (2003:73) goes on to highlight: 'if the effect of attending the class of one of the least effective teachers for a year is not debilitating enough, the cumulative effect can be devastating'. Students with the least effective teachers gained 29 percentage points over three years, when compared to 83 percentage points with the most effective teachers. This difference is shocking, and the potential impact to individual students is sickening. I recall the effects of three years with an ineffective teacher in a core subject in my junior high school years. If it were not for a change in school and consequently having a highly effective teacher, I may very well be in a vastly different field of work now.

So what exactly is it that these effective teachers do to improve student achievement? And more importantly, how do we ensure all teachers learn to be effective? This has been an ongoing struggle as Ellmore (1995:11, cited in Fullan 2007:5) notes, 'we can produce many examples of how educational practices could

look different, but we can produce few, if any, examples of large numbers of teachers engaging in these practices'. The answer is not a simple list either, rather, 'teachers are effective because of how various personal and professional factors combine and are executed in a classroom' (Stronge 2007:136). Personality and style should also be considered, although 'it is important to remember the difference between style and competence' (Guild & Garger 1998:91). Zemelen, Daniels & Hyde (2005:10-21) outline a comprehensive list of 'Indicators of Best Practice' in eight areas, and frame them on 'thirteen interlocking principles' that characterise the principles of best practice, as depicted in Figure 2.3. These indicators are notable as they represent common discourses in education (and the MYP in particular), and serve to highlight the inter-connectedness of the multi-faceted act of learning.

Figure 2.3 Principles of best practice
(Zemelen, Daniels & Hyde 2005:12)



In order to be classed as effective, Marzano (2003:75) suggests mastery of three teacher-level factors: *instructional strategies*, *classroom management*, and *classroom design*, and states mastery in all of these factors will 'certainly render a teacher at least average (and probably well above average)'. These factors provide a comprehensive and useful resource, however, for the purposes of providing a framework of best practices for teachers, I chose to use Strong's (2007:110-114) comprehensive list of 'Teacher Skills', as it presented the qualities and indicators of effective teachers in a useful way for referencing with the findings of my discourse analysis (see Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Teacher Skills (Stronge 2007:110-114)**1. The teacher as a person**

Quality	Indicators
Caring	Exhibits active listening; shows concern for students' emotional and physical well-being; displays interest in and concern about the students' lives outside school; creates a supportive and warm classroom climate
Shows Fairness and Respect	Responds to misbehaviour on an individual level; prevents situations in which a student loses peer respect, treats students equally; creates situations for all students to succeed, shows respect to all students
Interactions with Students	Maintains professional role while being friendly; gives students responsibility, knows students' interests both in and out of school; values what students say; interacts in a fun, playful manner; jokes when appropriate
Enthusiasm	Shows joy for the content material; takes pleasure in teaching; demonstrates involvement in learning activities outside school
Motivation	Maintains high-quality work; returns student work in a timely manner; provides students with meaningful feedback
Dedication to Teaching	Possesses a positive attitude about life and teaching; spends time outside of school to prepare; participates in collegial activities; accepts responsibility for student outcomes; seeks professional development ; finds, implements, and shares new instructional strategies
Dedication to Teaching	Possesses a positive attitude about life and teaching; spends time outside of school to prepare; participates in collegial activities; accepts responsibility for student outcomes; seeks professional development ; finds, implements, and shares new instructional strategies
Reflective Practice	Knows areas of personal strengths and weaknesses; uses reflection to improve teaching; sets high expectations for personal classroom performance; demonstrates high efficacy.

2. Classroom management and organisation

Quality	Indicators
Classroom Management	Uses consistent and proactive discipline; establishes routines for all daily tasks and needs; orchestrates smooth transitions and continuity of classroom momentum; balances variety and challenge in student activities; multitasks; is aware of all activities in the classroom; anticipates potential problems; uses space, proximity, or movement around the classroom for nearness to trouble spots and to encourage attention
Organization	Handles routine tasks promptly, efficiently, and consistently; prepares materials in advance and has them ready to use; organizes classroom space efficiently
Discipline of Students	Interprets and responds to inappropriate behaviour promptly; implements rules of behaviour fairly and consistently; reinforces and reiterates expectations for positive behaviour; uses appropriate disciplinary measures

3. Planning and organisation for instruction

Quality	Indicators
Importance of instruction	Focuses classroom time on teaching and learning; links instruction to students real-life situations
Time allocation	Follows a consistent schedule and maintains procedures and routines; handles administrative tasks quickly and efficiently; prepares materials in advance; maintains momentum within and across lessons; limits disruption and attractions
Teachers expectations	Sets clearly articulated high expectations for self and students; orients the classroom experience toward improvement in gross; stresses student responsibility and accountability
Instruction plans	Carefully links learning objectives and activities; organises content through Effective presentation; explores student understanding by asking questions; considers student attention span and learning styles when designing lessons; develops objectives questions and activities that reflect higher- and lower-level cognitive skills as appropriate for the content and the students

4. Implementing instruction

Quality	Indicators
Instructional Strategies	Employs different techniques and instructional strategies, such as hands-on learning; stresses meaningful conceptualization, emphasizing the students' own knowledge of the worlds; suits instruction to students' achievement levels and needs; uses a variety of grouping strategies
Content and Expectations	Sets overall high expectations for improvement and growth in the classroom; gives clear examples and offers guided practice; stresses student responsibility and accountability in meeting expectations; teaches metacognitive strategies to support reflection on learning progress
Complexity	Is concerned with having students learn and demonstrate understanding of meaning rather than memorization; holds reading as a priority; stresses meaningful conceptualization, emphasizing the students' knowledge of the world; emphasizes higher-order thinking skills in math
Questioning	Asks questions that reflect type of content and goals of the lesson; varies question type to maintain interest and momentum; prepares questions in advance; uses wait time during questioning
Student Engagement	Is attentive to lesson momentum, appropriate questioning, and clarity of explanation; varies instructional strategies, types of assignments, and activities; leads, directs, and paces student activities

5. Monitoring student progress and potential

Quality	Indicators
Homework	Clearly explains homework; relates homework to the content under study and to student capacity; grades, comments on, and discusses homework in class
Monitoring Student Progress	Targets questions to lesson objectives; thinks through likely misconceptions that may occur during instruction and monitors students for these misconceptions; gives clear, specific, and timely feedback; re-teaches students who did not achieve mastery and offers tutoring to students who seek additional help
Responding to Student Needs and Abilities	Monitors and assesses student progress; uses data to make instructional decisions; knows and understands students as individuals in terms of ability, achievement, learning styles, and needs

In addition to the above, it should be noted that Stronge (2007:126-136) also provides separate indicators for effective teachers with regard to professionalism, teaching at-risk students, teaching high-ability students, and subject-specific qualities.

2.4.3 Best Practices for the School Community

Based on extensive research, the 1967 Plowden report in England (cited in Abbott & Ryan 2000:145) concluded that 'parents' attitudes to education were of supreme importance in influencing children's educational success - more so than the parents educational or occupational status, than marital circumstances at home, and than schools themselves'. Since then research has consistently supported this statement. In fact, research has even quantified the importance, by indicating 'student factors' account for a high eighty percentile points of the variance in student achievement (Marzano 2003:73; Miller 2003:1). In light of the research dating back for over forty years then, it is disappointing to realise that while more than a few educators believe in the need for partnership with parents (Abbott & Ryan 2000:145), we are still finding that 'nowhere is the two-way street of learning more in disrepair and in need of social reconstruction than in the relationship among parents, communities, and their schools' (Fullan 2007:190). Perhaps this is overstating the case since there is a well

documented relationship of parents in early childhood education, but this appears to dwindle over time.

While there are factors promoting practical strategies to improve family–school collaboration (for example Nicoll nd-a), and literature discussing issues such as parent and community involvement, and the home environment (for example Marzano 2003:47-59 & 126-132), for the purpose of this literature review in providing a basic framework, it is sufficient to note their importance, and the disconnection between the research and practice in many schools.

Based on the disconnection associated with home-school collaboration, it is not surprising to find high percentages of students are disengaged in learning, and the proportion increases as the students get older (Fullan 2007:177-179). And yet, the link between motivation and student achievement is well established (Marzano 2003:144). It is sufficient to note here the importance of involving students in their own learning and the research-practice disconnect in many schools. On a positive note, the good news is many schools do make successful efforts in these areas.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the research and polemic concerning the MYP literature in order to ‘sketch out the nature of the field’ (Kamler & Thomson 2006:35) and provide a historical background and conceptual understanding of the MYP. Not much research on the MYP is available at time of writing, however, all relevant and accessible studies have been explored to identify what research has already been carried out, in order to position my research and stake a claim to the need for it to fill gaps in the body of knowledge surrounding the discourses studied.

Walker provides a timely reminder that ‘research must make contact with the big issues. ‘However thin the slice we see... we must be able to connect it in our minds to an issue of real significance’ (Walker 2005:11). In order to make a connection to the big issues, this chapter has attempted to lay out a basic conceptual framework of effective schools and best practices to relate to threads in the discourses. The development of such a framework proved difficult as it involved such a broad range of topics that it was not possible to go into them all in detail. At the cost of making the

framework seem a little superficial, topics were limited to those areas most applicable to the research questions, and limited in scope. Emphasis was placed on research question three in particular, as findings to support implementation was one of culminating objectives of the study.

The name “Middle Years Programme” can be misleading to those unfamiliar with the programme, so it is important to note the conceptual framework developed in this chapter was designed to cover best practices and effective school literature over both middle and junior high school grades (typically grades six-ten), as the MYP extends through these grades. This decision was made without intent to diminish the importance of literature dealing specifically with middle schools, rather, it was made in the interest of space, and to ensure an even coverage of literature covering the range of grades in the MYP. An attempt was made to include issues applicable (or at least transferable) to all grade levels. As most international schools contain elementary, middle and high school levels, a more generic framework was deemed to be more useful at least to those schools.

Again, past IB Director-General George Walker (2005:11-13) states his belief in the ‘vital importance of research to the well-being of the organization’ in order for ‘change to keep in step’ with the changing world. For the IB, Walker highlights three related research categories under the broad IB product of international education that deserved studying: ‘the nature and scope of international education; its practical implementation in the classroom; and a particular impact of IB programmes’ (Walker 2005:11). My research focus of discourses is on the latter.

While aspects of my research have been covered in various ways, this study is unique as no research was found that examined benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP using a framework such as the basic effective schools/best practices framework. Discussion in the following chapter outlines the research methodology used to investigate the research questions, which in part, were informed by this literature.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Gibbons et al (1994:1-3) present two modes of knowledge production which highlight the emergence of a 'Mode 2' form of knowledge production, that challenges the adequacy of "Mode 1", a form still practiced in various knowledge producing institutions. These modes of knowledge are useful to consider, as they provide theoretical support for the methodological choices made for this investigation of the research questions arising from the nature of my profession and professional practise.

The *Mode 1* form of knowledge production refers to 'a complex of ideas, methods, values, norms – that has grown up to control the diffusion of the Newtonian model to more and more fields of enquiry and ensure its compliance with what is considered sound scientific practice' (Gibbons et al. 1994:2). This mode is disciplinary, hierarchical and homogeneous, and controlled largely by the academic interests of a specific knowledge community. The *Mode 2* form of knowledge production on the other hand refers to knowledge carried out in a context of application; it is transdisciplinary, heterarchical, transient, socially accountable, and reflective. Flexibility and response time are crucial factors, and this mode increases potential sites of knowledge production, with the linking sites becoming important. These are usually outside the university and in similar contexts, i.e. the workplace (Gibbons et al. 1994:2-4).

It is probable that due to the nature of their underlying goals, it is likely that the research of most part-time professional doctorate candidates falls within Mode 2. While critics may voice concerns with the quality of research in this mode, I would argue that such research, done carefully, could tend more towards a higher quality, or at least toward greater immediacy of impact, as the whole process is more participatory in nature, certainly grounded, and may be peer reviewed amongst participants during the research phases. Perhaps critics' fears stem from the fact that Mode 2 knowledge production displaces the context of knowledge production from the university, and towards the 'context of application' (Gibbons et al. 1994:3).

3.2 Research Questions

The research questions below were derived from my experience and practice as a principal in an IB MYP school, and also from the review of the literature explored above.

1. How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be **beneficial** for student learning?
 - *Study focus: What benefits/drawbacks do practitioners perceive the MYP to have?*
2. How is the MYP being **promoted** in schools?
 - *Study focus: What arguments and rationales are being used to promote the MYP in schools, and what kinds of ideas do these arguments and rationales draw on?*
3. What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when **implementing** the MYP, and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?

While investigating these research questions I chose to focus on the perceptions of practitioners - teachers, MYP coordinators and administrators. This focus led to data being collected from those who had direct experiences teaching and administering the MYP. The assumption informing this decision was it would be more likely that the most significant density of discourse surrounding the implementation and use of the MYP would be found among those tasked with constructing a curriculum from its guidelines, in addition to those tasked with its in-school management and administration. This group can reasonably be identified as a particular discourse community, despite their disparate location. This group thus afforded the opportunity to explore discourses that revealed, if not constructed the: perceived benefits of the MYP; its means of promotion; and factors related to its implementation. A focus upon this discourse community also permitted identification of hegemonic discourses with respect to these issues, and identification of sites of resistances if not critique of the MYP.

3.3 Research Paradigms

There will be no single “conventional” paradigm to which all social scientists might ascribe in some common terms and with mutual understanding. Rather we stand at the threshold of a history marked by multivocality, contested meaning, paradigmatic controversies and new textual forms (Lincoln & Guba 2000:185).

When I first took the Gregorc Style Delineator personality test (Gregorc 2010a) many years ago, I found it difficult to select only one answer on the multi-choice questions as they were largely general questions, to which I felt my answers would be situation-dependant. I was thus sceptical regarding the usefulness of the results. My scepticism concerning the usefulness such tests increased when I re-took the test four years later - with vastly different results! It was only after taking a test designed to measure multiple intelligences (MI) based on Howard Gardner’s (1983) MI theory, that I realised why I found the Gregorc test so unreliable for me. My MI results indicated I had a very even spread of intelligences. Being pushed to choose between the four ‘boxes’ on the Gregorc test only frustrated me, and caused me to consider the results invalid and unhelpful (although I can see how some people could find it helpful in highlighting a distinct personality style). Interestingly, I later discovered Gregorc (2010b) refuses to create a child/youth instrument, or even give permission for anyone to develop one using his copyrighted work due to philosophical, ethical and technical views. In short, he states, ‘Design-wise, some students objected to forced choice responses like yes/no, always/usually/sometimes/rarely/never, most of the time/some of the time, etc.’. While I no longer qualify as a child (or even a youth!), I too object, and while Gregorc affords me the right to think critically as an adult, I have to say I still come to the same conclusion the students did.

In the same way, I found myself reticent to place this research project within in any one research paradigm. Initially I found myself seeking a ‘tolerance across theoretical perspectives and paradigms’, however, upon consideration of Habermas’ proposed approach of looking at a new view of social theory that can bring together different perspectives (Habermas, cited in Kemmis & McTaggart 2000:586), I came to realise this path would be fraught with difficulty. Communication with my supervisor (L. Tamatea 2010, pers. Comm., Aug 30) contributed greatly to my understanding of the following brief expose of Habermas. Habermas advocates a kind of resolution of

competing 'agendas' through the process of dialogue. In this respect Habermas represents a 'modernist' in that conflict and difference is assumed to be best responded to through the achievement of a sort of synthesis or consensus. While this is a laudable ideal, arguably the achievement of a resolution between competing agendas, indeed competing paradigms and theories, requires a degree of power over, if not violence committed to each. The achievement of the 'ideal speech community' is often achieved only through the maintenance of asymmetrical relations of power, both material and discursive, masquerading a consensual dialogue. While notions of hybridity and fusion have become popular, they can obscure what remain as inherent logical inconsistencies between competing claims to truth and thus the epistemological and ontological claims informing its production. This is not to say that an eclectic research methodology is always and fundamentally untenable. Rather it is to highlight that in working within an eclectic terrain, the tensions of dissonance and incompatibility should be acknowledged as opposed to be 'resolved' where resolutions erase significant points of difference.

To help locate this research project within a suitable theoretical framework, I found the model showing relationships among different research traditions and knowledge-constitutive interests put forth by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000:587) to be particularly useful; and I identified my practice as being located within box 5: 'Practice as socially-, historically- and discursively constituted by human agency and social action'. This reflexive-dialectical level of both subjective-objective relations and connections, and individual-social relations and connections is arguably suitable to the conduct of a multi-method investigation such as this, which is nonetheless cognisant of claims to have resolved the sometimes incompatible tensions between competing paradigms and theory. Thus, as I struggled to locate this research project within the one paradigm, I was reassured to find a few authors who promoted the idea of multiple paradigms: 'educational inquiry should be expanded to embrace multiple paradigms of knowledge' (Paul & Marfo 2001:540).

Initially, I considered gathering substantial amounts of quantitative data in order to look for comparative empirical trends that I could use to draw on for support, or to challenge the results from qualitative sources. Upon refining my research questions, however, it became apparent that this would be too ambitious, and the data would be of questionable worth due to the vast differences in the nature and programmes of the schools, and the type of data that could be gathered. Ultimately, this decision was

a practical one rather than emerging from a clash with the theoretical paradigm that I was in. Although the utility of this multi-method approach was of significance in determining the methodology, it also needs to be acknowledged that the construction of a mixed method arose from acknowledging that confining the investigation to one method had the capacity to limit the nature of the findings. In sum, particular methods produce particular kinds of results, and in the process, important aspects of the context under investigation may be silenced. Hence, the use of a multi-method approach was informed by a desire to limit this potential narrowing of research findings. My review of a number of quantitative studies (see Chapter 2 page 46) and their results highlighted this by indicating that the kinds of findings made possible through such modes of investigation had the potential to significantly under-represent the range of contextual dynamics that emerge within, and between, schools and students. Thus, the use of qualitative research methods would enable a fuller set of data to be obtained, and read in relation to, and against, the quantitative data.

Although this research project is multi-method and located within a broadly eclectic paradigm as detailed below, it is mainly *qualitative* in its research orientation. Drawing on much of David Hargreaves' work, Hammersley (2000:394-398), highlighted five specific advantages of qualitative research:

- Appreciative capacity – the ability to understand and represent points of view which are often obscured or neglected;
- Designatory capacity – enables people to think consciously what they have only been half aware of. As much of the knowledge on the basis of which practitioners work is tacit, providing a language that conceptualises this tacit knowledge aids the development of professional knowledge and skills;
- Reflective capacity – the ability to hold a mirror up to the world, allowing us to concentrate on what actually goes on, and not what is generally assumed;
- Immunological capacity – helps provide us with 'immunological understandings' so we can understand the precise nature of the host, and design 'innovatory grafts' with confidence; and
- Corrective capacity – the correction of macro-theoretical perspectives.

Moreover, Freebody (2003:37) lists nine central characteristics of qualitative research, which have facilitated the conduct of this research project, mainly within the

qualitative paradigm. Arguably very relevant to this project they are, as drawn from Freebody, that qualitative research is:

- Inductive and holistic;
- Sensitive to researcher effects;
- Draws on 'natural settings' as the source of data and the researcher is the key instrument of data collection;
- Interested in the subjects' point of view;
- Descriptive;
- Reports all valuable perspectives available;
- Humanistic;
- Interested in the 'inner life of the person' and;
- Has an emphasis on validity, regards to all settings and people as worthy of study, and regards research as a craft.

Using Lincoln and Guba's (2000:170) table of paradigm positions, I was able to locate the research project broadly within the **constructivist** paradigm in terms of its ontology, epistemology and methodology. Had I made use of quantitative data gathering methods alone, as originally intended, the project would have been located within the positivist paradigm. The research questions in a positivist paradigm would have tended to become more focused upon concerns related to 'what' and less so those related to 'how' and 'why' (P. Ninnes, pers. Comm., 25 Apr. 2004), or explanatory factors, causal relations and conditions of possibility. This arguably would have resulted in findings potentially quite different from those outlined in the following chapters; results perhaps more isolated, generic, and less useful to practitioners who are looking for detailed answers and explanations to their school contexts inscribed by fluid and often uncertain social, political and economic relations.

This research project's use of critical discourse analysis (CDA) also locates it within the poststructuralist and broadly constructivist paradigms. Both of these paradigms, and more particularly poststructuralism, have developed within the postmodern line of thought (Zeeman et al. 2002:96). Other authors have used the term "postfoundational" to incorporate postmodernisms, poststructuralisms and postcolonialisms (Mehta & Ninnes 2003:239). Aspects of these paradigms have, however, been criticised (see Mehta & Ninnes 2003). My supervisor (L. Tamatea

2010, pers. Comm., Aug 30) again contributed greatly to my understanding on poststructuralism (as detailed below), a particularly difficult concept to define. Lee and Poyton (2000:58) hold that poststructuralism is dependent on the researcher being able to disclose meaning from 'within' social practices. Where this is the case, it supposes that the researcher can simultaneously use an external perspective to 'identify' and 'communicate' processes that affect discourses and make visible otherwise 'invisible' discourses (Grossberg 1997:50-51; Lee & Poynton 2000:58). This assumption not only rests on the claim that the researcher sees what the researched cannot, but in claiming this capacity it potentially re-establishes the positivist binary between the researcher as the enlightened 'expert' and the researched as being located in a position of relative ignorance. The ability to know that which is within while observing from the outside also blurs and complicates insider-outsider relations. In this research project, I am an insider, and yet to the extent that I am conducting an investigation of the MYP from a position of management informed by relatively elite theoretical frames from the 'academy', I am also an outsider.

Fairclough (1995:17-18) is also critical of aspects of poststructuralism. He argues that its externalised approach can lead the researcher to overlook aspects of discourse as a result of their 'reading' being informed by their particular subjectivity. Neglecting, and indeed not even seeing the existence of alternative truths may result in particular discourses being silenced or represented in ways not intended by their agents. Fairclough (1995:19) further argues that as post-structuralist research uses text and language to gain meaning, it has the capacity to disassociate discourses from the social and historical context in which they were produced; resulting in misrepresentation, or 'other' representations at the very least.

Lee and Poyton (2000:49-50) further maintain that poststructuralism is obliged to take into account that discourses can only be interpreted in relation to other discourses, as discourses are invariably intertwined, influencing and shaping one another. Thus the challenge that this presents, is that it is difficult to include all discourses in circulation at any given time in a particular context, such as that investigated by this research project. With this limitation, it seems inevitable that established meanings will get lost in the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation, while new meanings may be generated by the research process.

Finally Bhabha (1990:122-123) and Belsey (2002:5) warn that the incoherence, slippage, ambivalence and opacity associated with poststructuralism and its analytic language lends itself to the use of abstract jargon for describing texts and contexts. Thus the vocabulary style of post-structuralist discourse has the potential to exclude not only other researchers, but the very public to which it is offered as a solution (Peters 1998:2-3). Arguably the language of Marxism was more effective in this respect, in terms of its modernist construction of precise categories and (proposed) 'resolution' of ontological conflict. While not advocating Marxism, the conduct of this research project's investigation has consequently been guided by an awareness of these limitations.

Nonetheless, the benefits from locating this research project within the above-mentioned paradigm(s) arguably outweigh these limitations. Many of these benefits accrue from the inherent assumptions that underpin poststructuralism and constructivism including:

Poststructuralism

- Comprises a subset of postmodernism and challenges the belief that there is one "meta-narrative" therefore rejecting total explanations for causes and events; and is concerned with relationships among truth, power and knowledge (Mehta & Nannes 2003:238-241);
- Disallows any denominative, unified or 'proper' definition of itself (Zeeman et al (2002:97-99);
- Involves a critique of metaphysics: of the concepts of causality, identity, the subject, of power, knowledge and truth (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Recognises the centrality within social analysis and social practices of discourse and language (Nannes 2004:46);
- Holds that there are no facts, only interpretations (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that meaning is never factual, ultimate or final, but is not necessarily meaningless (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99); and
- Maintains that language and language systems are important to the construction of society, Self, Other and social truth (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99).

Constructivism

- Comprises a subset of postmodernism (as above) (Mehta & Ninnes 2003:238-241);
- Studies how people interact with one another to construct, modify and maintain what their society holds to be true, real and meaningful (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that meanings are produced by process of reflexivity (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that methods want to show how understanding and experiences are derived from larger discourses (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that thoughts, feelings and experiences are products of systems of meaning that exist at a social rather than an individual level (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that interpretations are constructed against a backdrop of shared understandings, practices, language etc. (Schwandt 2000:197; Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that human life-world is fundamentally constituted in language, so language therefore should be the object of study (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99);
- Holds that language is not neutral, rather helps construct reality, and is concerned with broader patterns of social meaning encoded in it (Zeeman et al. 2002:97-99); and
- Maintains that there is no way of experiencing the 'real relations' of a particular society outside of its cultural and ideological categories (Stuart Hall 1997:245, cited by Denzin in Schwandt 2000:197-198).

Both these perspectives are important in the discussion of critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodologies in section 3.5.3 below which outlines research methodologies used in the study.

3.4 Research Design

The design of the research project provides the broad structure for the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

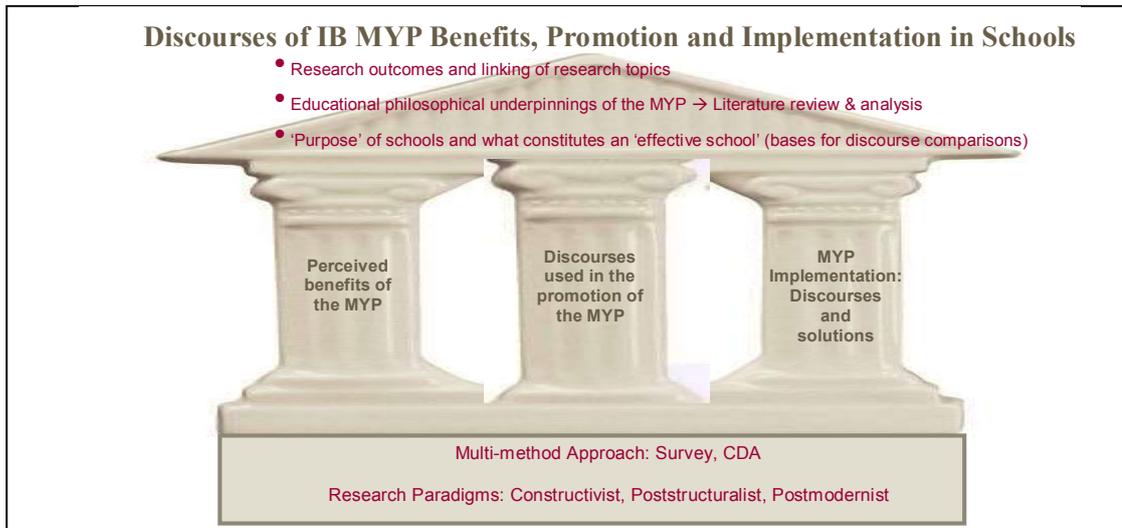
3.4.1 Introduction

This research project is focused upon identifying the discourses surrounding the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) as used by practitioners with regard to benefits, promotion and implementation in schools. As an international school middle and high school principal, I have been involved in implementing the MYP, and have been impressed with the manner the programme draws on research-based educational methods, yet remains flexible to situational needs of individual schools. While the IB Diploma Programme (DP) for Grades 11 and 12 (age 17-18) is a well established college preparation programme (introduced in 1968), the MYP has been the recipient of only limited research. In light of the philosophy of the 'New EdD at UNE' UNE' (Maxwell 2003:288, 2004:19), I make use of my professional experience and workplace knowledge, while combining the academic rigours of the Advanced Research Methods course as depicted in the hybrid curriculum model proposed by Lee, Green and Brennan (2000:127; Maxwell 2003:285) to carry out this investigation. Within this project's design, I have utilised a multi-method approach to analyse these diverse aspects of the programme. This research project's planning and methodologies are detailed below.

3.4.2 Research Planning

The research questions were used as foci to help locate my research in the most appropriate paradigm, and choose the methodologies which would enable me to best answer these questions. It is acknowledged, however, that this comprised a two-way process in which reflection upon the paradigm informed the generation of the research questions, in much the same way as the theory informed the data, and data also informed the social theory, as will be detailed in following chapters. As I originally intended to present my research using a portfolio, I used a portfolio planner to facilitate the planning of the research, and periodically reviewed and updated this as the investigation progressed. Using the 'Greek temple' metaphor (Maxwell & Kupczyk-Romanczuk 2009), a summary of my original **research plan** is depicted in Diagram 3.1 below, and is useful to highlight the origins of the research.

Diagram 3.1 Original research summary illustrated in the 'Greek temple' metaphor, (as depicted by Maxwell & Kupczyk-Romanczuk 2009)



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For the research planning phase, I used a comprehensive **research design table** adapted from Stringer's (2004:11) Action Research Sequence table as a base for summarising the steps required for rigorous research planning (see appendix viii for my research design table).

Using Patton's (2002:13, 254) 'Guiding Questions and Options for Methods Decisions' and 'Design Issues and Options', I analysed my research design table in order to confirm all required areas were covered. This was a valuable process, as while Stringer's sequence was very comprehensive, Patton approached the same issues in a different way, and used a different angle when presenting points. This helped me to consider different aspects of similar issues, an important skill for the 'reflective practitioner' as described by Schön (1987).

After I had already designed and started using this table I was introduced to the **Research Management Matrix** (Smyth & Maxwell 2008), however, as I had already employed the research design table, I decided to continue using it as it was serving its purpose well. As with Patton's guiding questions above, the matrix was useful as a check to ensure coverage of necessary areas.

In addition, the following procedural tools were employed:

- a) During residential study periods and school holiday breaks when I was spending extended period of time dedicated solely to my research, I made use of a **Time Management Matrix**, adapted from Covey's (1989:151), '7 habits of highly effective people', with my timeline listed underneath a detailed time management matrix to assist maintaining a focus on priorities; and
- b) In order to ensure cohesive planning and record keeping of what I coded and analysed, I also kept a **Data Analysis Log** as a memo document within NVivo; as well as making use of a notebook for recording quotes, ideas and thoughts when away from a computer.

3.5. Research Methodology

Surveys of two kinds were central to the data collection process in this qualitative research; interviews followed by questionnaire.

3.5.1 Introduction

Surveys were chosen as the most efficient method of eliciting data that could be used to find answers to my research questions on school stakeholder's perceptions of the MYP. Interviews with two experienced practitioners were transcribed to provide textual data for analysis and inform the questionnaire design. An online questionnaire was distributed to practitioners around the world and results collated and downloaded for analysis.

3.5.2 Surveys

'Conducting a survey generally means collecting data from a **sample** drawn from a **population** of interest that is too large to directly observe' (Scott 2004:47).

There are many different tools used in different kinds of surveys, but there are two basic categories:

- Interviews: face-to-face, telephone, self-administered, computer-assisted, internet (Stringer 2004:87); in-depth (Minichiello et al. 2004a); focus groups (St John 2004); and
- Questionnaires: structured, unstructured (Marino 2004:2); close-ended, open-ended (de Vaus 2004:354).

Which survey tool one may choose for any particular research setting will depend on what type of data is desired, and in what form. Three main types of survey use are: descriptive (used to gather information about the characteristics of a population), exploratory (to explore a topic), and analytic (used to explore causal relationships between aspects of interest) (Scott 2004:47).

Upon analysing which types of survey I should use to answer my research questions, I realised I would need to gather data for all three types so as to answer my three research questions; thus requiring a variety of data. In order to elicit practitioners' perceptions of the issues in my research, I chose the following survey techniques:

- a) *Face-to-face interviews* of practitioners - to obtain data that would give me background data on my focus research areas, as well as data to inform the design of the questionnaire;
- b) *Questionnaire* - sent to MYP practitioners around the world

A *focus group* and/or *in-depth interviews* were considered as potential tools for follow-up after the questionnaire data was analysed if it was deemed necessary. While these tools would have been useful for clarifying and expanding on the questionnaire data, as well as contributing to triangulation or 'crystallization' (Richardson 2000:934), time constraints were too great in the end. Additionally, during the research collecting and analysis phases, I maintained dialogue with various MYP practitioners in various professional forums (such as IB conferences, evaluation visits, etc.). This provided valuable background information and an extended dialogue which was a good, albeit informal, substitute for the more structured focus group.

This use of interviews and questionnaires, backed up with ongoing dialogue with MYP practitioners provided me access to the discourses I was seeking in order to answer my research questions.

3.5.2.1 Interviews

As this research project is informed by critical discourse analysis, interviews were a useful method of collecting data:

It has become increasingly common in qualitative studies to view the interview as a form of discourse between two or more speakers or as a linguistic event in which the meanings of questions and responses are contextually grounded and jointly constructed by interviewer and respondent (Schwandt 1997:79 cited in Fontana & Frey 2000:663).

A quick review of the literature reveals many different styles of interviewing. Patton (2002:342-349) identifies four varieties of interviewing which show a continuum of open-ended to close-ended styles:

- a) The informal conversation interview (unstructured and flexible);
- b) The general interview guide approach (lists questions to be explored, same line of inquiry used with each participant, free inquiry but focused);
- c) The standardized open-ended interview (carefully worded questions, structured in the same way for each participant); and
- d) Closed, fixed-response interview (questions pre-determined, and respondent chooses from fixed responses).

I chose the standardized open-ended interview style as it provided me the structure to collect participant perceptions on topical areas in a form that could be used to inform my questionnaire design; as well as provide additional text for the CDA.

In addition to the time, effort and impracticalities involved with interviewing, Sagor (1992:41-45) cautions researchers to consider the following issues when interviewing:

- a) Confidentiality/anonymity - how to use data, how to protect sources. Sagor notes here an aspect I have observed with in-school surveys, and that is the downside to promoting honest feedback through anonymous surveys is the higher likelihood of irresponsible unaccountable 'cheap shots'. In my research, I found the 'cheap shots' actually provided some interesting and useful viewpoints to critique;
- b) Disaggregation – total up and analyse responses based on the sub-populations from which they were derived. This was an effective technique for analysing the discourses in my data;
- c) Reporting back – participants often want something in return, and you need to protect your future credibility by delivering. Upon completion of the study, I will write up an executive summary of my research and send it to participants who indicated they were interested in receiving them; as well as writing articles based on the research to share with a wider audience;
- d) Capturing the data – I purchased a digital recording device to help accurate transcription of interviews; and
- e) Triangulation – compensates for mistakes, increases confidence in results, and can help raise follow up questions.

As one purpose of my initial interviews was to obtain data to help inform the questionnaire design, I used a general interview guide approach, as this provided a general structure yet allowed participants to volunteer information that could shed light on aspects I had not considered. The types of questions asked were based on Patton's (2002:348-351) useful list:

- a) Experience and behaviour questions;
- b) Opinion and values questions;
- c) Feeling questions;
- d) Knowledge questions;
- e) Sensory questions; and
- f) Background/demographic questions.

When designing the questions for the interview, I considered each question carefully and attempted to ask questions in the most appropriate way, so as to ensure the best answers possible. In addition to the list above, I made use of probes, or follow up questions, to 'deepen the response to a question, increase the richness and depth of

responses, and give cues to the interviewee about the level of response that is desired' (Patton 2002:372). As a pilot for my survey, I went over the questions with a colleague and shared them with my supervisor for input.

While considering the benefits of interviewing, I found it interesting to discover some very strong warnings about its use. Patton (2002:340) cautions 'the very popularity of interviewing may be its undoing as an inquiry method', as 'so much interviewing is being done so badly that its credibility may be undermined'. Fontana and Frey (2000:646-647) support this view, suggesting the reliance on interview and the inherent faith in the results have led to growing concerns with the traditional assumptions of the interview. Silverman adds his criticism of the use of interviews:

Here we see a stubbornly persistent romantic impulse in contemporary sociology; the elevation of the experiential as the authentic – the selfsame gambit that can make the TV talk-show or news interview so appealing (Silverman 2000:823).

When one considers the abundance of interviews in various forms in so many areas of our society; such as job interviews, media interviews and so on; I think it wise to heed this caution. Heeding this caution, I made efforts to prepare my interviews well to ensure they were credible, as the quality of the interview data is largely dependent on the interviewer (Patton 2002:340-341). Researchers should always ask themselves: 'Do interview data really help in addressing your research topic?' (Silverman 2000:825).

Further to this, the importance of keeping exemplary transcripts in interviews is highlighted by the following quote from a book review criticising an author's comparison of readers' interpretive work with texts of the interpretive work originally done by an ethnographer:

So, reading becomes ethnography once, or even twice, removed. If the researchers' experiences in the field are textualized (once removed) and then later read by a reader, the event is now twice removed (King 2004:748).

This perception of experiences 'twice removed' can be minimized by rich interview data, analysed and reported by the researcher in ways that clearly identify participant's contributions in a clear manner.

It was also interesting to note being an insider researcher allowed me to follow new trends in interviewing, that is, where interviewers are increasingly seen as active participants in interaction with respondents (Fontana & Frey 2000:663).

As planned, I invited two experienced MYP coordinators to a face-to-face interview at a regional IB conference. Participants were selected based on extensive experience with MYP teaching and implementation; and the interviews were approximately 45 minutes each. The interviews were then transcribed and the data analysed for areas to be considered for the questionnaire; and then imported into NVivo for later use with the CDA on data derived from the questionnaire.

Upon reflection, I acknowledge the framing of one question on drawbacks in the interview was leading, as the assumption there were drawbacks is inherent to the question: "*What are the main drawbacks of the MYP?*". A more open ended "*Are there any drawbacks?*" would have been more appropriate, however, as in practice there is an overt acceptance that there are in fact drawbacks, no bias resulted in this case.

The Human Ethics Committee approval for the research is discussed further in section 3.7.6 (page 116) below, and the letter of approval located in Appendix i (page 238). The letter inviting participants to interview is located in Appendix ii (page 239), and the interview questions are located in Appendix iii (page 241).

3.5.2.2 Questionnaires

de Vaus (2004:376) lists four main methods of administering questionnaires: face-to-face, telephone, self-administered mail and self-administered internet. Each method has different advantages and disadvantages, covering areas including response rates, representative samples, effects on questionnaire design, quality of answers and implementing the survey (de Vaus 2004:377). Upon considering the advantages and disadvantages of each method as it would relate to my situation, I decided the

self-administered internet method would be most beneficial to my research plans since MYP practitioners were spread across the world and most probably have access to the internet. I designed a web-based questionnaire using SurveyMonkey.com, so all respondents needed to do was to click on an e-mailed link to access the questionnaire. This method enabled me to get the questionnaire to potential respondents all over the world in a convenient and inexpensive way. The use of an electronic questionnaire also enabled me to route respondents through questions depending on their position, and it assisted greatly with the collation of the resulting data.

The advantages of questionnaires include the ability to acquire information from large groups of participants within a limited time frame (Stringer 2004:87), the low costs involved, relative ease of design, uniformity of data and the facilitation of the data for analysis (Marino 2004:2). Some disadvantages include the nature of information that can be obtained, the difficulty of obtaining responses from those surveyed (Stringer 2004:87), incomplete data, difficulty for follow up, time-consuming (interviews), and proneness to recall bias (Marino 2004:2).

In terms of questionnaire design, the type of questions are important, as is the wording, the number of questions, and the order of questions (Marino 2004:2). As my purpose was to gather rich textual data for a critical discourse analysis, I asked a variety of specific questions, and attempted to make it as easy as possible to encourage responses; as well a variety of open ended questions to elicit responses with the desired detail. I was satisfied with number of responses received, and was pleased they contained a good range of brief and detailed answers, which were valuable to the discourse analysis.

Piloting of the online questionnaire was undertaken by a colleague and I after my supervisors had given feedback on the content and structure, in order to test it for functionality and to eliminate any technological problems participants might encounter. I received three reports of technical glitches, but none were to do with the design; two seemed to be server filtering issues (unresolved), and one involved a problem with the user leaving the survey and returning to it at a later date (this issue was resolved).

'The purpose of sampling in qualitative research is to select the most appropriate group or situation for the phenomenon we wish to study' (Llewellyn, Sullivan & Minichiello 2004:211). As I was interested in perceptions from school stakeholders, I decided to focus on practitioners – namely teachers, coordinators and administrators. Taylor and Bogdan (1998:93) advise it is difficult to know how many people you need to interview prior to conducting research, so the size of the sample is something that should be determined toward the end of the research. In general, however, the greater the number of interviews with each participant, the fewer informants you will need, to have enough data (Taylor, S.J. & Bogdan 1998:93). Freebody (2003:78) describes three different approaches to selecting participants:

- a) Expedient selection – participants are available and appropriate;
- b) Purposeful selection – participants selected for representation of interest groups; and
- c) Probability selection - participants selected on basis of knowledge of population (may be random, or randomly selected in proportion to a representative group within the sample population.

As there were limited numbers of authorised MYP schools, I chose the expedient selection method, and included all English-speaking MYP authorised schools in my sample for the questionnaire. This ensured an informed base of respondents from a variety of different types of schools around the world. Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent to coordinators in 247 schools around the world with a request to forward the invitation to all MYP practitioners within their school, and the survey was left open for a three month period to give ample time for all who were willing to, to complete it. This is a version of the snowball sampling strategy as outlined by Minichiello et al. (2004a:195), where individuals are asked to identify other individuals who meet the sampling criteria, for inclusion in the sample. In this case, it was most effective to request the originally identified individuals to forward the invitation rather than have them report contact details back to me. One disadvantage of this method is it results in questionable representativeness (Minichiello et al. 2004a:196). As I was attempting to get as many responses from a specific limited-number subset of "MYP practitioners", this was not an issue. I also had no control over the sample number, and as I had no way of determining how many individuals the questionnaire was eventually sent to, I cannot reliably estimate the response rate. Due to the limited number of schools and practitioners and as I

was using electronic means to efficiently collect the data, the lack of control over sample numbers was not a concern as I could use as many responses as I could attract. The lack of being able to determine an actual response rate was a disadvantage I just had to accept as a necessary side product of this method of sampling.

There were 122 respondents, giving an **apparent response rate** of 49.4% if only the MYP coordinators directly contacted responded. Using Babbie's (2004:261) rule of thumb for return rates, this response rate would be adequate for analysis and reporting. It is conceivable to expect a reasonable number of coordinators did forward the questionnaire invitation as requested, however, so the actual response rate was likely to be significantly less than the apparent rate of 49.4%. Babbie (2004:261) notes: 'A demonstrated lack of response bias is far more important than a high response rate'. As much of the questionnaire data sought was rich textual data to be used for critical discourse analysis, I agreed with Babbie, so planned more for quality in responses rather than a high number of responses. In the end, I was satisfied with the amount of data collected from 122 responses, as it provided a good amount of textual data and sufficient quantitative data to analyse and use to answer the research questions.

In order to establish the validity of the responses, the roles and experiences of the respondents are noted below (refer to Appendix vii, page 252 for statistical questionnaire data results):

- 54.9% of the total respondents were teachers, 49.2% MYP coordinators and 12.3% administrators (some have dual roles so percentages do not total 100%). 9% listed 'other', so include practitioners working outside of schools in educational support institutions for example, or MYP practitioners in non-teaching roles in schools;
- 51.2 % of total respondents had over 5 years of experience teaching and/or administering the MYP, 24% had 3-5 years, 14% 1-2 years, and 10.7% less than a year;
- 86.9% of total respondents had attended formal training on the MYP;

- 95.1% of total respondents worked in authorised MYP schools. 66.4% of respondent's schools also had DP authorisation, and 58.8% also had PYP authorisation. 3.3% worked in schools which were not IB World schools; and
- 46.7 % of respondents had worked for over 5 years at their current school. 33.6% had worked there for 3-5 years, 13.9% for 1-2 years and 4.1% for less than a year. 1.6% did not work in schools.

This profile indicates that the majority of respondents have relatively high levels of experience with the MYP and other IB programmes, in both training and working in MYP schools. In hindsight, I recognised it would have been interesting to include and explore other profile variables such as total years experience and gender, however, at the time of design, the concern was that the questionnaire was already long, so the profile questions were limited.

In order to boost the response rate and in an attempt to assist distribution of the survey, I registered my research with the IB Research Unit, located at University of Bath, and agreed to provide the IB with the results of my research and follow the ethical standards for IBO supported Research Projects. While the IB could not help provide contact data due to privacy of data restrictions, I was very grateful to be given an endorsement letter from the Deputy Director General of the IB, Dr. Ian Hill (see appendix vi, page 251) which I included as a link in my invitation. I think this letter was extremely beneficial in contributing to participants deciding to do the survey.

Responses to open ended questions on perceptions were asked in sections one and two; with levels of agreement/disagreement to commonly stated benefits and drawbacks sought in section three of the questionnaire (the questionnaire questions are located in appendix v, page 245). The questionnaire was designed in this order so as to ensure the respondent's perceptions were recorded before they saw the commonly stated benefits, which could have subsequently biased responses to their answers regarding their perceptions of the MYP. In addition, respondents were prevented from returning to section one or two after moving to section three, in order preserve the integrity of their responses.

In order to obtain measurable levels of perceptions surrounding the MYP, section three of the questionnaire included a list of commonly stated benefits and drawbacks supporting and criticising aspects of the MYP. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to the statements using a Likert scale of: very beneficial, beneficial, minor effects either way, disadvantageous, very disadvantageous; and not applicable. This approach can measure direction, intensity, and extremity of attitudes (Minichiello et al 2004:357). This foray into the use of quantitative data, even though only at a basic level, raises the question of appropriateness considering the research paradigm was identified as poststructuralist and broadly constructivist in section 3.3 (page 78) above. The reason for inclusion was the usefulness of using this small amount of quantitative data to identify the intensity of participant perceptions was considered critical. I think use of quantitative data in a largely qualitative study such as this is one example of the “paradigmatic controversies” likely to appear in research as suggested by Guba and Lincoln (2000:185). The analysis of the data from section three of the questionnaire involved discussions on simple percentage comparisons to give an indication of strengths of perceptions as a background to discussions on the textual data CDA. No further statistical analysis on the quantitative data was undertaken as it was not considered necessary for the purpose of this study.

The length of the questionnaire was a factor mentioned by a few participants providing feedback, and the understandable fact that yet another educational survey does not rank high on the priority list of practitioners in schools, so not taking time to give perfectly crafted sentences has to be understood in that context. Being an online survey may have also contributed to the spelling errors as it was uncommon at the time of data collection for browsers to have inbuilt spell-checkers. Language could have been an additional factor with regard to incomplete sentences and grammatical errors. The typical multinational make-up of international schools suggests that a significant number of contributors were likely to be non-native speakers of English.

3.5.3 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

As signalled in the discussion above, critical discourse analysis refers to an interdisciplinary family of methodologies and approaches to the study of language and texts (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 1997:5; Luke 1999:165), and is considered

'one of the most influential approaches to discourse analysis in applied social science' (Walter 2006:141). It is generally agreed CDA should not be understood as a single method but rather as an approach (Meyer 2001:14). Fairclough (2001:121) goes so far as to say that CDA is as much a theory as a method, and that it is best used in transdisciplinary dialogue with other disciplines, theories and forms of research (Fairclough forthcoming:2). With this in mind, I used a hybrid form utilising aspects of various CDA theories and methodological approaches in order to provide me with an analysis that would shed light on my specific research questions. Accordingly, the reader should not attempt to pigeon-hole the applied theory/methodology used to any one style of CDA, or look for all aspects typically associated with CDA. Rather, it is my intent that the originating CDA styles (as detailed below) will be identifiable within the hybrid form utilised, and the reasoning behind the choices understood.

In order to explain what CDA is, it is necessary to define a few key terms:

The word '*discourse*' is used in discourse analysis to describe 'patterns in the ways that phenomena are portrayed via words in talk or text (written language)' (Axford et al. 2004:484), and are a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts (Wodak 2001a:66). Put simply, CDA refers to discourse as a 'dense fabric of spoken, written and symbolic texts' (Luke 1999:163-164).

The term '*text*' is generally used in discourse analysis in a broad manner, incorporating any written or visual material (Axford et al. 2004:484). Luke (1999:168) states more explicitly the principal unit of analysis for CDA is the text, where text is taken to be social actions, and meaningful and coherent instances of spoken and written language use. Georgakopoulou & Goutsos define text more holistically, including the concept of language units to provide context to a 'text':

If we observe language in use, we will find that linguistic communication is not achieved by individual units of language such as sounds, words or sentences. People primarily and essentially communicate through combinations of these language units, which themselves constitute distinct units of expression. We call these combinations of language units texts; we can, therefore, say that people when using language, communicate through texts (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 1997:1).

The term '*critical*' can be traced to the influence of the Frankfurt school and Jürgen Habermas (Thompson 1988 cited in Wodak 2001b:2), but has come to refer to the practical linking of 'social and political engagement' with a 'sociologically informed construction of society' (Krings et al. quoted in Wodak 2001b:2). Fairclough (1985 cited in Wodak 2001b:2) simplifies this by explaining "critique" is essentially making visible the interconnectedness of things', while Hammersley (1997:238) notes adding 'critical' to 'discourse analysis' implies at its simplest, an abandonment of any restraint on evaluation of the texts and contexts that are studied. Finally, Popkewitz and Brennan (1998a:4) add power to their definition, stating '*critical* refers to a broad band of disciplined questioning of the ways in which power works through discursive practices and performances'.

Upon review of the literature, it becomes obvious that CDA covers a wide range of views and analytical practices (see Meyer 2001:14-31 for an overview of a number of alternative views). It does, however, consist of a broad enough consensus in terms of philosophy and focus of practice to qualify as a distinct research tradition, despite differences within the field (Fairclough & Wodak 1997, cited in Fairclough forthcoming:2).

Other definitions located in the literature include the fundamental agreement that discourses are invested with power and knowledge (Luke 1999:167; MacLure 2003:178; Popkewitz & Brennan 1998a:16; Wodak 2001b:2, 11), and the concepts of power, history and ideology figure indispensably in all CDA (Wodak 2001b:3). Drawing from poststructuralist theory (Luke 1999:161; MacLure 2003:174-175), CDA has a history of development from Critical Linguistics (CL) in the 1970s, later to be termed CDA in the 1990s (Wodak 2001b:1,5) and assumes language use should be studied in a social context (Hammersley, Martyn 1997:12). CDA is considered a branch of discourse analysis, focusing on social and political issues related to texts and text production, and the assumptions and ideological complexes informing it (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 1997:10). MacLure (2003:174) identifies two broad theoretical orientations of CDA: Discourse within poststructuralism (European tradition) and linguistic discourse analysis (Anglo-American tradition). CDA is also considered a political act (Hammersley, Martyn 1997:12); has emancipatory goals which aims to make transparent the discursive aspects of societal disparities and inequalities (Meyer 2001:31); and focuses on social problems, and especially on the

role of discourse in the production and reproduction of power abuse or domination (van Dijk 2001:96,113).

Fairclough and Wodak (1997 cited in Scollon 2001:141) put forward an eight-point list of features of CDA: CDA addresses social problems; power relations are discursive; discourse constitutes society and culture; discourse does ideological work; discourse is historical; the link between text and society is mediated; discourse analysis is interpretative and mediated; and discourse is a form of social action. Scollon (2001:141) further notes not all contributors to CDA would take up each and all of these points, and may wish to add others. Fairclough also articulates a three-dimensional analytical framework for studying discourse, where CDA is viewed as integrating (a) analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, (b) analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, consumption and distribution), and (c) sociocultural analysis of discursive events as a whole (Fairclough 1995:23; Luke 1999:167; Wikipedia 2005).

The definitions above highlight the diversity of CDA and make it difficult to identify with a single definition of CDA, though a useful definition in terms of the aim of this research project is offered by Luke:

Critical discourse analysis is a contemporary approach to the study of language and discourses in social institutions. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse theory and critical linguistics, it focuses on how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools and classrooms (Luke 1999:161).

The interdependent power/knowledge discourses (Foucault 1980, cited in MacLure 2003:177) are helpful to construct meaning in the different social situations they occur. As power often introduces bipolar material and representational dichotomies, we can study these discourse to understand constructed 'realities'. This dualism or binary opposition (MacLure 2003:179) can lead us to understand how with power comes resistance, yet with emancipation, involvement and increased acceptance towards change.

Discourses also make available subject-positions from within which individuals and

groups can identify and read the world (Luke 1997:17). This is the discursive constitution of subjectivity which addresses and shapes the individual's mind, body and emotions (Weedon 1999:108-109). As Weedon (1999) argues, subjectivity is the site of the consensual regulation of individuals as a result of the identification by the individual with particular subject positions. In this respect, discourse has a formative effect upon identity and thus us research participants might read the world and respond to the MYP (Connolly 1998:16), particularly as they provide the continuously repeated frameworks in which identity is realised. The relationship is not, however, determinist. Subject-positions provided by particular discourses can be resisted and contested, as demonstrated below. But the alternative positions which are taken up, are not necessarily pre-existing or naturally occurring expressions of an individual's identity. Rather they are the result of the individual's participation and investment in other discourses (Weedon 1999:108-109). Thus it is useful to acknowledge that where resistance to the MYP is expressed, it is likely to be expressed through a reasonably coherent set of shared discourses.

As a research methodology, CDA provides a powerful set of conceptual and methodological tools with which to gain new insights into areas such as contexts of education, educational policy, and issues of difference (Ninnes 2004:43). Literature reveals critical discourse analysts have achieved 'considerable success in showing how the discursive "fabrication" of identities and realities works through the textual fabric itself – that is the "stuff" of everyday talk, reading and writing' (MacLure 2003:186).

MacLure (2003:4) notes 'we are in a very different world, then, from that proposed by common sense or scientific reason, where language rarely reflects, or corresponds to, a pre-existing reality'. Rather, language as discourse actively constructs social reality:

The move towards discourse analytic approaches to education thus begins from the assumption that many of these challenges can **only** be addressed by a focus on how language discourse, and text figure in educational processes, practices, and outcomes (Luke 1999:162, my emphasis).

The decision to use CDA as my key data analysis strategy has arguably enabled this research project to provide a comprehensive exposé of why (and how) the MYP is perceived to be beneficial; promoted; and implemented. In other words, the use of

CDA allowed me to unpack how discourses define, describe, and delimit, so as to construct the “truth” about the MYP in terms of benefits, implementation and promotion (L. Tamatea 2005, pers. Comm., May 16).

The data gathered through the questionnaire and interviews were analysed using the CDA methodology described below, and as CDA is a reflexive process, I was able to generate an insight into the ‘meanings’ and ‘perceived truths’ of the practitioners. Arguably, and as will be shown in the chapters that follow, this approach has provided a unique outlook on the issues under investigation, and has resulted in potentially more ‘transferable’ research outcomes than if the findings were gain by the use of positivist methods alone. It is crucial, however, to remember that my findings are based on my interpretations of others’ discourses; and readers will similarly construct their own interpretations:

Subjects never merely mirror the discourses and practices through which they take up their lives. There will always be a potential tension between the discourses and practices available and the subjects’ interpretation and use of them. The tension results in infinite variations in the individual realization of these discourses (Sondergaard 2002:199).

CDA Methodology

Drawing on a variety of CDA methodologies used by Fairclough (1995:98); Meyer (2001:28), Jager (2001:52-56), Wodak & Meyer (Wodak & Meyer 2001:93), Janks (1997:329-335), Tamatea (pers. com., May 22, 2005) and Halliday (1985), I developed the following methodology to facilitate investigation of my research questions. Due to the eclectic nature of this methodology, some areas over-lap, and others are not universally applicable. The methodology is grounded in following practices:

1. Select topic for analysis, define a focus, and establish a material base

Through attention to the process of definition, description and delimitation (saying what is not included), the practice of CDA can show how the ‘truth’ is socially constructed (i.e. ‘truth’ is constructed, produced and reproduced by discourses surrounding the MYP). Thus the data texts were explored in terms of how the

functions of definition, description and delimitation coalesced to construct the truth about the MYP (benefits, promotion, and implementation). While the analysis can be broadly defined as one which identifies both support for and resistance to the MYP, these discursively elaborated positions were identified through attention to how the participants defined the MYP; how they described it and how they delimited it – which are all active strategies for the construction of truth through process of inclusion and exclusion. For example the discursive tactic of delimitation identifies its object through the erection of boundaries grounded in enunciation of absence. That is, an object of truth is created through the enunciation of what it is not.

2. Structural analysis

Structural analysis involved identifying the presence of interdiscursivity within and among the participant discourse using Fairclough's *Dimensions of discourse analysis* three-dimensional analytic framework as an broad guide (Fairclough 1995:133). It also involved looking for patterns to hypothesise about discourses at work (and the confirming or otherwise of these hypotheses), and subsequently developing questions that needed answering with regard to social relations produced by the text. Questions concerned:

- Voice: who speaks for whom?
- Power relationships: who has the power to represent who?
- Implicit assumptions about the world which are just presented in a taken-for-granted way
- Truisms: how does the text lead the reader to a particular reading position before unloading a key claim?
- Does the text have a view of time? Does it claim history for itself? Whose notion of time is silenced and or voiced?
- Is the text framed by modernist assumptions about the world, such as those identified above in the brief review of Habermas?
- How are key themes in the text stitched together? Does the text present key concepts in an entirely unproblematic way?
- Whose interests may be served by representing education in such a way?

These are all concerns inherently related to representation. Through discourse the strategies associated with these kinds of concerns function to both deploy and

construct knowledge intended to achieve the status of 'truth'. Through attention to these concerns and associated strategies, the analysis was able to also reflect upon the relationship between power and knowledge.

3. Fine analysis of specific sections of text

The fine analysis involved a focus on ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings broadly guided by Halliday's *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Halliday 1985). Janks (1997:329) provides a useful summary of Halliday's work which was used to draw on for this section of analysis. Fine analysis is attuned to the grammatical properties of the participants' discourse, or what might be considered the micro properties of the texts, as opposed to the generally Foucauldian macro focused approach identified in the structural analysis mentioned above. Within in this micro focus, the analysis explored the data for significant use of:

- Lexicalisation (the process of making a word to express a concept);
- Patterns of transitivity;
- The use of active and passive voice;
- The use of nominalisation;
- Choices of mood;
- Choices of modality or polarity;
- The thematic structure of the text; and
- The information focus; and cohesion devices.

Overall, this eclectic hybrid form of CDA provided the methodology to explore the text for possible answers to inform answers to the research questions. NVivo was used as described in the section 3.5.4 below to analyse the corpus of textual data, the results of which are discussed in the 'evidence' chapters (Chapters 4-6). The kind of data that my CDA was expected to yield is revealed within this section.

3.5.4 Data Gathering and Analysis

I used NVivo to carry out the CDA as it is designed to 'assist researchers to organise and analyse [large and] complex qualitative data' (QSR International 2004:online). NVivo is a software program allows a researcher to:

import and code textual data, edit the text without affecting the coding; retrieve, review and recode coded data; search for combinations of words in the text or patterns in your coding; and import data from and export data to quantitative analysis software (QSR International 2004:online).

Stringer (2004:114) notes computer programmes such as NVivo (and others) aid in the process of 'unitizing' the data, but warns programmes only provide data storage, managing and searching, and cannot engage in analytic processes such as identifying meaning or formulating categories. I found NVivo to be a very useful tool to help analyse my data. In addition to the ability to analyse, I was also interested in the ability of NVivo to model relationships and patterns which I expected to find in my study (Bazeley & Richards 2000:69). I discussed the use of NVivo with colleagues before deciding to use it, and the only criticism I received was the time it took to learn how to use the programme. As I have used computers extensively in my profession and have taught computer skills classes at middle and high school levels, I find it easy to adapt to new programmes, so this did concern me at the time.

My concern was more to do with choosing the best method – Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access, and/or Microsoft Word; manual coding and comparisons; or NVivo. After completing my analysis using NVivo (in combination with Microsoft Word and Excel for data manipulation and storage), I was surprised to discover NVivo was a particularly difficult programme to learn how to use. Part of this was the need to learn how to use the programme itself, as while the interface was similar to others I had used, the terminology and functions were distinctively different. This was made more difficult in that I ended up analysing my data over a period of three years, so I found it difficult to build up my familiarity with the programme. This was also negatively impacted by initial difficulties in importing the data in the form I desired. This problem was most likely a programming bug and ultimately resolved itself, as when I returned to the task with a new version of the software, it worked the way it was supposed to in the first place.

Data from the interviews and questionnaire were imported into NVivo in a way that allowed me to create cases and set attributes. To do this, I selected demographic data from the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet of results and saved it as Unicode Text (.txt) files, ready to import to NVivo later to make a Casebook. I then deleted

demographic data from the spreadsheet of results and converted the textual data question headings to a Microsoft Word table document. The table was then converted to text, and merged with the participant textual data to the questions, creating a Word document file with respondent answers listed under the questions. This merged data was then imported into NVivo and the question headings auto-coded to create cases (cases being each respondent's questionnaire answers). The demographic data was then imported into NVivo to create a casebook (a casebook being where the attributes and values – or who answered what question - are assigned to each respondent). The participant's questions were then auto-coded to create tree nodes, allocating the answers to each question. Assistance to prepare the data for NVivo was gained from NVivo help files (QSR International 2009). Preparing the data in this way enabled me to access the data in many ways, such as calling up summaries of individual questions, individual groups of participants (such as coordinators and teachers) or manipulating groups of data such as answers to selected questions from teachers with certain years of experiences.

The data were then coded using NVivo nodes (a 'container' for a theme or topic within your data) (QSR 2009 International). After looking at the data and trialling various node structures, I settled on the following node structure:

- Attitudes towards Management (ambivalence, negative, positive);
- Attitudes towards the MYP (acceptance, opposition to, support for, tolerance to);
- Benefits of the MYP;
- Drawbacks of the MYP;
- Developing the MYP (administration, coordinators, processes, structural, teachers);
- Impact (on school programme, on student learning, on teacher behaviour, on teaching practices);
- Implementation Issues (barriers, suggestions, what didn't work, what worked);
- MYP Attributes;
- Participant factors (cultural Issues, political and governance, social factors, student issues and parent issues);
- Professional Development; and

- Promotion of the MYP (positive perceptions of the MYP, negative perceptions of the MYP).

Using the node structure above, I systematically went through the data and coded it into the appropriate node(s). In addition, I made memos as I was coding and various themes, patterns, potential relationships or textual nuances emerged, in order to inform the subsequent CDA.

The data were then queried using a variety of query types to inform the CDA. The following searches were carried out as detailed by the NVivo help files (QSR International 2009):

- A **Text Search Query** was used to see occurrences of a particular word or phrase I wanted to explore;
- A **Coding Query** was created to locate source content coded by a specific combination of nodes (and/or attributes);
- A **Matrix Coding Query** was used too see patterns in one group of nodes compared with another group of nodes (or attribute values); and
- A **Compound Query** was used to find content that was coded by a specific node, and also has specific text.

This coding structure and description of queries employed demonstrate how Nvivo was used to enable efficient analysis of the data following the CDA methodology described in section 3.5.3 above. For consistency in categorization of the textual data, the following order or hierarchy of textual categories has been used throughout this study:

1. Discourse;
2. Themes;
3. Topics;
4. Statements;
5. Lexical items; and
6. Grammatical structures.

In order to differentiate the 'data' from my own voice and conclusions, all quoted statements, both partial and complete sentences, are given with quotation marks.

When a combination of respondent's data is used or summarised but not quoted, it is prefaced with a statement of origin, indentifying respondents as the source of the data.

As an example of how Nvivo was used in the CDA to obtain the derived discourses, the following sample demonstrates the procedures used to analyse one statement. A respondent (a teacher) submitted a response regarding benefits of the MYP: *"I feel that teachers communicate [with] each to make the unit interdisciplinary. In a sense, I think teacher[s] become more effective communicator[s], which is one of the characteristics [of the] IB learner profile"*. In Nvivo, this statement was coded to four nodes in the node structure outlined above: attitudes towards the MYP (support for), benefits of the MYP, impact (on teacher behaviour and teaching practices), and MYP attributes (enhanced communication between teachers). When various queries were run during the CDA, this statement was presented when it satisfied the query parameters, allowing it to be considered in the analysis from different perspectives depending on the query. For example, a coding query was run at each node to help identify discursive themes, and in this case, this statement contributed to the identification of *Academic features/Instructional advantages* as a discursive theme in Chapter 4, Benefits of the MYP. Another example was a text search query on "communication" that highlighted this aspect of the MYP, and contributed to the identification of communication as a tangible benefit of the MYP. Teacher's perceptions of benefits were compared with administrators and coordinators using a matrix coding query, and allowing patterns to be compared between the groups. As an example of fine text analysis, while not significant as many international teachers fall in this category, in this case the grammatical structure indicates the writer was a non-native English speaker.

This worked example demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the analysis carried out based on the hybrid form of CDA as outlined above, and using Nvivo as a valuable time saving tool. The findings from the CDA are detailed in Chapter 4 (benefits), Chapter 5 (promotion) and Chapter 6 (implementation).

3.6 Other Research Methodologies Considered

The following selection of research methodologies were considered for this investigation. While they were ultimately not selected, they are noted in brief in order to show the range of methodologies considered, and to note the influence they had to my theoretical background of the methodologies chosen. Indeed, many aspects of the following methodologies contributed to the research indirectly.

I consider **ethnography** to be an all-encompassing discipline to the extent any researcher undertaking qualitative social inquiry needs to consider aspects of ethnography as a conceptual aid to research design. While I could not find references directly supporting this statement, a number of researchers make comments which suggest support for the idea in general. Tedlock (2000:455, my emphasis), for example, states ethnography has long been 'enshrined as a method, a theoretical orientation, and even a *philosophical paradigm* within anthropology'. Harvey and Myers (1995:17) note: 'because context is so crucial to qualitative observations and analyses, techniques which explore contextual webs of meaning are important. The main body of techniques fall under the domain of an approach called ethnography'. In addition to the importance of understanding contextual webs for all qualitative research, I found understanding underlying principles of ethnographic techniques to be helpful when these same techniques are used in other research settings. For instance, a researcher with an *emic* (insider's) perspective will have the advantage of already knowing the culture, however, he will then have the challenge of considering perspectives other than his own to ensure personal bias is not introduced (Byrne 2001:82).

In-depth interviewing was considered as a way of collecting 'detailed and richly textured person-centred information' (Minichiello et al. 1999a:396) and can provide an insight into individuals' constructed social worlds, and the ways they convey those constructions in the particular setting of the interview (Silverman 1993, cited in Freebody 2003:137). I was particularly interested in using in-depth interviews to contribute to the rigour and validity of my research by providing data to triangulate with that obtained from the questionnaire. In the end time and practical restrictions prevented inclusion, however, I did use many of the techniques learnt when carrying out informal interviews and dialogue with practitioners over the course of the study.

I think many teachers have intrinsically used versions of what is **Action Research** (AR) for years, to plan, reflect, act and observe. Kemmis and McTaggart (1998:11) seem to agree, noting master teachers have used a version of the AR spiral for many years in less formal forms, to plan, reflect, act and observe. Drawing on different types of Action Research by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000:568-571) I designed a hybrid type that could be used which I termed “Critical Learning Analysis Action Research”, as it draws elements of Critical AR, Action Learning and Action Science, with the aim of critically analysing learning (via the MYP), through the analysis of discourses. I chose not to undertake AR, however, as it did not allow me to fully address all aspects of my research questions, and it would have been too large a project to do in addition to the survey and CDA. It would, however, be a good methodology for further research in order to assist in the attempt to understand the specific implementation issues arising from the findings of this study.

In addition to providing additional perceptions from an increased number of participants, use of a **case study** would have contributed to triangulation and had potential to uncover a wider range of, and/or deeper understanding of issues covered. Freebody (2003:81) notes Case Study has been popular as an educational research methodology because of frustration at the ‘apparent lack of impact of more traditional forms of research’, and at ‘the apparent non-transferability’ of many research findings. The decision not to do a case study in the end was made largely due to practical difficulties stemming from the distance between my workplace and other MYP schools. Taking on too much data collection within the limited time frame of this study was another major concern; therefore after the survey netted a satisfactory amount of rich textual data, any thoughts of adding a case study were discontinued.

Initially, a qualitative **multivariate analysis** was considered, with the view of comparing student performance in MYP schools with those in non-MYP schools. The purpose of this was to see if there was any correlation between performance of students in MYP schools to those in non-MYP schools. Apart from the practical difficulties in obtaining such data from schools, the main problem with doing this was regular school grades would not have been comparable due to the different grading systems used, and planning my research across qualitative and quantitative paradigms would have been complicated. The essential challenge of using quantitative data is each international school is so different in respect to numbers of second language learners, cultural make-up, length of time using the MYP, level of

adoption of the MYP - even between authorised schools, and so on; that results would be little more than interesting as a comparison between schools, and would not provide data accurate or reliable enough to accurately relate performance to the MYP, nor reliable enough to act on.

3.7 Other Considerations

3.7.1 Rigor and Validity

Consistent with the discussion of epistemological tensions between paradigms noted above, Lincoln and Guba (2000:178-179) address the controversy about paradigm differences in validity noting: 'The postmodern turn suggests that no method can deliver on ultimate truth... although one might argue that some methods are more suited than others for conducting research on human construction of social realities'. Lincoln and Guba go on to describe the different forms of rigor arising from positivism - rigor in the application of method; and postmodernism - defensible reasoning, ascribing salience to one interpretation over another and interpretive rigor. Some authors argue that traditional research has its own threats to rigour, and 'some of the features of traditional empirical research are taken for granted, and their disadvantages not recognised' (Argyris, cited in Dick 1993; see also Lincoln & Guba 2000:178).

Hence, the types of questions asked by educationalists cannot be simply reduced to scientific experimentations due to the human element. Argyris and Schön (1991:85) refer to relevance being lost, and argue the 'challenge is to meet the standards of appropriate rigor without sacrificing relevance'. As qualitative research is a different type of research, attempts should not be made to measure it using scientific standards of quality (see also Guba & Lincoln 1989:156). Nonetheless, the importance of 'good research' and 'rigor' and 'validity' remain – only they must be met using criteria appropriate to the paradigm(s) the researcher is working with. A number of other authors also discuss the dilemma of rigor verses relevance in the conduct of research (for example, see Guba & Lincoln 1989:233-243; Schön 1987:303). Rigor in qualitative research can emerge from a number of sources. Some are similar to scientific measures, but others differ to accommodate the different methodology. Babbie (2004:140-146) describes specific methods to ensure

precision and accuracy in qualitative research, which were useful to note as I carried out my research.

Like quantitative research, qualitative research also makes use of triangulation (Street 2004:292) to ensure the quality of the data. Triangulation refers to 'the combination of methods or sources of data in a single study' and is 'often thought of as a way of checking out insights gleaned from different informants or different sources of data' (Taylor & Bogdan 1998:80). Semantically, I found Richardson's (2000:934) term 'crystallization' more thought-provoking than the established term 'triangulation', as it provides for 'a deepened complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic' (Richardson 2000:934). As I planned my research, I used multiple incidences of triangulation to ensure my data was rigorous. The use of both interviews and questionnaire was helpful to get data from differing sources in different ways. Follow-up dialogue with MYP specialists also assisted in this triangulation, and indeed, often assisted greatly in the 'crystallization' (Richardson 2000:934) of discourses as described above. In my questionnaire, I asked similar questions in different ways in order to act as triangulation. In particular, I designed my questionnaire so participants first answered open-ended questions identifying what they thought were benefits and drawbacks of the MYP. In the next section, they were then asked to indicate levels of agreement to commonly stated benefits and drawbacks of the MYP that could be triangulated with their answers in the first section (the online survey process did not let them return to the first section once it was completed).

The benefits gained from self (and collaborative) reflection and evaluation is also notable here:

Most people would agree that no accountability system is as powerful as self regulation. The standards we set for ourselves are almost always higher than those others would set for us. When we work in systems where others set the standards, we are often inclined to passively resist or to negatively sanction our rate-busting peers (Sagor 1992:5).

In general I agree with Sagor, and in my case attest that I tend to be much harder on myself than others might be. The knowledge that my results will be scrutinized by my peers add to this self-imposed rigor.

Therefore, while self evaluation is desirable, it must go hand in hand with accountability to stakeholders. This was achieved in my case by a combination of means such as supervisor feedback, peer-reviews, and the knowledge that I will be submitting this writing not only to doctoral examiners, but also to the IB research unit, and to colleagues around the world. The example made of Reimer's mistakes in her research on how the MYP prepares students for the DP (Caffyn & Cambridge 2005) was a stark reminder to me of the lack of mercy academics will afford me should I not display the requisite levels of rigor in my research.

Stringer (2004:59) refers to the importance of 'dependability', and notes the trustworthiness of the research being dependant on the 'extent to which observers are able to ascertain research procedures are adequate for the purposes of the study'.

To conclude, I have attempted to emulate what Nelson & San Miguel (2000:4) list as one of their 'Key issues for professional doctorate writers', and that is to demonstrate 'familiarity with advanced knowledge and analytical skills...rigor and care in judging and deciding, and a reflective, informed self' (Morley & Priest 1998:25 cited in Nelson & San Miguel 2000:4)

3.7.2 Power and Voice

As highlighted in Chapter 1, my initial instinct when beginning this study was to separate out my personal perceptions, and focus purely on observable data. Upon further readings of voice and identity, I came to realise that contrary to my first impressions, recognition of writer identity is desirable (Ivanic 1998 cited in Nelson & San Miguel 2000:93), and the *ethos* or character of an author is important in allowing the audience to build confidence in who you are (Aristotle cited in Thompson 1998:85-86). This perspective is consistent with the poststructuralist paradigm.

I have by necessity learned to aware of the crucial importance of 'power' and 'voice', as my position requires collegiality, yet contains elements of 'power' over others. I learned power is not necessarily a bad thing, but is often used in ways that have a negative impact on others, and is therefore commonly associated with negativity.

Thus, as an insider researcher looking into practices in my own workplace as well as worldwide, I was cautious to ensure all participants were not influenced by any relationship to my position. This was accomplished via an anonymous questionnaire, and interviewing colleagues outside of my own workplace. Grundy (1987:16,17) wisely points out the need for this caution: 'because of the interactive nature of human society, individual freedom can never be separated from the freedom of others', however 'laudatory' the way a consensus is arrived at, 'the suspicion arises that consensus can be used as a form of manipulation'.

An integral trait of qualitative research is the ability to construct social answers to problems not appropriate to, or accepted by, scientific research. Foucault (cited in Popkewitz & Brennan 1998a:16) reverses the traditional view of knowledge is power, and 'looks for power in how people effect knowledge to intervene in social affairs'. He goes on to use the idea of 'sovereignty' where a king has the power of life and death over his subjects to explain the concept of power with the researcher being king, controlling the power afforded by the institution. Changing this prevailing "knowledge is power" ideology is difficult, as it involves multiple views, however, 'ownership can be re-distributed among groups to challenge inequities' (Popkewitz & Brennan 1998a:17). A researcher looking to affect change, such as myself, needs to heed this reversal of traditional roles, in order to understand the discourses being studied and to identify solutions which will be accepted by the 'subjects'.

3.7.3 The Positioning of the Researcher

As discussed in section 1.2.3 (page 17), Maxwell (2004:21) noted how the inclusion of a researcher's background in a successful EdD dissertation assisted the examiner's reading of the text, and that the examiner found the text more credible. My experiences were similarly outlined in order to inform the reader of my background, and therefore contributing to my credibility, and trustworthiness.

3.7.4 Readability and Writing the Portfolio/Dissertation

The readability and writing of the study is of particular importance to the 'New Ed.D. at UNE' (Maxwell, T.W 2003:288, 2004:19), as examiners may be more used to

examining Master and PhD theses. Taylor and Bogdon (1998:167-181) provide a comprehensive guide to writing qualitative studies, as does Stringer (2004:125-129) and Richardson (2000:923-948). After years of reading multitudes of books, papers and articles for my doctoral studies, I can identify with Richardson (2000:924), who confesses 'for 30 years I had yawned my way through numerous supposedly exemplary qualitative studies'. Taylor and Bogdon likewise note:

The most elegant and liberating theory does not interest us if it can only be understood by a small group of like-speaking people and cannot be translated into terms meaningful to people confronting problems in their everyday lives (Taylor, S.J. & Bogdan 1998:21).

In light of this, I made an effort to ensure my research writing offered worthwhile reading, and attempted to communicate the study and findings as interestingly as possible within the required framework, which includes appropriateness to the audience.

3.7.5 Challenges and How They Were Overcome

One difficulty faced was the collection of sufficient data from participants. School administrators and teachers are so busy that surveys are often given low priority. To help with this, I tried to make the questionnaire as easy as possible by offering it via an easy interface on the internet, and sending a link that respondents simply needed to click on to increase the likelihood of it being submitted. I tried to keep it as brief as possible, however, as I was attempting to extract detailed textual data, this was difficult. In hindsight, it may have helped to have made it shorter.

Attracting participants to answer my questionnaire was another challenge, especially as there are a limited numbers of MYP schools in existence. There are now 789 MYP schools (International Baccalaureate 2010b), however, this is up from only 259 schools as of April 2004 when this study commenced (IBO 2004c:3). At the time the questionnaire was distributed in 2007, I was only able gather contact data for 247 English-speaking MYP-authorized schools to approach. I also utilised the fact that I know many administrators personally, and think that direct contact helped increase the percentage of returns.

The limited amount of literature and research on the MYP was also a challenge in that there was not much information available, but this is just the way it is at present, so I just had to work with what I could locate. Over the years of my investigation, a few more studies appeared on areas surrounding the MYP which were interesting and informed my findings. One benefit from this is my research remains unique and will be a valuable contribution to the field, and thus to the IB and the growing IB school community.

In addition to the challenges learning to use NVivo outlined in section 3.5.4 (page 104) on data analysis, there were additional challenges with upgrading versions as well. Due to a computer hard drive crash and the purchasing of new computers over the years, I had repeated issues with activation codes not working, and found these to be rigidly controlled by the company producing the software, to the extent they cost me many days of 'opportunity time' to use the programme at premium times. I also had to work through frequent crashes when analysing the data, which often caused time-consuming and frustrating loss of newly coded or analysed data. These crashes were determined to be most likely due to conflicts with using NVivo on a Mac computer using Microsoft Windows in a Virtual Environment.

Finally, the IBO went through a number of significant changes over the years I was carrying out my research, with the accompanying documentation being constantly updated. I found the discourses remained applicable, however, as the philosophy of the IB remained constant. As research has to be bounded in time (T. Maxwell 2009, pers. Comm., 1 March), I continued on and made note of any significant differences at time of writing.

3.7.6 Ethical Issues, Permission to Conduct Research, and Data Protection

The University of New England's (UNE) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approved my research (No.: HE06/108, see Appendix i, page 238). As required by HREC guidelines, my questionnaire was completely optional, and participants were made fully aware they could discontinue filling out the questionnaire at any time. There was no foreseeable risk associated with participation in the questionnaire as it

was optional, anonymous and participants were fully informed about the study beforehand (see Appendix ii, page 239, for the invitation to participate in the questionnaire).

The face-to-face interviews were also conducted using the UNE HREC guidelines. The two participants were invited under the same conditions as the questionnaire participants, with the additional guarantee of confidentiality (see Appendix iii, page 241, for the invitation to participate in the face to face interviews).

The online questionnaire was administered using SurveyMonkey.com. SurveyMonkey was used due to their expertise; security; and ease of set up, collection and collation of results.

All electronic data collected from my research (original recorded interviews, transcriptions and notes, questionnaire data and analysis) were kept on my password-protected personal computer, located in my office at my alarm-protected home residence. Back-ups were kept on a secure external hard drive and kept in my office. All paper copies of my research data and analysis were secured in my home office. The transcription for one of the face to face interviews was out-sourced, however, the transcriber received only the recording with no identification attached to preserve confidentiality.

After the completion of the study, these materials will be stored securely in my home office, and will be destroyed after five years.

3.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the research methodologies which guided the investigation of this project's research questions. It has been argued that despite the potential of 'logical' inconsistencies to make the combining of various research paradigms largely incompatible, a benefit of the multi-method approach is that it affords the investigation the potential for a more complete representation of the key dynamics present in the context under examination. While advancing this claim, the project combines aspects of the quantitative orientation and aspects of the qualitative orientation, but it has been predominantly informed by the latter. While a number of

reasons were offered for this strategy, the key reasons are that unlike the 'laws' of nature which are, or at least were held to be fixed, individuals, groups and society are characterised significantly by fluidity and change informed by a range social, economic and political factors. Unlike the laws of nature, social relations are also informed by agents who act in relation to reality as they perceive it. Construction of social reality, however, is informed by discourse, and for this reason the research project has been located within the poststructuralist paradigm with acknowledgment that the principles of social constructivism also inform the making of meaning, truth and thus reality.

With this focus upon discourse, the discussion above has outlined that the project deployed the techniques of critical discourse analysis to inform the analysis of the data, variously collected through interviews and questionnaires. The CDA was conducted using NVivo and also relying upon a variety of macro and micro-focused techniques drawing upon Fairclough, Halliday and Foucault.

The data is interpreted through the range of social theory identified in the literature review. The chapter that follows presents the first of the 'evidence' based discussions grounded in the methodology outlined above.

Chapter 4 Perceived benefits of the MYP

4.1 Introduction

The perceptions regarding overall benefits of a programme underlie that programme's success. Accordingly, this chapter focuses on the perceived benefits of the MYP as outlined in my Research Question 1: *How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be beneficial for student learning?* In order to answer this question, I explored practitioners' responses regarding the benefits and drawbacks of the MYP. How these perceptions differ between practitioners was also examined so as to gain an understanding of how various texts are constructed, fractured, deconstructed and reconstructed. Understanding these discourses assist with identifying rationales for, and insights into, the decision to implement the MYP (covered in Chapter 6).

The following findings represent individual and collective perceptions of surveyed participants, and therefore vary depending on the topic or question. Stated and implied benefits are discussed below, followed by a detailed evaluation of significant findings, derived from a descriptive statistical analysis and critical discourse analysis on the data as outlined in Chapter 3. The chapter ends with a summary of findings and implications from these findings, which lead into proceeding chapters covering the promotion and implementation of the MYP.

4.2 Findings and analysis

The questionnaire in this study was designed to illicit two types of responses from participants. The first was to identify levels of agreement or disagreement on benefits of the MYP commonly stated in the literature and amongst IB practitioners. The second was to collect rich textual data regarding perceptions surrounding benefits in order to analyse and explore the less tangible and more personal feelings regarding the benefits. This strategy additionally provided triangulation in order to contribute to validating the data, as discussed in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3.5 page 87 and 3.7.1, page 111).

The textual data was derived from questions designed to elicit data rich in arguments, rationales, ideas, desires and so on, surrounding the MYP. As respondents were answering the survey electronically and anonymously; and understanding teachers and administrators are busy, I was not surprised to find responses to the questionnaire were comprised largely of informal short sentences. While the anonymity of a questionnaire is conducive to honest answers (Minichiello et al. 2004b:379), Moon (1998, cited in Minichiello et al 2004:357) also warns the research indicates anonymous methods of questionnaire result in higher levels of reports of 'socially undesirable behaviours'. I believe the anonymity contributed to more candid answers than I may have received otherwise. Answers also tended towards informality, with responses consisting largely of short and often incomplete sentences; often containing grammatical and spelling errors. A significant number of respondents also did not complete every question asked. Some skipped questions, and some, such as coordinators were asked extra questions. Results from the CDA on these data are discussed in section 2.2 below.

An assumption was made that survey participants would range in levels of insight and interest in the MYP. The fact they were working at an MYP school indicate they were at least aware of the MYP, however, there were a range of experiences. 5.1% of respondents were inexperienced, working less than a year in, or having no experience at, their current school. Some of this group may have had previous experiences, however. 89.2% of respondents had one or more year's experience teaching or administering the MYP, and 86.9% indicated they had attended formal training on the MYP. The conclusion was that the majority of the respondents had an understanding of the MYP and were qualified to answer the survey questions knowledgeably.

It could be argued that the respondent pool would consist of practitioners who would be positive towards the MYP, as they bothered to answer the (somewhat lengthy) questionnaire. The opposite of this could also be true, however, with those strongly against the MYP would be equally likely to be motivated to voice their opinions. Just the fact that they worked in an MYP school lends supports to the notion most respondents would be somewhat in favour of the MYP, otherwise they would likely have left the school. This is confirmed by the data which show a generally positive response to the MYP discourses.

4.2.1 Levels of agreement on commonly stated benefits

The data outlined in Table 4.1 below indicate a very high level of agreement amongst respondents to all stated benefits of the MYP surveyed.

Note that while the total number of respondents was 122 (N=122), not all questions were answered by every respondent, so the total numbers in some questions do not add up to 122. The 'not applicable' (N/A) response for questions a. and b. are noticeably higher as those respondent's schools did not offer the PYP (in a.) or the DP (in b.). For all other questions, the N/A value was provided for respondents who did not feel they could answer the question for whatever reason.

Table 4.1 Summary of participant responses indicating levels of agreement/disagreement to statements of commonly attributed benefits of the MYP [% of respondents (number of respondents)].

Stated Benefit	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Minor effects either way	Disadvantageous	Very disadvantageous	N/A
a. If your school has the PYP and the MYP: The MYP provides a natural progression for students coming from the IB Primary Years Programmed.	15 (9)	39 (23)	12 (7)	0 (0)	2 (1)	32 (19)
b. If your school has the MYP and the IBDP: The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme.	22 (13)	42 (25)	17 (10)	8 (5)	2 (1)	10 (6)
c. The MYP provides a framework rather than a set curriculum, allowing schools to implement the program while satisfying their particular curricular requirements.	48 (30)	39 (24)	8 (5)	3 (2)	2 (1)	0 (0)
d. The MYP is flexible, allowing schools in different systems and situations to implement the program yet maintain their core values and/or state-mandated systems.	53 (33)	29 (18)	11 (7)	3 (2)	3 (2)	0 (0)
e. The MYP promotes holistic learning as a fundamental concept.	66 (41)	24 (15)	6 (4)	0 (0)	2 (1)	2 (1)
f. The MYP promotes communication as a fundamental concept.	62 (38)	31 (19)	5 (3)	0 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)
g. The MYP promotes intercultural awareness as a fundamental concept.	65 (40)	26 (16)	8 (5)	0 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)
h. The MYP promotes leaning in constructivist ways.	54 (33)	31 (19)	8 (5)	0 (0)	2 (1)	5 (3)
i. The MYP uses criterion based assessment.	57 (34)	28 (17)	7 (4)	5 (3)	3 (2)	0 (0)
j. The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment.	49 (30)	38 (23)	7 (4)	5 (3)	2 (1)	0 (0)
k. The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes.	42 (26)	27 (17)	23 (14)	5 (3)	3 (2)	0 (0)
l. The Personal Project provides an opportunity to practice and assess AOI skills.	52 (32)	33 (20)	10 (6)	0 (0)	2 (1)	3 (2)
m. The IB promotes the use of Interdisciplinary Links, which enhances meaningful connections by students.	52 (32)	39 (24)	5 (3)	2 (1)	2 (1)	0 (0)
n. The required 8 subjects ensure a balanced programme.	52 (32)	31 (19)	11 (7)	3 (2)	2 (1)	0 (0)
o. The IBO governance structure allows for practicing educators to have input in the continuing development of the programme.	32 (20)	52 (32)	10 (6)	2 (1)	5 (3)	0 (0)
p. The IB Learner Profile (implemented 2006) provides a focus for development of knowledge, skills and attitudes espoused by the IBO spanning all three IB programmes.	45 (28)	35 (22)	11 (7)	3 (2)	2 (1)	3 (2)

When comparing the relative perceptions of the stated benefits of the MYP, it was significant to note that the three highest ranked benefits were the three fundamental concepts of the MYP – holistic education, communication and intercultural awareness (e, f & g). As discussed in the literature review (section 2.2.5, page 36), the fundamental concepts underpin the MYP practices, so this result was important as it indicates that half to two thirds of practitioners strongly agree with the underlying concepts which drive the MYP. In my professional role as an IB practitioner, I have heard suggestions from colleagues that these fundamental concepts should be diminished in prominence in the MYP but not in the other two IB programmes. In light of these results, it would appear they are in fact valued by these practitioners as beneficial to the programme.

The statements which ranked highest in the minor effects either way category as outlined in Table 4.1. included the following:

- *k. 'The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes' (23%), and*
- *b. 'The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme' (17%).*

These statements are also characterised by the highest number of 'disadvantageous' or 'very disadvantageous' responses, with 8% of respondents in (k.) and 10% in (b.). The literature review (section 2.2.9, page 46) reveals there is an increasing body of research showing that the MYP in fact does prepare students for the DP better than non-MYP tracks studied in a number of schools, however, to be fair to the respondents, this research was unavailable when the data were collected.

The statement:

- *i. 'The MYP uses criterion based assessment'*

was another area in which 8% of respondents said the stated benefit was 'disadvantageous' (5%) or 'very disadvantageous' (3%). On the other hand, the majority of participants found criterion based assessment 'very beneficial' (57%) or 'beneficial' (28%), and 7% found it had 'minor effects either way'.

The significance of the statement:

- *k. The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes.*

being identified as having ‘minor effects either way’ (23%, with 5% ‘disadvantageous’ and 3% ‘very disadvantageous’) demonstrates the difficulty schools have had implementing the AOIs effectively. Ongoing efforts to define how to do this better continue. The IB has given this area considerable attention since this survey was collected. In particular there have been new guidelines written in the *MYP: From Principles into Practice* (International Baccalaureate 2008b), which replaced the old *Areas of Interaction* (IBO 2002a) guide, and the *Implementation and Development of the Programme* (IBO 2000) guide. More effective ways to use the AOI have also been promoted via workshops and resources on the IB Online Curriculum Centre.

Overall, the results indicate the stated benefits of the MYP were perceived by the majority of MYP practitioners surveyed to be accurate.

4.2.2 Discourses Surrounding MYP Benefits

Textual data from the surveys were coded and an extensive search for all direct and implied benefits arising from the MYP was carried out as part of the critical discourse analysis. The benefits that were identified were allocated into various discursive themes which arose from the data. These data complement the statistical data given in Table 4.1 above by providing rich textual contexts with which to understand the discourses surrounding the perceptions towards the benefits to the MYP.

When respondent’s statements are used in the analysis discussion below, they are given in quotes. If data is coming from a source other than the surveyed data, it will be reference specifically. Common themes from multiple respondents are given in one sentence, in which case separate quotes are used for different respondent’s answers.

Note that N-values are only given as a comparative weighting when they are important. The reason for this is many of the discourses coded for a specific discursive theme are multi-faceted and so contribute to more than one topic, so total topic N values do not necessarily equal total theme N values. In addition, some responses contained eloquent, detailed and well thought out ideas, others brief comments or even one word (eg. "cost"), so the weighting for N values becomes skewed for some themes. Finally, the N is only as good as the data coding, so potential human error should be considered, especially with repetitive one-word comments that may have been missed, so the total N values are not considered highly accurate.

That being said, while not a reliable indication of relative importance, it is useful to consider a ranking of the discursive themes as a general indicator of how commonly the benefit is mentioned. Accordingly, the discursive themes surrounding the benefits of the MYP below are ranked in order of the number of comments in each theme. Any significant N-values discussed in the analysis of the results under each theme.

1. School programme benefits (39);
2. Student-related benefits (24);
3. Academic features/Instructional advantages (23);
4. Preparation for the Diploma Programme (DP)/continuum of learning (from the PYP and on to the DP) (22);
5. Marketing and Public Relations (PR) (22);
6. Collegial and professional development (PD) benefits to teachers (11);
7. Other (13).

4.2.2.1 School Programme Benefits

Curriculum design comprised a significant topic in this discursive theme. Respondents stating the MYP provided a 'curriculum' which was 'well-thought-out', 'coherent', 'cohesive', 'interrelated', 'documented', 'flexible', 'student focused' and 'internationally recognised'. It should be noted the MYP does not in fact provide a 'curriculum', rather, a curriculum framework. The term 'curriculum' is very broad, however, and in the context of the survey, the respondents seem to be referring to

various common aspects of international school curricula, and not a complete curriculum in the full sense of the term.

'Best practices' with a 'modern approach' focusing on students was another significant theme to emerge within the topics identified above. Statements represented the MYP as being a force of change, promoting accountability and collaboration in the school and amongst teachers. One respondent summarised this point, writing: 'the adoption of the MYP forces a school to take steps towards implementing effective educational practices'. This participant also stated the MYP itself was not important as a 'product', but rather as a 'process' [of learning], and that any school could begin this process and 'possibly develop a programme as effective' as the MYP (a statement implying MYP was considered effective). They did qualify this claim by adding: 'fundamentally we are cowards as educators and wish to defer our responsibility to act to a higher power [and seek] external validation for choices and actions'. It was telling to note the inclusive use of the collective pronoun 'we' in association with the term 'cowards', which functions to identify the author as an educator who includes himself or herself in this somewhat derogatory category. Later in the paragraph, however, the respondent distances him/herself from cowardly action, choosing to disassociate him/herself by moving to a third person point of view and stating 'their' when describing the seeking of external validation. The statement on the process being more important than the product was a good point, but my experience of reality is that the complete product is required by most schools in order to put the processes in place.

The access to professional development, shared resources and a framework for a common understanding for transient faculty was also noted by respondents as a benefit (see also section 4.2.2.6, page 136, Collegial and professional development benefits to teachers). One respondent succinctly states this as a 'common commitment to organized excellence' of the MYP framework. In addition to the survey data, my own experiences as a practitioner in a school which implemented the MYP confirms the claim stated above. In my experience MYP implementation contributed as much if not more to positive changes in processes (collaboration, student focused, interdisciplinary focus and accountability), than actual changes in the content of the curriculum (with the exception of the required introduction of criteria-based assessment). Furthermore, as an MYP coordinator and an administrator, I found the

MYP a powerful vehicle to help focus, direct, encourage and, when necessary, force desired change on faculty who were at varying levels of buy-in to the changes.

A number of respondents also referred to benefits derived from the holistic nature of the programme, one of the three official fundamental concepts of the MYP. Of note here was the mixed use of terminology. Some respondents used the term 'holistic', while others deconstructed it and used related phrases such as 'interrelatedness of the curricula', and 'able to make connections'. It would be interesting to further investigate how respondents define 'holistic', as I often hear practitioners use the term 'holistic' in ways that suggest a less than full understanding of why it is a fundamental concept, and how the AOI and interdisciplinary focus promote this philosophy. Responses such as 'the AOIs help to plan for interdisciplinary projects' indicate at least some of the participants did understand this term.

The criterion-referenced assessment methodology used in the MYP was referred to in various ways by respondents in the survey/questionnaire open-ended responses. As with the term 'holistic', it was interesting to note there was a mix of official MYP discursive statements used by the respondents, such as 'criterion-based' (now officially referred to as criterion-referenced), and 'more meaningful than normative-based assessment'. Reference to not having to deal with exams and 'no external assessment pressure' were also made. Schools still have to undergo monitoring of assessment procedures regularly, so the comment above most likely refers to the lack of external exam-induced pressure. Some responses lacked specifics regarding why certain benefits were desired, however, the choice of words to express the benefit was clear and often quite strong, for example: '[introduce the MYP to] get rid of exams'. Coming from an informed participant base, such a statement likely indicates a change in programmes to the non-exam driven MYP; however, there is a possibility the respondent misunderstands the MYP, as while it does not offer external subject exams, schools are encouraged to use a range of assessment strategies, and exams are still used by some schools, especially in the upper grades as preparation for the exam-driven Diploma Programme. Benefits related to the MYP assessment system are also noted in the discussion of the 4.2.2.3 Academic features/Instructional advantages discursive theme below (page 130).

Finally, perceived increases in performance in their school was also noted by some respondents, with 'improved test scores', 'improved performance of the school', and 'significant improvement on teacher collaboration' being typical comments.

As a summary, school programme benefits included the following:

- Curriculum design;
- The MYP being a force of change, promoting accountability and collaboration ;
- Access to professional development, shared resources and a framework for a common understanding;
- The holistic nature of the programme;
- The criterion-referenced assessment methodology; and
- Increases in performance in school.

4.2.2.2 Student-related Benefits

A broad theme mentioned in this category was the way the MYP develops a 'well rounded student', with more ability to deal with higher order questions, a high level of community awareness (and in particular intercultural and international awareness), and a more 'diverse understanding of the world'. The areas of interaction (AOIs) were credited with contributing to this. The impact from Community Service and reflection was another area contributing to it. The Approaches to Learning was noted as being a unique feature of the MYP, helping students 'learn how to learn' and 'ways to study'. One respondent commented that schools may gain the same benefit the Learner Profile brings via their school's Student Learning Results (SLRs). I have found this to be true, with some schools even combining the Learner Profile with their SLRs, especially in schools accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), a US-based accrediting commission, which requires SLRs as part of their criteria.

It was interesting to note that a number of respondents mention that students seem to enjoy the MYP, and find it relevant. Examples of evidence were the lack of external exams which provide students a more 'relaxed' academic atmosphere. Such a claim is perhaps a little ambivalent as it could also imply a relaxing of academic rigour although in practice this depends a lot on the school's own curriculum and

expectations not to mention the school's intake. Other respondents confirm this, listing 'motivating', 'challenging students academically' and 'students feel they derive a benefit from the instructional approaches' as benefits.

Another respondent noted the benefit the MYP brought to gifted students when compared to their regular programme being 'not enticing' and lacking in options. The IB does not promote the MYP specifically as a vehicle for gifted and talented students, so this comment suggests some teaching and programme limitations in the school's regular programme.

The third area mentioned by respondents was the MYP offered the 'student with a learning disability the chance to do as well as the 'normal' student'. This again is not an area promoted specifically by the MYP. However, it could be partially seen as a side-benefit of the impact of particular MYP features such as the criterion-referenced assessment system. Indeed, this area was noted by respondents as a positive benefit to all students as they receive more detailed and specific feedback on each of the subject criteria. The differentiation this allows is also noted in the academic features section 4.2.2.3 (page 130).

The egalitarian nature of the MYP was noted, with opportunities being provided for different socio-economic groups to mix in a positive ways and benefit 'poor' students due to the resources allocated to the programme. With an effective teacher being of such importance (see Section 2.4.2, page 68) any promotion of best practices is likely to have a positive effect on the level of proficiency of teachers. In this case, it was possible that the school also received additional funding to support the programme, thus benefiting under-privileged students.

As a summary, student related benefits included the following topics:

- The MYP develops a well rounded student;
- Students enjoy the MYP and find it relevant;
- The MYP brings benefits to gifted students;
- The MYP offer chances to students with a learning disability; and
- The egalitarian nature of the MYP.

4.2.2.3 Academic Features/Instructional Advantages

It was significant to note a number of respondents found the MYP treats students holistically, 'whilst still being academically strong', and linked 'higher academic achievement' to a higher 'concentration on skills'. The drawback responses, however, detailed an opposing viewpoint. I have heard this opposing viewpoint regularly, particularly from select DP teachers. This opposing perception maintains that the MYP is too 'project based' and does not give enough emphasis to content, and thus leads to *less* 'academic rigour'. This dichotomy seems to stem largely from personal preferences towards particular teaching methodologies which differ throughout the IB continuum. According to the MYP these teaching methodologies address the requirement for age-appropriate methodologies at the different age levels. In short, the MYP builds on the inquiry-based PYP, highlighting interdisciplinary connections between subjects, and emphasising knowledge, skill and aptitude development. The DP in comparison is a rigorous college preparation programme which is relatively more disciplinary and content-based; and students are assessed largely (typically up to 70%) by external exams at the end of the course.

One possible reason why some DP teachers found this incongruent with the styles they prefer to prepare students for the DP is the MYP covers both middle school (typically grades six-eight in many international schools) and the first two years of a typical high school (grades nine-twelve). This coverage contributes to the tension, as generally teachers treat high school students differently to middle school students. In my experience this is a common construction in discourses of MYP/DP teachers, arising from the rapidly changing adolescent brain over these middle years (Sprenger 1999:95-96; see also Wolfe 1999:135-150) requiring teachers to use age-appropriate teaching strategies. The MYP has the scope to encompass these differences in the five-year framework (International Baccalaureate 2008c:6), however, it is less specifically delineated than the traditional grade eight to nine middle-high school transition. Regardless of which structure a school uses, it is up to the *school* (and teachers) to adjust their methodologies to age-appropriate strategies. This notwithstanding, the data show that the MYP is blamed for what often boils down to personal preferences and/or styles of teaching, although one could argue the requirement of the MYP to adapt to the programme may be a catalyst for at least some of issues to arise. The requirement for a varied use of appropriate assessment in the MYP (International Baccalaureate 2008b:59) forces MYP teachers to consider

teaching methodologies they may be uncomfortable with (or even disagree with) when they want to concentrate on strategies suited to a more content-heavy curriculum such as the Diploma Programme, and with which they are familiar.

Considering this criticism that the MYP is not rigorous enough is based on preferences related to teaching different levels, it was not surprising then to hear MYP and PYP teachers use the same set of arguments but from opposing viewpoints to criticise the Diploma Programme. The popularity of the Diploma Programme with schools and universities demonstrates the success of that programme, and its longevity and the importance for schools to prepare their students for university afford it much credence. This credence is often used by Diploma Programme teachers to posit themselves on the teaching methodology 'high ground', as tertiary education systems around the world continue to require the current content-heavy skill set taught in the Diploma Programme.

Many of the responses within this discursive theme detailed the benefits to teachers of the MYP. Responses ranged from broad comments such as 'teaching method promotion', to more specific comments highlighting the focusing nature of the programme, such as, the MYP 'gives a framework to focus my teaching' and 'it has helped me focus deliberately on skills and values and attitudes in a realistic context'. Other themes were the benefit of improved 'communication and cooperation amongst teachers', and the promotion of collaboration between IB schools. As noted earlier, this enhancing of collaboration was a major benefit in the school I worked in as we implemented the MYP. Further support for benefits arising from the interconnected nature promoted by the MYP curriculum was voiced by teachers as illustrated by 'integrated approach to knowledge' and the 'transference of skills'.

In addition to the benefit of having motivated students in the classroom, participants also noted that teachers were more engaged, and found the holistic approach and freedom to plan curricula and 'adopt various methods of educational philosophies' beneficial. The 'modern, balanced curriculum' was also identified as another interesting way of crediting the MYP with a perceived 'good' curriculum, however, such a statement, while indicating broad satisfaction with the curriculum, is of less use when trying to determine what exactly a 'modern' curriculum is, and how it is of benefit.

It should be noted that participants often outlined benefits as if they were observed in others. This is an assumption that one should be wary of, as participants may be referring specifically to their own experience, yet write it as if it was an agreed upon school-wide discourse surrounding the benefit in question. Further research would be required to determine specifically who exactly agrees with the benefit in relation to the whole school. In my experience it is not rare for some teachers in MYP schools to disagree with at least some aspects of the benefits to teachers stated above. These disagreements are identified and explored in the following chapter in the discussion of drawbacks.

Further to the benefits derived from the criterion-referenced assessment system noted in 5.2.2.1 School programme benefits above, respondents also noted that the assessment methodology gives students responsibility for their own achievement, thus: 'students know what to expect with regard to assessment tasks'. This attribute is identified as important for students learning to occur (see 2.3.2 Characteristics of effective schools, page 52, and 2.4.2 Best practices in teaching, page 68), and an attribute listed in many schools' Expected Student Learning Results. Another respondent noted that the criterion-based assessment is definitely more meaningful (than normative-based assessment) but also that it is harder to determine.

As a summary, academic features/Instructional advantages included the following topics:

- The MYP treats students holistically, whilst still being academically strong
- The MYP affords teachers the benefit of helping them become better teachers
- The assessment methodology gives students responsibility for their own achievement.

4.2.2.4 Preparation for the Diploma Programme/Continuum of Learning (from the PYP, and to the DP)

As discussed in the literature review (see section 2.2.9, page 46) there is some research available indicating the MYP does prepare students well for the Diploma Programme. The results of the present data analysis contributed to this conclusion by providing numerous references to the MYP providing a good 'link', 'good preparation' and 'highly regarded as a pathway' to the DP. Discourses provided were non-specific but decisive and often absolute, such as '[the MYP] is a perfect transition and preparation to the Diploma'. The few specific benefits of the MYP to prepare students for the DP were the Personal Project preparing students for the Extended Essay, and the connections and skills developed preparing students for the Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay. Criterion-based assessment and task specific rubrics were also mentioned by one respondent as good preparation for the Diploma. This response was interesting because while the Diploma Programme does use criterion-based assessment, in my experience, the majority of Diploma Programme teachers use largely normative assessment tasks, and reporting is far less criterion-based when compared with the MYP.

One respondent noted that the 'MYP builds connections to high school where most of our middle school students attend'. This comment highlights the fact that there are a number of middle schools who make use of the MYP, and this can be of value in entering high schools, particularly if they also offer the MYP in grades nine and ten. For many kindergarten-grade twelve schools, this also highlights an important issue regarding school structure. With middle schools typically encompassing grade six-eight and high school grades nine-twelve in most western-based international school systems, the five-year MYP programme spans these traditional divisions. Some schools have done away with the three-year 'middle school' structure and moved to a five-year 'middle year's' structure in order to avoid confusion. Other schools have maintained the middle school system while superimposing the five-year MYP, perhaps by default as structures and physical facilities were in place to serve that structure. As a middle/high school principal in an implementing school, I found keeping a three-year middle school useful for highlighting the move into high school and acting as a 'rite of passage' to students, parents and teachers. This reflected the changes in teaching methodology at that level, as the cognitive abilities of young adolescent brains develop around this time, necessitating appropriate changes to

teaching methodologies to develop desired critical thinking skills (Sprenger 1999:95-96; see also Wolfe 1999:135150).

There is a lack of research concerning how the Primary Years Programme prepares students for the MYP, however, this does not seem to be a contentious issue. In my professional experience, the Primary Years Programme enjoys a relatively positive reputation as a programme which prepares students well for any middle school programme. This is also evidenced by the fact the PYP is the fastest growing programme out of all three IB programmes (International Baccalaureate 2010b). The respondents indicated that the benefits of a continuum of learning from the PYP through to the DP were highlighted in the survey data as comprising a 'good link between that the PYP and DP', however, fine analysis of comments shows that at least some respondents were not convinced this is true, with comments such as 'it was *thought* to link to Diploma and PYP', and it offers an '*impression* of a continuum'. Further research would be useful in identifying if this perception has changed.

The fact all three IB programmes share fundamental philosophies regarding constructivist, inquiry based teaching, a common Learner Profile and an agreement on the importance of holistic education contribute to the claim that the continuum provides a relatively seamless transition from the PYP to the MYP. This seamlessness falters somewhat when moving from the MYP to the Diploma Programme, however, as the Diploma Programme deviates in several key areas such as having external exams and a more content-driven curriculum with a syllabus.

As a summary, preparation for the Diploma Programme (DP)/continuum of learning (from the PYP and to the DP) benefits included the following topics:

- The MYP provides good preparation to the DP;
- The MYP builds connections to high school;
- Benefits of a continuum of learning from the PYP through to the DP; and
- The continuum provides a relatively seamless transition from the Primary Years Programme to the MYP.

4.2.2.5 Marketing and Public Relations (PR)

As evidenced in the examples below, even the more critical respondents noted the positive PR and marketing pull the IB possess. While the strength of much of this PR likely stems from the proven success of the Diploma Programme, the organisation has also been able to promote an image of being a pioneering, modern and cutting edge organisation (see also section 1.1.1 on page 9 and 6.2.2 on page 161).

Some of the specific benefits of the MYP noted by respondents were to have 'challenging' programme with a 'rigorous academic purpose', to attract 'advanced ability kids', and to have the 'best' programme. This was 'great PR'. Having all three IB programmes in the one school was also represented in various ways, such as being a 'full IB school', being the only school with all three programmes in the region. While the IB organisation state that each programme can be run independent of the others (IBO 2001), obvious benefits are derived from the continuum of learning and having one philosophy and purpose throughout the school. The extension of the IB reputation is clearly used as a marketing strategy to gain 'public prestige attached to the IB name'. This extends to the use of subtle discourses promoting an elite status for schools offering all three programmes, such as defining these schools as 'all' IB schools, or 'proper' IB schools. The promotion of such a discourse is at odds to the IBs strategic plan to promote access, and seems to stem from schools, not the IB. This could also be an unavoidable by-product from being considered the 'best'.

As a summary, Marketing and Public Relations (PR) benefits included the following topics:

- Positive PR and marketing pull of the IB;
- The MYP is used as a marketing tool in some schools;
- Competition with other schools is a reason some schools are attracted to the MYP; and
- Benefits of the MYP include its challenging programme.

4.2.2.6 Collegial and Professional Development Benefits to

Teachers

A number of respondents stated that the MYP provided 'a framework' to focus their teaching'. The effect on personal knowledge, skills and attitudes towards teaching outlined in these responses is a hidden benefit to schools, and often overlooked. When teachers are noticing they make 'better connections', are 'better communicators', feel 'more effective', and that they 'have a much better appreciation for the big picture of what [they are] doing', it was clear that at least for these respondents, the MYP has been of great benefit to their teaching. One respondent was even more descriptive stating, 'I think it rescued my teaching from potential stagnation'.

Linked to the above positive outcomes are related benefits such as the requirement for training, and an expectation of ongoing professional development (PD). One participant noted that 'excellent PD encourages me and makes me reflect upon my performance and try to improve it'. This appreciation for professional development is a characteristic of the IB "way of doing things" and this is reflected in school satisfaction survey undertaken in 2006 that noted 84% of heads and coordinators were satisfied (strongly agreed or agreed) with the professional development offered by the IB (2006b:3). More recently, international school head representatives note the quality of professional development provided by the IB was perceived by at least some practitioners as an area of concern (The Academy for International School Heads 2009). Quality of professional development is progressively getting better in my experience, but there have been times when teachers have returned from training with less than enthusiastic reports of the worth of the experience. I have noted from my experience and that of colleagues that particular problem with IB workshops in the past has been the potential effects of regional issues taking up inordinate amounts of time at workshops with international school teachers being forced to waste time sitting through what is irrelevant discussion to them. Again, recent initiatives by the IB to standardise workshop content and training of workshop leaders to ensure they minimise this aspect should ensure more focused workshops. The increasing options for online courses are also contributing to cost-effective options for schools.

Another important area highlighted by respondents was the promotion of collegial collaboration, grounded in 'ongoing and fruitful discussion about educational initiatives'. This collaboration brings about two benefits. One is the benefit to coordinated, connected student learning between teachers, subjects and grade levels. The other is the increase in quality of educational discussions, which, as noted earlier (see section 2.4.2 Best practices in teaching, page 68), is beneficial to student learning.

As a summary, collegial and professional development benefits to teachers included the following topics:

- The MYP provides a framework to focus teaching;
- The MYP facilitates ongoing professional development; and
- The MYP promotes collegial collaboration.

4.2.2.7 Other

There are ongoing efforts to define exactly what 'international' means (see section 2.2.5.2, page 38). The fact the word 'international' was sprinkled in many of the responses in different contexts highlights the difficulty in defining what each respondent meant when using the term, and Hayden and Thompson (2001:xiii) confirm this: 'What has not emerged to date, however, is a clear conceptualization of the whole field of international education'. Nonetheless, 'international badging', 'international understanding' and feeling 'more connected to other world-wide schools' highlight the particular appeal having a programme that is recognised as an international programme. This use of 'internationalism' links to PR and student benefits, as well as the academic and social benefits the enhanced awareness brought about by the international nature of the programme.

Accountability was noted as an advantage. Teachers were said to be held accountable to 'international standards, and not local, parochial or in-school standards'. Interestingly the requirement for the school to be authorised and evaluated periodically was not specifically mentioned, though these are key accountability processes that the IB uses. Upon reviewing my questionnaire, I

suspect this aspect was not lost on respondents, but viewed as being part of the marketing (IB brand recognition) category, and so not specifically noted.

The international diversity afforded by the student body was also noted by survey respondents, with the accompanying benefit of students having a 'concept of being part of a wider community'. While this is not exclusive to MYP schools, the emphasis on being internationally aware would enhance the appreciation of diversity. With less than 50% of MYP schools now being international schools (International Baccalaureate 2010b), it is indicative that the appreciation of international awareness does not solely rely upon a large range of international diversity within a student population, but rather the focus on international understanding and appreciation of diversity.

The obvious advantage of students transferring to other schools with a similar curricular framework and educational philosophy, which the MYP afforded, was also commented on. One respondent noted a more specific benefit – that the 'wider repertoire of skills' developed in the MYP makes 'transfer to another location more feasible than with models that support a building on previous knowledge model'.

It was interesting to note there was no mention of the MYP Certificate, which students can gain in year 5 of the programme (grade 10), as an internationally recognised certificate. This highlights the current state of many schools in opting not to go through the (optional) expense and extra effort to do the required moderation to get the certificates awarded. For international schools, the vast majority of students progress into grade 11, so there is less need for a 'school certificate'-like award such as those awarded in many 'state-side' schools (such as the General Certificate of School Education (GCSE) in Britain, the School Certificate in NSW, Australia, and level 1 of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement in New Zealand).

As a summary, other benefits included the following topics:

- International understanding is promoted by the MYP;
- International diversity is often associated with MYP schools; and
- The wider repertoire of skills developed in the MYP assists students transferring to other schools.

4.2.3 Levels of Agreement on Commonly Stated Drawbacks

The findings on drawbacks and negative perceptions were not extensive. This apparently represented participants' tendency towards being positive about the MYP as discussed above. This was again demonstrated by eight out of ten statements having highest rankings in the '**not a valid criticism**' choice, and the remaining two still at the second highest level of having '**some validity**' (see Table 4.2). As such, it is important to keep the same considerations noted above regarding the participant profile in order to understand the limitations of any conclusions drawn from this response.

Table 4.2 Summary of responses indicating levels of agreement/disagreement to statements of commonly attributed drawbacks or negative aspects of the MYP [% of respondents (number of respondents)]

Stated Drawback/negative aspect	Not a valid criticism	Some validity	Medium validity	Significant validity	Valid criticism	N/A
a. The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects.	40 (25)	22 (14)	19 (12)	13 (8)	6 (4)	0 (0)
b. The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level.	33 (21)	25 (16)	16 (10)	19 (12)	6 (4)	0 (0)
c. The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors)	21 (13)	41 (26)	14 (9)	10 (6)	14 (9)	0 (0)
d. The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting.	58 (36)	24 (15)	10 (6)	3 (2)	5 (3)	0 (0)
e. The MYP is too difficult to understand.	43 (27)	33 (21)	13 (8)	5 (3)	6 (4)	0 (0)
f. The MYP moderation processes takes too long.	18 (11)	35 (22)	10 (6)	13 (8)	8 (5)	16 (10)
g. The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class, and take time away from teaching content and subject skills.	61 (38)	21 (13)	10 (6)	0 (0)	8 (5)	0 (0)
h. The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be.	40 (25)	33 (21)	10 (6)	8 (5)	10 (6)	0 (0)
i. The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious.	52 (32)	29 (18)	11 (7)	6 (4)	2 (1)	0 (0)
j. The MYP is different to the PYP and IB DP so does not provide a good learning continuum from elementary to high school.	36 (22)	28 (17)	16 (10)	7 (4)	8 (5)	5 (3)

When comparing the relative perceptions of the stated drawbacks, the two statements with the highest ranking within the 'not a valid criticism' category, were:

- *g. The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class, and take time away from teaching content and subject skills' (61%), and*
- *d. 'The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting' (58%).*

These responses seemingly contradict the findings from the stated benefits regarding these two areas, where they were identified as being second equal in the areas that respondents disagreed with that they were benefits. The strength of the defence of the AOI and criterion-referenced assessment in the stated drawbacks results firmly establish these two areas are explicitly valued by the majority of respondents.

The only other statement where more than half (52%) of the respondents disagreed with the stated drawback was:

- *i. The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious.*

As the fundamental purpose of the interdisciplinary links is to facilitate students to see knowledge as an interrelated whole (Boix-Mansilla 2010:3; International Baccalaureate 2008b:10), the strength of agreement to the concept of holistic learning was not surprising.

Analysis of the 'significant validity' and 'valid criticism' category statements show that the two highest ranked statements are:

- *b. 'The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level', (25%) and a related curricular criticism, and*
- *c. 'the MYP provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors)' (24%).*

The second statement above also obtained the second lowest level of support (21%) within the 'not a valid criticism' category.

One benefit to the lag time between when this questionnaire was completed and the writing of these findings was that a number of areas reported in the survey as drawbacks have since been addressed by the IB. The exit criteria issue is one of these areas, with new interim objectives for each subject being released for years one and three of the MYP, and schools being required to develop modified criteria from these objectives in years 1-4 of the 5 year programme (International Baccalaureate

2008b:43-46). This has alleviated the problems experienced by many schools with only having one set of exit criteria, however, there remain a number of issues yet to be addressed. One of the remaining issues concerns the IB providing interim objectives and not examples of actual modified criteria, meaning schools had to develop their own from the interim objectives. The reasons for this have not been stated in official documentation, but the message given to MYP coordinators by IB personnel was to ensure schools adapt the criteria to fit their own individual programme, and avoid the tendency to simply take the sample sets and use them verbatim. The MYP development team did note they would investigate the need for criteria at years one and three (International Baccalaureate 2009a:3), yet none have been forthcoming.

The lowest level of support (18%) in the 'not a valid criticism' category group in the list of drawbacks was:

- *f. 'The MYP Moderation process takes too long'.*

This statement also gained relatively high responses in the 'significant validity' and 'valid criticism' categories (21%), indicating this was also an area of perceived weakness for the MYP. 16% of participants in this question selected **N/A**, most likely as their school does not moderate, meaning the comparisons between rankings have been diluted. The issue of time to moderate is more of a practical issue, and the IB has recently expedited turnaround times for moderation samples (International Baccalaureate 2009a:3).

4.2.4. Discourses Surrounding MYP Drawbacks

Discourses on drawbacks were analysed in the same way as those for benefits (4.2.2, page 124). The following themes were identified:

1. Teacher factors (37);
2. Programme administration (30);
3. Academic and theoretical concerns (16);
4. Administrator factors (10);

5. Student factors (8); and
6. Parents and board of trustee factors (5).

As with section 4.2, it is important to note this ranking of discursive themes is not a reliable indication of relative importance, but is useful to consider as an indicator of how commonly the drawback was mentioned, and therefore the strength of the theme amongst the participants. Specific comments and analysis results of note are discussed in more detail under each category below. The data complement the statistical data in 4.2.3 by providing details of the discourses surrounding the strength of the statements of perceived drawbacks; and also provide for triangulation of analysis.

4.2.4.1 Teacher Factors

With the majority of questionnaire respondents being teachers and/or MYP coordinators (78.7%), it was not surprising to find the most negative drawbacks under a 'teacher factors' theme.

Time and amount of work were the most common topic (N=18), however, these were justified in vastly different ways. In fact, this discursive theme had a fairly broad range, from simple statements (at times with sarcastic comments), to emotionally charged statements indicating high levels of negativity arising from the drawback. To give a range of these themes, a typical statement was 'teachers generally find the MYP more difficult as they have to prepare so much more material'. A variety of areas backed up this comment, such as comparing with the DP, the need to develop units, and the time taken to complete required assessment tasks. Frustrations and objections to the extra time and work were exhibited by the addition of negative comments such as 'this [time taken to get the MYP ready] distracts from the core business of teaching...there are only so many hours in a week', and "people are often rushed off their feet and do not plan effectively because of the lack of time'. At the far end of the range were more open negative and personally subjective statements, such as, 'teacher's time is taken up with retraining and ambiguity rather than the emotional needs of the student population. The MYP is the focus, not the students and their learning'; and teachers 'tired of re-inventing the wheel'.

There is no question that it takes time to prepare materials and lesson plans for the MYP, and common sense dictates learning new methods or facets of a programme will take extra time to learn. Thus, the time issue cannot be ignored, as the strength of this discursive theme demonstrates. The questions I ask as a principal to put this in perspective, however, are:

- a) What are the time/effort expectations for faculty in the particular school, and are they feasible and reasonable?;
- b) Are the time/effort expectations focused on student learning and do they contribute to the good of student learning (and therefore the school programme?); and,
- c) Are the time/effort expectations compensated for, and have the faculty agreed to receive this compensation in return for services towards reaching the school's goals?

If all answers are yes, then the time/effort factor should be viewed as a limitation within which schools need to work with, and not used as a reason to impede attempts to improve school learning and attain school goals. That being said, the analysis of the perceptions do suggest there are schools which have either deliberately or unknowingly over-loaded faculty, or introduced the MYP in a way that contributed to overload. The process of change is difficult, and some people are more adapt at adjusting to change than others, so this must be managed carefully and support provided (see section 2.4.1 on page 58 for best practices in school leadership).

Another aspect of the time/effort factor is considering the root causes behind these perceptions. It was interesting to consider who was responsible for constructing or re-constructing these perceptions. As an MYP workshop leader, I am often asked questions concerning time/amount of work issues at school. When asked to explain the issue using school-specific examples, a vast majority of the causes turn out to be more people related or school focussed than any MYP-related issue when the situation is deconstructed. This could be the case in at least some of the respondent's perceptions here as well. For example, the statements: 'the MYP is the focus, not the students and their learning'; and, 'MYP teachers are isolated' both raise issues that could occur in any programme, and may not be MYP-related at all.

Perceived need was used as a strong argument against the introduction of the MYP with statements expressing a discourse that 'things were going fine', so 'why change'. Fine text analysis, however, highlighted a weakness with this claim. When choosing what words to describe the current state of incumbent programmes, the following phrase were used: 'was working'; 'things are going fine'; and 'we're ok as we are'. With schools invariably stating their intent is to offer the best education they can, such acceptance for a status quo raises questions. Reasons for the satisfaction with current programmes may be valid, such as stated concerns with time and costs, and even a successful programme. However, a plausible explanation would be the criticisms largely stemmed from a resistance to change, and the plethora of reasons behind such resistance was contributing to the discourse. Two comments were absolute in their confidence they already had a 'top quality' programme and were obtaining 'excellent results', however, even the others containing a relatively positive range of statements such as the current programme 'was doing a good job' lacked the descriptive terminology one would expect if there was a high level of satisfaction with the current programme. This raises the question, is it satisfactory for a school to be complacent and do a good job, or should they attempt to do better, and strive for do an exemplary job?

A number of respondents (N=11) note a variety of negative experiences while implementing the programme, such as poor promotion, expectations based on ignorance of the programme, poor administrative implementing skills, using the wrong reasons for implementing and challenges resulting from staff reluctant to change. When deconstructed, these discourses arise from specific actions or difficulties brought about by the school and its personnel, and do not specifically target the MYP itself, although the implication was that they are caused by the MYP. This may be accurate in the sense it was the MYP being implemented. However, apart from attempting to educate schools and provide further assistance while implementing, many of these negative issues are not programme design factors, rather they are the by-product of implementation of a new programme. The IB would do well to heed these concerns as they can have a big impact on the successfulness of an implementation. One way of doing this is to produce a guide for schools, containing not just MYP-related information, but also strategies for leading change in educational institutions. There is much literature pertaining to this topic from specialists in educational and organisational change such as Fullan (2007) and Collins (Collins 2001), however, a more specific guide for implementing schools

would be helpful. It would be a useful exercise to explore these two sources in more depth to reflect on the data, however, time and space limits preclude doing so in this dissertation.

Another stated theme for a small number (N=4) of teachers was the complexity of the MYP, and the difficulty understanding it. Some referred to specific reasons for the difficulty such as more preparation of material needed and lack of ability to understand or have it explained, others simply stated it was 'too complex'. One comment referred to the resulting stress for faculty from the complexities, and respondent again linked this theme to others, such as the more effort theme: 'I didn't really understand the programme, and felt it was just more work'.

A number of discourses related to the faculty issues discursive theme were also raised by individuals and noted here for the record. These included negativity and 'not on board'; resistance to change because they 'need more time to prepare'; and philosophical lack of understanding or disagreeing, such as 'don't agree with assessment', and a desire for 'official examinations to provide a "mark"'.

As a summary, teacher factors included the following topics:

- Time and amount of work resulting from the MYP;
- Lack of a perceived need for the MYP;
- Issues dealing with implementation;
- Complexity of the MYP; and
- Related faculty issues (teacher negativity, resistance to change, philosophical differences).

4.2.4.2 Programme Administration

Perceived deficiencies (N=12) of the MYP were wide-ranging, but respondents often failed to specify the deficiencies leaving the perceived deficiency open to dispute due to lack of substance. For example, 'no curriculum' lacks the specificity to deconstruct as the MYP does provide many elements of a typical curriculum. Terminology aside, the MYP as a framework does lack other common elements, most noticeably content standards and benchmarks which some educators perceive as a deficiency in the

programme. A few reasons for respondents not agreeing with the MYP were: 'too much emphasized on result rather than the process and progression', 'the MYP is a mish-mash of too many popular, and often unsuccessful, theories', 'the students learn more using the MYP processes (a totally fallacious argument)', and 'there is so much emphasis on the overall, which does not take into account the pieces that make the overall on the way'. Other perceived deficiencies dealing with school-specific issues were drops in performance requiring 'honour role qualification' points to be lowered, and too many programmes at the school already.

Another curricula area noted as a deficiency was to do with the Assessment methodology, and particularly the lack of assessment criteria. Since the survey, the IB have expanded on their Year 5 exit criteria by providing interim objectives for Years 1 and 3, from which schools can develop assessment criteria for the lower grades. This has addressed this perceived deficiency somewhat, although it was a common complaint amongst practitioners that it is wasteful of time for each school to have to develop the criteria from the objectives.

Within the assessment area, proponents of external exam-based assessment were also present, such as, 'external examinations do provide a better standard to evaluate student standing'. The conflict with the exam-based IGCSE and the internally assessed and externally moderated MYP was also noted in schools that attempted to maintain both programmes, causing many to 'see [the] MYP as an imposition'.

Cost (N=6) was mentioned as a drawback. However, apart from professional development being noted by two respondents, cost statements were either not detailed, or used to reinforce another theme, such as this statement: 'time and costs and the existing programme was working so why change?', with *costs* and *time* added to reinforce the questioning of the need for change. The importance of professional development is highlighted in Chapter 2 (section 2.4 page 58), as well as being noted as one of the benefits of the MYP in the survey (see section 5.2.2.6, page 136 for collegial and professional development benefits to teachers). I found the low number of comments on costs in the survey surprising, as I have often heard costs used as a criticism of the IB. The annual fee for the MYP is US \$8000/year per school (as at 2010), not a small amount of money, however, this does include most services and resources. The other large (but variable) cost, however, stems from IB

requirements for ongoing professional development, and particularly in international schools where transport and lodging can balloon costs by a factor of three when they are held in a different country. PD is such an important part of school development, however, that it is difficult to attribute these costs as MYP-related, when schools will be, or should be spending a significant amount on this anyway. One possible explanation for the lack of comment on costs was the relatively low numbers of administrators responding to the questionnaire (12.3%); compared with coordinators (49.2%) and teachers (54.9%) (note some coordinators are also teachers, thus the total percentages do not equal 100%).

Lack of cohesiveness (N=5) was another specific topic spanning both philosophical aspects such as, 'there is no one philosophy underlying the program, and the theories run rampant'; and practical perceptions such as 'the school still has no cohesive program', and the 'MYP is not cohesive with the DP or any know curriculum'.

As a summary, programme administration included the following topics:

- Perceived deficiencies of the MYP;
- Assessment methodology;
- Cost; and
- Lack of cohesiveness.

4.2.4.3 Academic and Theoretical Concerns

Further to assessment methodology concerns noted in section 5.2.4.2 above, issues with the criterion-related assessment system seemed to raise particularly acerbic comments on varying aspects of teaching methodology. The words 'absurd', 'sub-standard', and 'joke' were all used in relation to the topic, along with verbs such as 'jettison', and analogies such as combining democracy with dictatorship. In summary, practitioners noting the assessment as a drawback suggested it was too difficult to measure outcomes due to (1) the multiple aspects requiring a 'number', (2) taking up too much time in class, (3) they are difficult to understand, and (4) the mixture of formative and summative assessment didn't work.

The point that 'students are not encouraged to learn content' was noted, and especially in relation to preparing students for the DP. Again it was interesting to observe some respondents do not seem to realise content is largely within the school's control within the MYP framework, so rather than being an MYP issue, was a criticism the school needs to address. A specific content-related comment did specify the requirement arising from the objectives for One World in science, stating it leads to 'trivializing the learning rather than focusing on the comprehension'. In my experience I have heard MYP science teachers argue the One World component takes time away from giving content, but contrary to the above, most acknowledge it does enhance understanding by enabling students to relate what they are learning to the world around them.

The AOs were noted as 'difficult to assess', with one respondent saying it was not until Year 5 when students were doing their personal project that they could see the picture clearly, at which point it was too late to correct the early learning. The issue of how to maximise the benefits of the AOs is one I find many schools continue to struggle with.

As a summary, academic and theoretical concerns included the following topics:

- Assessment issues;
- Content; and
- AOs.

4.2.4.4 Administrator Factors

Change knowledge appears to be an important factor missing in many schools that have implemented the MYP. Changes in administration were reported to help in many cases, however, 'frequent changes made implementation difficult' in other schools.

While it was unclear if the anti-admin feelings are a result of the lack of change management skills or simply a feature of the leaders in the schools, ineffective leaders 'more worried with the dollars and cents and educational leadership' and the implementation of the MYP allowing 'administrators to feel good' about getting IB

World status are reported. One head of school was reported to become arrogant after the school became a full IB school, while at the same time not really understanding many aspects but not making an attempt to learn. Another respondent seemed to think the MYP consumed too much of the administrators time, as they became 'MYP watchdogs'.

The related topic of management skills contained further evidence of administrative fallibility, such as the perceived imbalance of resources spent on the MYP not addressing the needs of the students and little time spent on the DP. Of note are the 'trickle down effect' school leader's actions have on teachers, as reported by one respondent whose administration was displaying ambivalence.

As a summary, administrator administration included the following topics:

- Change knowledge;
- Anti-admin feelings; and
- Management skills.

4.2.4.5 Student Factors

As mentioned in 4.2.4.3 Academic and theoretical concerns above, content and DP preparation are also issues within this subtheme, with the general complaint being 'students are not held accountable for the content needed for a university bound student'. More specifically in some schools, students are reported to be lacking study skills and work habits in preparation for the DP. What was not clear was if the lack of study skills is a result of the MYP, or from school programme deficiencies.

Student motivation was raised by one respondent, suggesting 'students do not seem to be as concerned with scores'. This could be due to any number of reasons, however, such as from a lack of understanding of the criterion-related assessment, or a general lack of motivation in the student body separate to the MYP itself of students' socialisation into the importance of assessment scores as an external motivator to learn. Similarly, due to the change to no exams, one school also noted students felt a bit like they were 'floating' as to how they stand with no exit

examinations to work towards which impacted upon their working as hard as they could.

In addition to student motivation, a few negative opinions were noted regarding students leaving the school 'because' of the MYP, and that there was no evidence of student benefit but 'plenty of evidence of students struggling'.

As a summary, student factors included the following topics:

- Content and DP preparation;
- Student motivation; and
- Negative opinions.

4.2.4.6 Parents and Board of Trustee Factors

The complexity of the programme was noted and especially the assessment process and how these impacted upon stakeholders. The clarification of the programme is a critical area for the IB to address in order to diminish the promotion of these negative discourses. The need for to explain the MYP was highlighted by the comment that the MYP 'befuddles parents into silence'. The choice of the word 'befuddles' was interesting to note in this context as a linguistic tool used to promote a negative discourse through word-use association.

The discourse promoted that exams, as used in the IGCSE, were more trustworthy than the MYP form of assessment. Power issues are also highlighted by this example: 'there are in fact very few [British parents] in the school', however, the board promoted the discourse in order to resist MYP assessment. One respondent noted parents 'did not want an elitist program in their school'.

As a summary, parents and board of trustee factors included the following topics:

- Complexity of the programme, especially assessment;
- Personal biases; and
- Elitism.

4.3 Comparisons Among Perceptions

A comparison of the perceptions by teachers, administrators and coordinators was done as part of the CDA in order to see if, and what, differences in perception practitioners had. It was interesting to note very little variance in the discursive themes located between the three participant groups. The length of comments was variable in all three groupings. One contributor to this was likely to be from the multiple roles many of the participants had; that is, as 23.8% of the respondents (administrators and teachers) were also coordinators. The few observable differences were with administrators were more likely to note systems change and financial discourses more often than other groups, and teachers focussed more on teaching factor discourses. However this was not exclusive; administrators noted teaching factors ('I think it rescued my teaching'), and teachers noted big picture discourses ('with a global perspective and a sense teachers are accountable to international standards').

Results from the levels of agreement to the commonly stated benefits and drawbacks were also compared to the results of the discourses analysis for discourses surrounding the benefits and drawbacks. This served as triangulation, as well as to inform our understanding of the strengths of the perceptions (from the levels of agreement to the statements); and our understanding of why those levels may be high or low for the various stated discourses.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter answered Research Question 1, '*How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be **beneficial** for student learning?*', with a focus on the benefits and drawbacks practitioners perceive the MYP to have? Two types of responses from participants were analysed: the first to identify levels of agreement or disagreement on commonly stated benefits and drawbacks/negative perceptions of the MYP; with the second a discussion surrounding the findings of the CDA on the textual data regarding perceptions surrounding benefits and the drawbacks.

When considered together, the CDA results provide a textual background to the strength of perceptions provided by the statements, and served to act as triangulation of the data. The literature review in Chapter 2 also assisted understanding the issues raised, and provided the basic framework of effective schools and best practices with which to refer to when considering data for inclusion as examples of themes worthy of mention.

Results of the commonly stated benefits and drawbacks/negative perceptions of the MYP are summarised in table 4.1 (page 121) and table 4.2 (page 139). As a summary, the six top-ranked benefits (% 'very beneficial' and 'beneficial') included:

- The MYP promotes communication as a fundamental concept (93);
- The MYP promotes intercultural awareness as a fundamental concept (91);
- The IB promotes the use of Interdisciplinary Links, which enhances meaningful connections by students (91);
- The MYP promotes holistic learning as a fundamental concept (90);
- The MYP provides a framework rather than a set curriculum, allowing schools to implement the program while satisfying their particular curricular requirements. (87); and
- The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment. (87).

The six stated benefits perceived to be least beneficial included the following (% 'disadvantageous' and 'very disadvantageous'):

- If your school has the MYP and the IBDP: The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme (10);
- The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes (8);
- The MYP uses criterion based assessment (8);
- The IBO governance structure allows for practicing educators to have input in the continuing development of the programme (7);
- The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment (7); and

- The MYP is flexible, allowing schools in different systems and situations to implement the program yet maintain their core values and/or state-mandated systems (6).

The five top-ranked drawbacks respondents agreed with included the following (% 'valid criticism' and 'significant validity'):

- The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level (25);
- The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors) (24);
- The MYP moderation processes takes too long (21);
- The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects (19); and
- The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be (18).

The six top-ranked drawbacks respondents did not agree were valid criticisms (% 'not a valid criticism'):

- The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class, and take time away from teaching content and subject skills (61);
- The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting (58);
- The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious (52);
- The MYP is too difficult to understand (43);
- The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be (40); and
- The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects (40).

Results to the CDA on the benefits of the MYP yielded the following discursive themes:

1. School programme benefits;
2. Student-related benefits;
3. Academic features/Instructional advantages;
4. Preparation for the Diploma Programme (DP)/continuum of learning (from the PYP and on to the DP);
5. Marketing and Public Relations (PR);
6. Collegial and professional development (PD) benefits to teachers; and
7. Other.

Results to the CDA on the drawbacks included the following discursive themes:

1. Teacher factors;
2. Programme administration;
3. Academic and theoretical concerns;
4. Administrator factors;
5. Student factors; and
6. Parents and board of trustee factors.

The perceived value of the areas of interaction was noted. However, further development of how they are used in practice could assist the IB in correcting the relatively high negative perceptions surrounding the AOI outlined as in Table 4.1, and as detailed within the CDA.

One respondent noted the benefit the MYP brought to gifted students. Further research on this perception would be useful to determine exactly what the MYP offers to promote this perception, and how such features can be promoted.

While these results offer insight to what discourses have been constructed for the various discursive themes presented, further research on the relative importance of each area would be beneficial to reveal which areas are considered most beneficial. For example, further development of how the MYP directly relates to student learning would be beneficial, as this study presented a relatively broad expose of benefits as perceived by practitioners. The further research on each area would in turn be useful to the IB and practitioners, assisting the allocation of resources to promote those areas, and address the areas needing attention. Further analysis between various

stakeholders could also be useful to highlight differences between each interest group, and resulting identification of discourses that could be helpful in drawing practical conclusions to assist with implementation planning.

Chapter 5 Discourses Surrounding the Promotion of the MYP

5.1 Introduction

How the MYP is being promoted in schools is important to consider in order to identify the dominant discourses being constructed, deconstructed and re-constructed by various interest groups. These discourses are useful to further inform our understanding of what it is about the MYP that practitioners perceive to be important. Accordingly, this chapter focuses on the promotion of the MYP addressing Research Question 2, “*How is the MYP being **promoted** in schools?*”. Arguments and rationales being used are explored, and what kinds of ideas these arguments and rationales draw on. Understanding which of these arguments and rationales appear to be successful or unsuccessful, in what context, and why, will assist in identifying rationales for the decision to implement the MYP; and will provide insight when considering implementation strategies.

Eleven discursive themes emerged from a critical discourse analysis on the data using NVivo as outlined in the methodology chapter (page 76):

1. Middle years schooling philosophy, pedagogy and academic attributes arising from the MYP;
2. Marketing and public relations;
3. Teacher factors and professional development;
4. Promotion of negative aspects of the MYP;
5. Student and parent considerations;
6. Promotion of issues surrounding the implementation of the MYP;
7. Programme quality control;
8. Preparation for the DP;
9. Programme coherence and transience;
10. Internationalism of the programme; and
11. Other.

As in the other findings chapters, N values are only given when relevant to highlight numbers of comments, or lack of them (see Chapter 4, page 119 for a discussion on

why this is done). The chapter concludes with a summary of findings, which leads into the proceeding chapter covering the implementation of the MYP.

5.2 Findings on the Promotion of the MYP

Eleven discursive themes emerged from the discourses when a critical discourse analysis was applied to the data provided by open ended items collected from questionnaire. Respondents were all MYP practitioners – that is teachers, MYP coordinators and school administrators. The sources of the discourses being promoted therefore all come from this school-based “interest group”, with a few exceptions where noted (such as those derived directly from the IB). Other interest groups are reported *by* the respondents to be promoting various themes as well, but it should be noted these reported discourses are constructed by respondent’s perceptions, and may not reflect the perceptions held by the reported interest groups. While comparisons between reported and actual perceptions of other interest groups would be interesting, it was out of the scope of this study, and only reported discourses are examined.

5.2.1 Middle Years Schooling Philosophy, Pedagogy and Academic Attributes Arising from the MYP

A broad discursive theme covering middle years schooling philosophy, pedagogy and academic attributes arising from the MYP was identified, and contained six topics covering representations and constructions of philosophical, pedagogical and academic attributes respondents perceived to be promoted by the MYP (N=41). The source of promotion appears to stem largely from the IB itself, however, the discourses have been (and are being) promulgated via practitioners, often with personal interpretations of the formal IB discourses being officially promoted. The underlying subtext about MYP philosophy and pedagogy being promoted was that the programme is contemporary, progressive and research-based; with resulting attributes gained by participating students viewed as a positive for the programme.

The largest topic involved philosophical statements and pedagogical references (N=27) used by the IB and practitioners teaching the MYP. Specific references to contemporary research-based philosophies with resulting pedagogical practices being promoted by the MYP participants included: 'constructivism', 'multi-pluralism', 'multicultural education', 'critical pedagogy', 'multiple intelligences', 'behaviourism', 'brain-based learning', 'control theory of motivation', 'observational learning', 'social cognition and learning', 'criterion-referenced assessment', 'skills-based', 'values-based', 'holistic' and 'using understanding by design'.

These were the words and phrases used to promote the MYP as were the names of specific educational theorists contributing to the MYP philosophy and pedagogical practices employed by the MYP included: Bloom, Gardner, Piaget, Bartlett, Jonasson, Friere, Vygotsky, Magers, Wiggins and McTighe.

Details on how these practices and theorists have contributed to the development of the MYP were not given. However, specific contributions to educational theory from these people were correlated to IB-stated characteristics and the published philosophical underpinnings of the MYP. The correlation shows that these respondents can 'reproduce' the official discourse. For instance, I found the wide range of names presented interesting, as there is currently no one document produced by the IB covering the philosophy of the MYP in depth, and many of the names above (and indeed, even some of the educational philosophies) are not specifically mentioned in official IB documents. The results of the questionnaire CDA serve as evidence, then, that connections have been made by many practitioners to contemporary middle years theories, many of which are espoused as educational 'best practices' as highlighted in section 2.4 (page 58) of the literature in Chapter 2. In other words, the interested parties have turned the MYP into a form that suits a range of educational philosophies and practices. It also shows that they have become inscribed by the official discourse.

Considering the number of educators I have met who question the validity of the MYP, I have often thought that it would be beneficial for the IB to produce a document elaborating on these theories and how they have contributed to the ongoing development of the programme. There has been increasingly detailed guides over the few years, such as those regarding learning in languages other than a mother tongue (IBO 2004b), interdisciplinary teaching and learning (Boix-Mansilla

2010) and a recently announced plan to publish a 'History of the Middle Years Programme' in September 2010 (International Baccalaureate 2009b:3-4) covering the people, thinking and research behind the programme model, principles and practices. An improved understanding of the philosophical background to the MYP may well be a great boost to the IB and schools promoting the MYP, as it will provide an articulated reason for the educational practices used. In doing so, however, the IB may at the same time limit the capacity of individual schools to tailor the MYP to the school's position.

References to affective attributes gained by students in the MYP was the next prevalent topic (N=7), and covered a number considered to be of benefit to students. Attributes noted included: 'attitude', 'holistic thinking', 'international understanding', 'intercultural awareness', 'thinking about the "big picture"', 'developing well-rounded students', 'encouraging students to challenge themselves academically', 'contributors to the learning environment', and 'contributes to students developing skills of inquiry'.

The variety of positive attributes claimed by the interest group arising from the programme appears impressive. Many of these attributes can be linked to the promotion of the three fundamental concepts of the MYP - communication, intercultural awareness and holistic learning.

The promotion of the importance of affective attributes was particularly interesting to note as similar statements are promoted in many schools (including non-IB schools) as key attributes schools desire all students to learn. These are often presented via 'expected school-wide learning results' or 'school learning objectives', and statements that present the qualities and attributes the school desires their students to learn. In IB schools, these may be presented as school-wide learning results due to historical or accrediting agency requirements; however, they tend to be reflections of the IB Learner Profile as the learner profile is required by to be embraced by school. These attributes are difficult to quantify, however, and in my experience they are not systematically measured by many schools at the middle and high school levels, except for some common report card references which are largely subjective evaluations by teachers; or rubrics covering approaches to learning type skills such as organisational and collaborative skills. The PYP does measure these attributes more extensively than the MYP so as to provide foci to PYP units of inquiry, and students reflect on how they have shown the target attributes. In fact, historically, the

IB Learner Profile was derived from what was called the PYP learner attributes. There is a philosophical difference in opinion between PYP and MYP/DP teachers regarding the validity of assessing the attributes. Teachers in the upper grades tend towards an increasing focus on curriculum content and learning-specific skills as compared to the more esoteric Learner Profile attributes. There is little argument about their desirability, however, rather on how much class time should be devoted to them, and if and how they should be measured at the middle and high school levels.

Considering the number of affective factors mentioned above, it was not surprising to find a positive effect on student academics being promoted. This does contradict the discourse from a few teachers who considered the MYP lacking in academic rigour as mentioned in section 5.2.4 (pg 142). Recent data specifically supporting the academic benefits of the MYP (International Baccalaureate 2009d:4-5) boosts the credibility of the dominant discourse findings from Chapter 4, that the MYP, along with its focus on developing the affective areas, can provide positive effects which enhance student academic learning. I believe this was significant in that it challenges the incumbent discourse of an industrial-age model of education which has proven lacking in many important areas such as the trivialisation of community and mismatch between the traditional classroom practices and brain-based learning (Abbott & Ryan 2000:6). It has important implications for curriculum design in schools attempting to provide a learning environment for their students that maximises meaningful and long-lasting learning.

An example of an important specific skill, 'clearly demonstrable amongst MYP students', was long term project management and essay writing skills. From context, this most likely refers to the personal project carried out in grade 10, the final year of the programme.

5.2.2 Marketing and Public Relations (PR)

Based on both the frequency measured by number of times it was commented on by different participants, and ways this theme was constructed, the power of the public relations image of the International Baccalaureate was an important and valuable factor for the IB and schools in a variety of ways, and yields 'significant impact'. The IB has been successful in promoting itself as a quality programme provider, as

evidenced by the discourses being re-constructed by respondents, for example, reporting that the IB is on the 'cutting edge of education', has a 'desire for the "best" programme' and has a 'rigorous academic purpose'. It is to be expected that schools choosing to use the IB will also appreciate the name recognition associated with the IB. However, it was interesting to note the discourses in this section were more focused on the popularity, brand name, recognizable label, prestige, image, and attraction the IB brings; and the associated marketing value of these perceptions. These discourses are constructed in various ways, ranging from direct use of promotion such as, 'the MYP is used as a marketing tool' (that is for increasing school numbers), to the targeted use of the MYP to 'keep families in our school system', and make the school more 'attractive' to the community, and bring students back to their 'home school instead of private schools'. It was also interesting to note 'there has been no large-scale attempt to market IB programmes as growth levels created by 'word of mouth' promotion have always absorbed and stretched any spare capability' (IBO 2006a:7).

The implications to these marketing discourses highlight the competition schools face to enrol students. This not only includes international schools, but also private and public schools, and highlights the important reality that attracting and retaining students is an economic force that schools simply cannot afford to ignore. When the data were coded for marketing and PR, it was interesting to note the discursive theme regarding attracting students to a school was more evident than the theme regarding attracting good teachers. Perhaps this is because the majority of income for schools comes from student fees - and the majority of expense is teacher benefit packages. When it comes to marketing and PR, however, it is more likely that students' parents are the targets, and the desire for good teachers is raised in other discourses (such as section 5.2.3 teacher factors and 5.2.7 programme quality control). Furthermore, good teachers are attracted to schools with good reputations and good students, so there is a run-on effect of being able to attract good students.

The confidence in the 'IB' brand name by respondents was impressive. Rather concerning, however, are assumptions that an IB school has reached ideal levels of education. My experiences in visiting schools for IB authorisation and evaluation visits as well as accreditation visits for the US-based Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC) accrediting commission tell me it is not this simple. The number of school-related issues requiring attention in MYP schools raised by

respondents supports this, so it would more accurate to recognise that schools are at different stages in their levels of effectiveness, and that there are many facets involved this multi-layered continuum. They may also be doing well in one area, and quite poorly in another. My conclusion is, simply having the IB World School label does not necessarily guarantee the best education possible is being provided by the school. What it does mean, however, is that the IB standards and practices have been met by a school in order to be authorised; and perhaps more importantly, there are monitoring structures in place to ensure continued improvement over time in order to keep the authorisation.

When respondent statements were analysed in the CDA, a number of common reasons for the promotion of the IB for PR and marketing purposes are given. The most common was the name recognition factor discussed above. More specific reasons were; the IB can be used to drive curriculum and programme development; and the organisation provides a plethora of resources and professional development opportunities that benefit the schools. While these discourses are openly promoted at a practitioner level, it would be interesting to see how far they have penetrated the student and parent body. From the data in this research, the community were represented as being more generally interested in the brand name, and the competition between schools was highlighted a number of times (and when taken in context, this seems to be especially so in the United States). For example, a number of schools were reported to have implemented all three IB programmes in order to benefit from the public relations gained from the implementation in order to attract students to their school. Of course this could just be the perception of practitioners; however, it was telling that little was mentioned in the PR and marketing discourses about the value of the continuum and the academic value of having all three programmes. Perhaps this was because it is inherent in why the IB has such brand-name strength.

Data from the closed items section of the questionnaire (appendix vii, page 252, question 43) highlights the PR power of the IB. When asked to rank the importance of seven commonly stated reasons for schools deciding to implement the MYP, the highest percentage (61%) of respondents ranked 'to promote your school by offering an IB programme' as very important. Another PR and marketing reason, 'to make your school distinct from other schools in your region' also received high rankings for

being very important (47%). The 'perceived educational benefits of the MYP' was ranked 'very important' by 48% of respondents.

In light of the importance of marketing and PR to end-users of the MYP discussed in the findings above, it may well be important for the IB to protect and nurture positive discourses, and protect the underlying features that have contributed towards their current status. The IBO strategic plan of 2004 went to great lengths to do this by making quality control one of the three major foci for the organisation. Evidence of ongoing attention to this area was apparent. For example, the publication of the *MYP: From principles into practice* document (International Baccalaureate 2008b) contained a large number of specific requirements previously only recommended, and therefore clarifying desired practices. While this may have been largely the product of ongoing programme development, it also reflects the strategic plan in intending to increase quality control. Further evidence of this ongoing quest are new standards and practices being developed along with updated authorisation and evaluation features, and the recent announcement that it will soon be a requirement for all authorised MYP schools to undertake moderation, albeit in a different form (International Baccalaureate 2010c:2-3). Moderation requires samples of student work to be sent to trained IB moderators, who check for appropriate use of task and assessment criteria, and validate the authenticity of the work. This is a big move from the current situation whereby moderation is optional. Related to marketing, the impact of more stringent or difficult criteria in offering the MYP could be to lower the PR draw of the IB name for some schools, but for others, enhance it as perceptions of quality are likely to be enhanced.

5.2.3 Teacher Factors and Professional Development (PD)

Increased collaboration and collegiality amongst faculty were dominant in this discursive theme. In addition to the shared philosophy and enhanced focus on the programme, respondents noted the resources and professional development provided by the IB lead to feelings of being 'more effective as an international teacher'. Administrators were observed communicating more with teachers, and being 'knowledgeable and open-minded to new ideas'. While many of these effects will also be dependent on the type of school administrator, the change was noticed in this discourse and attributed to the MYP implementation. My experiences with

implementing the MYP also confirm enhanced collaboration was an invaluable by-product from the implementation, and it definitely provided an 'impetus to collaborative planning' as noted by respondents promoting this discourse. Bottom line is, with the research highlighting the benefits of collaboration amongst teachers (as noted in section 2.4.2, page 68), it is a powerful testament to hear the following statements: 'I had to move out of my insular departmental position and collaborate with others to define what was important in our middle school curriculum and how to improve students' learning over the 5 years of the programme'.

Professional development provided (and required) by the MYP was another topic. One respondent articulated this by stating the 'excellent' professional development 'makes me reflect on my performance and try to improve'. Over the years there have been various opinions on the effectiveness of the professional development offered by the IB, however, while my research did not specifically ask about the quality of the PD, respondents to the survey referred to PD in positive ways.

A 'good' versus 'bad' school discourse was identified through the statement, 'what separates good schools from bad schools are the quality of teachers some schools have versus others'. The focus on quality professional development will obviously contribute to the developing of desired practices, however, perhaps as important is the way a good school attracts good teachers. Good teachers are hard to find, and the IB label has proven, at least in my experience, to be a powerful attraction to such teachers.

One statement that leads into the next section on the promotion of negative aspects was, 'all teachers are on board, there is always ongoing and fruitful discussion about educational initiatives, and staff collaborate more than in other systems'. This comment complements the above promotion of collaboration, but also highlights the need for all teachers to be 'on board' for the collaboration to be ongoing and fruitful. The reality in many schools implementing the programme is there are often incumbent faculty who do not want to teach the MYP for various reasons (such as those discussed in the drawbacks and negative aspects findings in section 4.2.4, page 142). For schools starting the MYP afresh, this is not as big an issue, providing faculty who are open to the MYP are employed.

To summarise, the teacher factors and professional development discursive topic included a noted increase in collaboration and collegiality, and 'excellent' professional development that lead to the development on quality teachers.

5.2.4 Negative aspects of the MYP

The two main topics in this discursive theme are (1) the MYP takes a lot of work, time and effort; and (2) it is complex and confusing. These aspects have been covered in Chapter 4.

Another discourse that emerged was constructed around overstated values of the MYP, along with a perceived view that the current programme in the school, or another programme, would be as good as the MYP. For example, one respondent noted 'there are many local curricula that are just as good'. But if that were the case, the question begs, why then did the school not choose them? A similar comment was, 'in terms of student advantages, providing a program based upon similar though unofficial MYP ideals will most likely have the same effect'. After all, if the MYP is a programme containing current best practices, couldn't a school make use of the same best practice with similar effect? As identified in Chapter 2, the MYP is not simply a collection of best practices, rather a complete holistic programme based on best practices, delivered in a specific manner, with the experience and backing of the well-established and reputable IB which provides support and ongoing programme development and professional development, in an accountable manner.

A related discourse was the MYP 'should not be sold as a gifted program' (that is, implying it is a programme designed for advanced students). This was a good example of a non-IB-related discourse likely promoted by the school for local benefit. This position is not stated in any IB literature. This comment may stem from feelings some practitioners have towards the DP which has received such criticism in the past as it is a rigorous college preparatory programme. If anything, the criticism I have heard about the MYP is that it is too easy – a perception shared by some who believe the use of criterion-related assessment allows students to gain higher levels when compared to traditional assessment methodologies relying on exams to rank students. Again, it should be noted that schools chose to use the MYP framework, so while they are provided objectives and assessment criteria, they make use of school-

developed (or imported) curricula standards and benchmarks, and therefore have significant control over the level of rigor in their curriculum. Additional factors such as admission policies (the ability of students being admitted) and hiring/firing policies (how good the teachers are) would also have a major impact on how rigorous a school's programme can become. With regard to the IB, the official discourse regarding the myth that the IB is only for the brightest students is: 'the IB designed and promotes the Primary and Middle Years Programmes as "all-school" programmes that should be offered to every student' (International Baccalaureate 2007a:15). It was not surprising for some schools to promote a discourse of elitism, however, in efforts to attract students from competing schools.

Another negative discourse noted was the relatively high costs to offer the MYP. Cost was also raised as a drawback to the MYP in Chapter 4 (page 142), but surprisingly, not to the level I expected based on the number of verbal comments I have received over the years. One possible reason for this was the data gathered for this study was mostly (91%) from current MYP school practitioners, who by already working in MYP schools, will have either had the decision the cost was worth it already made, or have experienced the reality of the costs involved. In addition, 79% of the respondents were teachers and coordinators, so are not likely to be as concerned with the total costs as administrators would be.

When actual costs of the MYP are evaluated, they are not as high as some seem to think, and the growth of the programme, especially in state schools, indicates costs are acceptable to those who value the programme. As an administrator of an IB World School offering all three programmes, I found total costs considerable and more expensive than some alternatives; but this was not due to the fees, and rather due to the training costs of the teachers. The IB (International Baccalaureate 2007a:14) note 'the annual school fee and student assessment fee for teaching the five-year MYP in an average school of 400 students comes in at around US\$43 per student per year'. They then go on to note there are additional expenses associated with offering the course, such as the 'need to recruit more and better teachers, teacher training, extra staff, etc' (International Baccalaureate 2007a:14). This is where the high cost is to schools, with personnel costs typically comprising 75-85% of the total school budget (Lunenburg & Ornstein 1996:523), and professional development costs, particularly for international schools, exceeding US\$30,000 a year for a small international school (J. Schell 2010, pers.com., Jun 17).

A number of negative discourses highlighting discontent with the differences between the MYP and the DP were also identified. One theme was MYP teachers are isolated from the DP teachers because of different objectives and practices. Another theme was the MYP demands more than the DP does, so MYP teachers work harder and have more meetings. One respondent views the effect of the MYP on the school as a downgrading of student expectations and performance, with students entering the DP with 'research and computer skills enhanced, but a lack of content and comprehension of the basic knowledge of the subject'.

Many of the negative issues identified above really appear to involve school or personnel issues or result from a lack of ability to lead change in an implementing school. As such they are not a direct result of the MYP design but its in-school implementation. If left unaddressed, the negative discourses can contribute to a groundswell of dissent as demonstrated by the anti-IB website "Truth about IB" (Truth About IB nd) who state they 'represent the most comprehensive compilation of investigative research on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program', in order 'to provide factual information and resources to parents and taxpayers who have unanswered questions about IB'. The site has a considerable amount of misinformation and much nationalistic rhetoric which contribute to a lack of credibility, however, it is a factor the IB need to consider.

As a summary, the negative aspects surrounding the MYP were found to include the extra work, time and effort the programme requires, overstated value of the programme in schools, high costs, and a variety of negative experiences practitioners had when implementing the programme.

5.2.5 Student and Parent Considerations

While academics and academic skills were noted, the majority of topics represented in this discursive theme related to multiple positive benefits to students in social and personal growth areas. This was interesting to note, as 'life skills' are considered important by those promoting the discourse and a valuable contribution to the education of students. Many of the discourses promoted in this section were noted by

respondents to be 'difficult to measure quantitatively', however, the collective voice of the discourse does provide an indication of perceptions of importance.

Being one of the three fundamental concepts of the MYP, and also present in the IB Learner Profile (see section 2.2.1, page 30), it is not surprising that communication was recognised along with enhanced collaboration. For example, one comment was, 'we noticed that students entering the DP are better team players than before the implementation of the MYP. They are caring and better communicators'.

Two other fundamental concepts were also represented in the data. Comments supporting a holistic concept such as, 'students get a sense of connectedness', are 'better prepared for life generally', and 'MYP students tend to be more balanced than their counterparts in terms of maturity, being responsible, or self-disciplined'. Supporting the cultural awareness concept were comments such as 'international understanding' is promoted by the MYP, and 'our students appear to be more globally aware and more communicative'. Perhaps one reason a relatively high proportion of comments related to these fundamental concepts is of their promotion through professional development and IB literature.

The fundamental concepts (page 36) are central to the MYP and heavily promoted by IB literature. It was of import then, to note fine textual analysis of the data raises a question about how well some teachers understand the fundamental concepts. To say the MYP 'treat[s] the student holistically, whilst still being academically strong', suggests a diametrical opposition to being both holistic and academic. Many argue these are complementary, with research highlighting the benefits of balanced life skills alongside more traditional ideas of 'academics'. Hoerr (2008:83-84), for example, looks at the big picture and questions what *successful* means, and how it differs in school and in life. He concludes: 'Schools should develop concrete plans to foster the personal characteristics that school staff members believed students need to succeed'. Business groups likewise indicate they desire well-rounded skills in prospective employees with extended academic skills (including critical thinking and communication), personal management and teamwork skills noted (Corporate Council on Education nd). There is much discussion going on in the academic field to define these concepts, as evidenced by educational conference themes, journal and magazine articles and books published on international education in recent times (for

example articles in the *Journal of Research in International Education* and *International Schools Journal*; Hayden et al (2007).

In addition to the above, other attributes of the IB student Learner Profile (see section 2.2.1, page 30) were also mentioned in the promotion of this discourse. Direct reference was made to the students being risk takers, balanced and caring. Indirect references to MYP students being relatively knowledgeable, thinkers, inquirers, principled, open minded, and reflective. Having all ten attributes clearly identifiable within this discursive theme was evidence the MYP programme in schools is successfully promoting the learner profile attributes, at least as far as the practitioners who contributed to this study are concerned.

Reference was likewise made both directly and indirectly to elements of the Areas of Interaction (AOI) (see section 2.2.1, page 30). Direct reference was made to the programme 'having an impact in the area of community service', and developing students' 'social and environmental conscience'. Indirect reference to Approaches to Learning skills such as organisational skills, 'heightened research skills' and learning to be responsible for one's own learning were also made. Aspects of Health and Social Education and Human Ingenuity were evident. Like the aspects of the Learner Profile above, presence of so many references to the areas of interaction do highlight the promotion of the AOIs in this theme, albeit less obviously than the Learner Profile. This was not surprising considering the nature and purpose of the AOIs are more specific to pedagogical practices; while the Learner Profile is more public and identifiable.

Further to above but more specifically, student attitudes and personal qualities such as social skills, maturity, being responsible and self disciplined were mentioned, and involvement in student government and extracurricular activities were noted as a characteristic of MYP students. In addition, the MYP was credited with providing an avenue for students with learning disabilities to have a 'chance to do as well as the "normal" students'. Lower socio-economic students have 'benefited from the resources devoted to this program', and 'ESL students can score well on some criteria that focus on concepts or content, despite their limited command of English'.

Students entering from different schools and systems were noted to benefit from the programme. It was no surprise then, that student satisfaction with the programme

was noted with discourses such as ‘student satisfaction and buy-in to school is about 3,000 times greater than in regular classes’, and ‘it took time and success with the(se) students for them to come around. They are our biggest supporters now’.

Enhanced parent involvement was reported to occur in various ways. One interesting example was the MYP ‘offered an opportunity for different socio-economic groups to mix in a positive ways’. Another was ‘the parents get more involved and the community service involves parents and community. It brings a sense of pride and unity to the school’. With home-school collaboration identified as a trait of highly effective schools (see page 52), this is a valuable aspect any programme should strive for.

To summarise, student and parent considerations included communication and enhanced collaboration resulted from the MYP, as well as the holistic nature and the cultural awareness of the programme. The learner profile attributes were identified, as were specific areas of interaction, with positive results to student attitudes and personal qualities. Students entering from different schools and systems were noted to benefit from the programme, and parents were reported to gain an enhanced involvement in education of their children.

5.2.6 Promotion of Issues Surrounding the Implementation of the MYP

Discourses surrounding the promotion of the MYP with regard to implementation of the programme in schools centre on professional development, communication of information, and issues to do with change. Discourses surrounding the implementation of the programme are discussed in detail in Chapter 6, so this section focuses on how such issues are promoted externally by the IB, and internally within schools.

The importance and value of professional development in various forms was highlighted again in this discursive theme. In addition to workshops, suggestions were made to have key personnel visit other schools, or to invite specialists to visit the school for in-school training and to ask for their advice. Since the survey was carried out, online workshops have been offered by the IB to facilitate professional development in areas such as an introduction to the programme and a range of

specific courses to build specific skills such as developing MYP unit plans. Collaborative planning was also listed as important.

It was interesting to note the offer of professional development was used in some schools for 'critical mass wooing'. It would be interesting to investigate how effective this tactic was, however, my experience with teachers is that, unless a teacher is open to change anyway, such use of professional development to entice buy-in tends to have minimal effect. On the other hand, it could be very positive to a school as a whole, not just for the enhanced understanding of the program, but also as an indication that the school is willing to put money towards the programme, sending the message that it is important and will be supported.

The communication of information regarding the programme to parents and students was noted to be important, with responses such as 'flood the parents coming in with information and invite them as often as possible to see the students work and their accomplishments'. Having 'longitudinal comparative studies would be useful' to convince stakeholders of the value of the programme as well, and there is an increasing amount if this available to schools. One school made good use of students as a source of information sharing, by doing 'a lot of work with students so they understood, and could explain to parents'.

The issues dealing with change arising from the implementation of the programme (and in particular the initiation phase) are complex and wide-ranging. A first key question a school might ask is, "should it undertake implementation, considering the programme requirements and the resources available to the school?" How this question is answered will vary according to a range of factors including types of schools and leadership styles. The majority indicated the decision to implement was not a collaborative one. A typical dictatorial-like decision was, 'I expressed that this was the way that the school was going. We would give people time to understand the program and time to discuss and implement but at the end of the day if they did not like it they could leave with no hard feelings'. A proprietary school reported 'one person (owner) made the decision, the board OK'd it and we were told to make it happen'. A public school system response was, 'district level administrators have made it clear that implementation is not an option' and will proceed (regardless of alternative opinions). This respondent did acknowledge 'enormous support (materials, time, etc) has been provided to each and every teacher', however. This highlights

another important issue relating to change, whereby an assessment needs to be made for what resources will be required, and a plan developed to ensure these resources are delivered.

Resistance to change was a common discourse constructed by respondents, as highlighted by this stereotypical response: 'The only problem with the MYP program is that some of the "old fogies" refuse to try something so new and foreign to them'. A common feature of traditional teaching methods is the presence of an isolated classroom where the teacher's control is God-like, so the promotion of new ideas such as during an implementation that challenge this status-quo is understandably threatening to many. The problem is, while it may nice to 'have some way to convince them that it is a great program', this in itself takes time and effort, and administrators are typically in short supply of these. Unfortunately, this means it is likely for these teachers to move on (or be moved on). Even worse, teachers allowed to continue, while not contributing to an expected level or not teaching the programme in the manner it is intended, will likely have a negative impact on student learning and staff morale.

Ideally, a certain level of buy-in is required in order for a teacher to contribute to a successful implementation, and the drawbacks (as discussed in Chapter 4, page 142) might be minimised if the initiation phase of the programme implementation is done in ways that minimise drawbacks. Various strategies noted to promote this buy-in were to 'address all concerns when raised openly', use 'faculty meetings for discussing and explaining systems, professional development opportunities', 'modeling' by effective teachers, allowing 'lead-in time for new systems', and 'making use of converted faculty to support and bring others along'. A reassuring factor for implementing schools was noted to be: 'the advantage that an MYP has over a non-MYP school is that they have someone to hold their hand, guide them, and point the way towards progressive education'.

To summarise, professional development, communication of information, and issues dealing with change were covered under the discursive subtheme of the promotion of issues surrounding the implementation of the MYP.

5.2.7 Programme Quality Control

A significant number of comments (N=18) were made on how the implementation of the MYP contributes to quality control in schools. These ranged from quality control relating to the school and administration, curriculum and teachers' educational practices. This contribution to quality is promoted by the IB and schools as a desirable benefit to offering the MYP.

The MYP authorisation process and evaluation visits are key vehicles which provide structure and ensure expectations are met, and in essence, 'forces a school to take steps towards implementing effective educational practices'. Note the use of the word "forces". In addition to providing a 'formalised' structure in a 'consistent' way, they can also 'help administrators get out of the bushes of the never ending demands on their time to see the larger issues at stake', and provides them with a 'leverage to get things done that they might otherwise not tackle'.

The middle school methodologies employed by the MYP are noted to be 'internationally accredited' (perhaps "recognised" is a better term, as it was not clear who accredits such methodologies), has 'rigorous standards' and can be 'measured against international benchmarks'. This gives confidence that the school is offering 'a better curriculum to the students'. More specifically, the MYP 'reinforces certain practices and [teacher] reflection, and 'insures current practices are used, [with a] balanced, applicable curriculum.

Better teaching is one outcome of strong accountability according to the teachers. With the importance of good teaching practices for optimal student learning (see section 2.4.2, page 68), according to some teachers, the MYP has the effect on schools that it 'has made all of our teachers step up a level and learn new ways and implement new ideas'. Practitioners noted they are seeing 'many of [their] colleagues develop more effective teaching strategies and engage more authentically with students' is perhaps one of the most powerful arguments for implementing the MYP from these respondents and, as mentioned previously, this accountability also contributes towards the ability of a school to 'attract clients with the IB logo'. Holding teachers 'accountable to international standards and not local, parochial or in school standards' 'implies quality control that is provided by a higher authority than the

school administrators'. As mentioned immediately above, this can provide the administrators with a means to get things done. However, there is potential also to produce conflict when a school's ability and/or resources fail to reach required levels and/or standards. Disagreements on the fine details of exactly how to implement some of the philosophies has contributed to disagreement with certain practices, for example, how the Areas of Interaction are supposed to be used. This was evidenced by the relatively high response to the question regarding Areas of Interaction being considered a drawback (Chapter 4, page 139).

The recent announcement by the IB that moderation will be made compulsory for all schools (International Baccalaureate 2010c:2-3) has brought mixed reviews from colleagues with whom I have discussed this. The advantage to the IB will be further quality control. For schools, these advantages are soured somewhat by the potential prospect of a time-consuming and expensive moderation system. Until the new moderation system has been developed, however, it was difficult to judge if the benefits will outweigh the time, effort and financial costs involved.

To summarise, the programme quality control in schools discursive subtheme covered quality control relating to the school and administration, curriculum and teachers' educational practices, all of which are considered positive aspects of the programme used to promote the MYP within the school, and to the wider community.

5.2.8 Preparation for the DP

Due to the established reputation of the IBs Diploma Programme (DP), it was not surprising to note the promotion of the MYP as a preparatory programme for the DP was relatively widespread (N=18) within this discursive theme. The main theme was relatively straightforward and as one person directly put it, 'it is a good preparation program for the diploma'. This theme relied heavily on the DP as a culminating award, with the implication being that the MYP would provide a 'perfect transition and preparation to the diploma'. The support for the MYP being an ideal lead in to the DP was validated by a number of other comments, such as the MYP and the DP having the 'same philosophy', the DP's similarity with 'MYP practices', having the personal project as a precursor to the extended essay, and that they have 'similar assessment philosophies'.

Furthermore the practitioners surveyed indicated success with the MYP as a DP preparation programme. Respondents noted 'average scores from MYP-experienced students when they reach grade twelve have risen'. Such academic improvements were attributed to students becoming 'actively independent learners' (in the MYP), as well as the added benefit of becoming more supportive of each other than students who undertook the DP prior to the introduction of the MYP. Responses did range in levels of certainty, from noting a definitive '*positive correlation* to success at the DP level' and 'students *are* better prepared for the diploma programme'; to more ambiguous statements such as 'students with a strong MYP background *seemed* better prepared for DP classes', and the MYP '*appears* to significantly help Diploma scores'. Of course this is an empirical question and since the collection of these data, there have been a number of studies that support this finding (see Chapter 2, page 46).

The summary for this topic is simply put, Respondents found the MYP to be a good preparation programme for the DP, a discourse used to promote the implementation and/or use of the MYP.

5.2.9 Programme Coherence, the Continuum, and Transience

The promotion of the MYP's coherence has been referred to in a number of other discourses in related ways (see Chapter 2, pg 34). This discursive theme will therefore focus more to do with the concurrency aspect of the programme provided by having three programmes under the same philosophy, yet addressing the pedagogical needs of the different age groups involved throughout the primary, middle and upper high school years. The MYP was noted by respondents for providing the 'impetus to designing a curriculum that provides continuity both horizontally and vertically'. It was interesting to note the 'seamless aspect of the MYP was promoted rather than the benefits of the actual program' in one school. The benefits of having all three IB programmes in a school are noted for marketing/public relations benefits (as discussed in section 5.2.2 above), providing an 'integrated approach to knowledge', and as a 'good link between the PYP and the DP'. An additional benefit was noted in that primary schools were encouraged to work more formerly with other school sections. Stobie (2005:40) reminds us that the experience

of the continuum is bound to be different in schools as it is so dependent on context and influenced by various factors such as school culture, the hidden curriculum and student and teacher composition.

A noted level of transiency from a programme with a common structured curriculum framework such as the MYP provides benefits to transient students moving to/from other MYP schools. This is important particularly for 'globally mobile students [as] they develop a wider repertoire of skills so that transfer to another location is more feasible than with educational models that support a building on previous knowledge model'. This problem is highlighted in many international schools when students transfer from the United States, bringing content specific year-long course credits such as algebra II or American history for their grade 9 mathematics and humanities credits; while the MYP course objectives require a broader range of content and skill coverage leading to a more spiral based curriculum model. Thus, in addition to providing a 'programme with the same educational beliefs', transient students from MYP schools have the additional benefit of continuing on with the same curriculum framework, albeit with a different content. It is important to note again that the MYP is not a full curriculum, rather a framework. Thus, transient students will still likely be exposed to different curriculum content when moving to different schools but the common framework is understood across jurisdictions. Overall, however, the perceived advantage of transferring to a similar programme provides a strong promotional aspect to schools with transient populations.

Fine discourse analysis also revealed some scepticism towards the IB continuum, with the use of the phrase: the MYP provides 'identity and an *impression* of a continuum'. The IB have documented significant efforts over the past few years to clarify the continuum of International education provided by the PYP, MYP the DP (International Baccalaureate 2008c). The continuum remains an issue for many schools, however, as highlighted by a recent letter noting five specific concerns to the IB from the Academy for International School Heads (AISH) (2009), and in particular, the need for 'A more coherent, articulated program N-13'. This brings the value of the continuum as a promotional aspect for the IB and MYP schools into question, and is an area in need of further examination.

To summarise, this topic focused on curricular aspects of the MYP used in the promotion of the MYP such as coherence, the continuum, and the resulting transience the curriculum affords MYP students moving to other MYP schools.

5.2.10 Internationalism of the Programme

The importance of internationalism to the IB was showcased by the use of the word *international* in the organisation's name with all three programmes originating from international schools (Hill 2007:27-31). Being international was a major factor when developing the DP, partially because technology was less advanced (and the internet in particular), and international travel was slower and more expensive). For the MYP, having one of the three fundamental concepts as *culturally aware* further underpins the importance of being international in nature. It was no surprise then, that internationalism was promoted by schools and these ideas were evident in the respondents' comments. The variety of the topics in this discursive theme was interesting, as they extend beyond just reflecting the desire for an international programme that enabled students to transfer schools more readily and be internationally recognised by universities around the world.

In addition to being 'internationally recognised', 'world connected', and providing a 'balanced framework of international education' and a 'global perspective', respondents noted a 'focus on international understanding', and that the MYP 'offers [students] a more diverse understanding of the world'. The IB was reported to be internationally recognised and had a 'good reputation in the field of International education'. Some respondents noted their schools used this factor to promote the MYP. That is 'International badging' was deliberately advanced to attract students, and especially internationally mobile students.

Although the programme was reported to contribute to internationalism the analysis revealed some skepticism about 'internationalism'. The comment, 'I suppose internationalism and the baggage that comes with this are a plus of [the] MYP'. This was an interesting linguistic way of grudgingly giving credit to the positives resulting from internationalism, yet the use of '*baggage*' indicates the writer was not enthusiastic about all of the aspects related to internationalism, although the reason for this was not elaborated on. The difficulty to define exactly what *international*

means to schools, and to what extent they celebrate the positive aspects has likely contributed to this type of skepticism. Despite efforts to define internationalism in education such as core standards of international education developed by the Council of International Schools (Bartlett & Tangye 2007), debate continues regarding the definition and how internationalism relates to international schools and for that matter all schools who have the MYP.

To summarise, this topic recognized the importance of internationalism in the promotion of the MYP, however, further definition of what this term means is required to clarify exactly how it can be classed as a benefit to the programme.

5.2.11 Other

This section contains themes that, while sometimes related to one or more of the above, did not fit in. The perceived importance of these themes could be seen as low due to not having large numbers of responses, yet are still important to note.

The comment that the MYP 'expects all teachers to support Language A [typically the language of instruction at a school] skills and acquisition' touches on aspects of internationalism (bilingualism, cultural awareness), as well as philosophy, teacher factors, student factors and contributing to preparation for the DP. This innocuous comment highlights an important factor of the programme, confirmed by the IB guide which states:

Since proficiency in cognitive academic language is inseparable from successful learning in school, it makes sense to think of all teachers as having some role in developing this. In other words, all teachers are language teachers (International Baccalaureate 2008a:9).

The import of this was that students are encouraged and given feedback from all subject teachers on the school's language of instruction, not just the first language teachers, thus magnifying opportunities to become proficient in the language of instruction in the school. This is particularly important for second language learners who typically make up a significant proportion of international school teacher

populations, and also provides a context to learning, promoted by the holistic concept of the MYP.

One respondent noted the MYP was promoted in order to 'get rid of exams'. This was an interesting comment to use for promotion as the MYP does not state tests or exams are not allowed, rather 'values the use of a variety of assessment strategies' (International Baccalaureate 2008b:47). While some schools may use the MYP as a vehicle to specifically do away with traditional exams, from my experience, some MYP schools still offer exams, especially in the upper middle years grades, in order to ready students for the exams they will be expected to sit (in the DP), and sometimes as required by local authorities. The IB do warn schools to 'consider carefully the effects of running examination-based courses concurrently with the MYP' (International Baccalaureate 2008b:40).

Another respondent reported 'if you want to attend my school and do not live in our attendance area, you must be accepted by a selective enrolment program like [the] MYP'. At first, this comment seems to simply indicate there are limited spaces in the programme, a common occurrence in many schools. However, the statement 'selective enrolment program like the MYP' raises questions on how students are selected, and if it is in fact practicing elitism. The IBO now has a requirement for schools to offer the MYP to all students in a school, however, there are schools that were authorised before this was the case, as well as some who were authorised on the understanding that they would work towards being all-inclusive. Charges of elitism have been levelled at the IB for many years. In fact, past IB Director General George Walker (Walker 2003:9) reports 'minutes of the Council of Foundation and its different committees show how the charges of elitism and exclusion have preoccupied its members for over 30 years'. This demonstrates the difficulty the IB has had in dealing with this discourse. Alec Peterson, the first IB Director General, was quite clear on this and related issues:

The IB diploma is within the reach of solid, average students who are prepared to work consistently throughout the two-year program; it is not restricted to the academically gifted. On the other hand, the IBO has never pretended that students of any ability could successfully complete an IB diploma; it has been, and remains, a course giving access to higher education

and is therefore no more or less elitist in this sense than most national systems where students must reach a minimum academic standard before proceeding to university. However, the MYP and PYP are designed to be available to all intellectual abilities (Peterson 2003:278).

As noted elsewhere, the most recent IB strategic plan (IBO 2004c) states 'access' as one of the three focus drivers for the IB programmes, and there has been much development in this area as discussed in this chapter. Further evidence of attempts to dispel the elitist label are bursaries being made available to schools who cannot afford fees, and various grants to help extend the IB education beyond the traditional international school. Grants are also sought to help, such as a recent US\$2.4m grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to expand IB access and develop new resources for the MYP and DP to help ethnic minority students and those from low income families (International Baccalaureate 2010a:9).

5.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed findings about how the MYP is being promoted, with a focus on arguments and rationales being used to promote the MYP in schools, and what kinds of ideas these arguments and rationales draw on. Dominant discursive themes are identified and deconstructed to expose factors involved in their construction.

Eleven broad discursive themes were identified and discussed. Middle years schooling philosophy, pedagogy and academic attributes arising from the MYP contained six topics covering philosophical, pedagogical and academic attributes perceived to be promoted by the MYP. The Marketing and public relations discursive theme highlighted the strength and power of the public relations image the International Baccalaureate holds. It was telling to note the most common reason given for implementing the MYP was the name recognition; but the IB was also promoted to drive curriculum and programme development, and provide resources and professional development opportunities. Teacher factors and professional development centred on increased collaboration and collegiality amongst faculty, as well as highlighting the benefits of having a shared philosophy throughout the school

that enhances the focus on the programme. The resources and extensive professional development opportunities provided by the IB was recognised as a major contributor to more effective teachers in schools. Discourses surrounding the promotion of negative aspects of the MYP were many, yet mostly individualised, with the exception of the amount of work, time and effort the MYP involve; and that it is complex and confusing. The rest of the discourses included negative experiences while implementing the programme, overstated values of the MYP, the MYP as an elitist programme, the relatively high costs of the programme, the overly complex assessment process, and various differences between the MYP and the DP which were perceived to be negative.

The majority of topics represented in the Student and parent considerations discursive theme related to multiple positive benefits to students in social and personal growth areas. All three fundamental concepts of the MYP were represented in the discourse: communication, holistic, and cultural awareness. All ten IB Learner Profile attributes were also clearly identifiable within this discursive theme, and reference made both directly and indirectly to elements of the Areas of Interaction (AOI). The contribution of all of these areas to student attitudes and personal qualities was highlighted. Enhanced parent involvement was also reported. Promotion of issues surrounding the implementation of the MYP centered on professional development, communication of information, and issues to do with change. In particular, the importance of professional development was highlighted, and the promotion by some of a resistance to change discourse noted as a common when implementing the MYP. Programme quality control discourse highlighted how the implementation of the MYP contributes to quality control in schools. These ranged from quality control relating to the school and administration, curriculum and teacher's educational practices.

Due to the established reputation of the DP, it was not surprising to note the promotion of the MYP as good preparation for the DP was widespread. The MYP's strength in having the necessary requirements of an 'identifiable philosophy as well as clearly specified aims and objectives' (Stobie, Tristian 2007:142) contributed a high level of programme coherence, continuum and transience, with the Learner Profile contributing to the articulation of values. The common structured curriculum framework also provides benefits to transient students moving to other MYP schools. The Internationalism of the programme discursive theme extend beyond the desire

for an international programme that enabled students to transfer schools more readily, and be internationally recognised by universities around the world, and included benefits to students from becoming 'internationally-minded'. The whole concept of what this means has not been resolved, however, there are many forums debating it. Other discourses included expectations for all teachers to support language A (the schools language of instruction) skills, the desire of some to eliminate exams, and another facet to the elitism.

Exploring these discourses informs our understanding of the MYP, allowing us to identify arguments and rationales which interested parties are using to promote the MYP in different contexts.

Chapter 6 Discourses surrounding the implementation of the MYP

6.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises a response to Research Question 3: *'What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when implementing the MYP, and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?'*. In order to do this, how the dominant discourses are constructed, deconstructed and re-constructed is examined, and the arguments and rationales these discourses draw on are reviewed.

These themes were difficult to delineate as they were often interrelated, thus some topics appear in more than one discursive theme. The three discursive themes identified were:

1. Implementation issues – what worked and what didn't;
2. Barriers to implementing the MYP; and
3. Implementation suggestions and recommendations.

It was interesting to note that the discourses identified below are for the most part, similar amongst all respondents. In other words, there was a generally coherent and distinct range of discourse used to discuss, respond to and represent MYP implementation. This was in contrast to the highly polarised themes which emerged in response to the benefits and promotion of the MYP identified in Chapters 4 and 5 (respectively). As a result of this discursive consistency, the discussion which follows is somewhat different from that in the preceding evidence-based chapters which each explored more comparative data and entertained quite lengthy discussion. The chapter concludes with a summary of findings and implications.

6.2 Findings and Analysis

The three discursive themes listed above were identified through analysis of data collected from questionnaire respondents who were all MYP practitioners (see section 3.5.2.2 starting on page 92 for a break down of respondent positions).

N values of topics within the discursive themes are not provided as many responses contained multi-faceted answers, rendering N-values potentially misleading. Instead, the data was used to facilitate identification of key discursive themes and topics. When a predominance of common topics is noted in particular themes, this was reported without numerical totals so as to note a general trend.

6.2.1 Implementation Issues – What Worked and What Didn't

Four topics were identified in within this discursive theme, and are discussed below:

1. Teacher factors;
2. Administration factors;
3. Organisational change; and
4. Resources availability and use.

6.2.1.1 Teacher Factors

Ensuring teachers were open to the MYP (“buy-in”) and hiring or selecting teachers that believe in the MYP was identified by respondents to be a key factor for a successful implementation of the MYP. In order to ensure the desired buy-in, schools were advised to ensure teachers ‘really understand the program’, and in particular, the ‘philosophy of the MYP’ and how it related to practice. If these requirements were not ‘marketed’ successfully, teachers would feel like they were simply ‘doing more and enjoying it at less’ and that there was no ‘cohesive program’; they would resist collaboration and the completion of required curriculum and documentation work; and may feel isolated. Unless the school had the advantage of being in a position to use only teachers who want to teach the MYP, it is important to ensure the school either hired or ‘select teachers that believe in process orientated learning’ (or in other words, to be open to the philosophies and practices of the MYP), or provide the resources and structures to enable faculty to receive the necessary guidance and opportunities to gain the desired level of understanding and hence buy-in. How this was done in schools varied, and included strategies such as allowing ‘consultation in the decision to take on the MYP’, implementing in a way where ‘teachers were gradually

developed and made ready to understand the philosophy of the programme', and providing professional development opportunities. The discourses surrounding making the decision to implement and implementing styles are discussed in section 6.2.1.3 on organisational change below.

The benefits of professional development (PD) were highlighted by the comment, 'it seems like the teachers who have been affiliated with the programme the longest, and who have attended the most trainings, displayed the most positive characteristics of good teachers'. While this may not always be the case, good, timely PD was identified as a prerequisite to a successful implementation. A wide variety of professional development activities were identified by respondents as being used in their school's MYP implementation, including:

- send faculty to workshops;
- invite IB specialists to give in-school training;
- develop resources for teachers;
- visit other MYP schools, meet and discuss with colleagues;
- share practices with others;
- demonstrate good practice;
- focus and plan professional development around school needs;
- mentoring;
- have the MYP coordinator work with small teams of teachers to ensure understanding;
- attend local and regional network meetings;
- Involve faculty with IB events (such as IB conferences);
- encourage faculty to become moderators and workshop leaders etc; and
- provide teachers with time for professional development (such as reading the guides and discussing them).

When professional development is missing, a lack of understanding of the programme was reported to lead to problems in understanding the philosophy of the MYP, and teachers tended towards the opinion that it was 'just more work'. Not surprisingly, 'poor PD' was also noted to be something that 'made the implementation difficult'. PD is often used as a 'carrot' in many schools, and indeed, the benefits and promotion findings in Chapters 4 and 5 note the high regard practitioners have for IB

professional development. This should be balanced when used for promoting buy-in, however, as PD does not always work. For example, one respondent reported 'some opposition were "bought off" with job changes, interstate PD and offers of promotion within MYP admin early on. These strategies failed'. Use of resources in this way is not only wasteful; it also contributes towards negativity and distrust of the motives of administrators who make such decisions.

6.2.1.2 Administration Factors

A key decision affecting the success of an implementation occurs in the initiation stage, where how the decision was made to implement is important. The most common way reported in the data appeared to have generally been a top-down unilateral decision by the owner, board, or administrator in charge. The commonality of this authoritative decision-making style was concerning, considering that it tends to contribute towards significant challenges to a successful implementation; and both experience and the literature indicate it subsequently contributes to a negative morale in the school. Leadership styles are discussed further in relation to organisational change below, however, it is important to note here that being a strong instructional leader is identified in the literature as one of the requirements for an effective school (see page 52 in Chapter 2) does not (necessarily) mean an dictatorial leader. A leader must have authority but appropriate leadership styles need to be considered to suit the situation and members involved in order to get desired results. The leadership style being employed should then be adapted to the situation as it develops – a practice called situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard 1988).

Following on from the decision to implement is the matter of promoting buy-in. Respondents did not specifically address how to do this, but did note it as a necessary factor. One respondent gave an example of how *not* to attempt to gain buy-in, with reference to the failed attempt as noted above. Results from failing to gain a collaborative agreement to implement the MYP can be severe, with actions such as 'ignoring, non-compliance, sabotage [and] complaints to the union'.

In addition to ensuring faculty buy-in, community buy-in was also noted by participants to contribute to a successful MYP implementation. For schools with

boards containing a high proportion of representative parents, this would obviously be an important area to address. In such schools, positive marketing of the proposed changes will likely contribute to a positive feeling towards the decision to implement, and more 'general community satisfaction' leading to support for the programme. If there is not enough 'consultation between the board, parents, etc.' and a clarifying of financial commitments, time requirements and programme characteristics, respondents note it is likely to lead to low levels of support, ambivalence or resistance. This can in turn affect the teachers as observed by a respondent who noted 'ambivalence by the administration and board to the MYP... has had a trickledown effect to the teachers'. It seems counter-productive for leaders not to be supportive of a programme they either chose to implement or chose to join. Unfortunately this appears to be all too common based on some of the comments. My experience leads me to believe that it is not just simple ambivalence that will affect the implementation - leaders who are not *actively* supportive of the programme will likewise constrain implementation and programme development (see Fullan 2007: for further discussion).

Strategies to gain community buy-in included presentations to the school board, educating the students about the MYP so the MYP could be 'explained to parents' through them, and training parents to 'teach the MYP to help understanding'. The 'IB identification' associated with the MYP was also thought to 'have significant impact' in promoting the decision to implement. Having a 'great demand for the programme' by the community provides 'support to the school' for the implementation. This support can then be useful to administrators when faced with reluctant teachers.

A more difficult question arising from the suggestions for MYP implementation schools was what to do with teachers who resist. There will most likely be teachers who will remain unconvinced regarding the desirability of certain features of the MYP despite all attempts to convince them. Some respondents noted that 'resistors were minor and left'. This particular response to the changes associated with implementing the MYP is thus often seen as a good decision for all concerned. While no school wants to lose good teachers, if the teacher does not support the programme of the school, it only brings about frustration and negativity. The administrator needs to decide if the teacher is open to developing the required knowledge skills and attitudes, and if not, it must be made clear to the (resistant) teacher that not attempting to change is unacceptable. Different schools in different countries will

have varying processes to protect themselves from non-performing or non-conforming teachers, though these are often complicated, time consuming and sometimes expensive processes. While often an emotional and unpleasant task, one of the most important tasks of an administrator is to 'manage' such teachers if a school is to maximise its potential for student learning.

Having administration who are committed to the programme was another key area identified by respondents. 'Frequent changes in administration' also contributed to heightened resistance from faculty and a poor implementation. One respondent noted that their MYP implementation 'could have been a lot more pleasant with different administrative leaders' who knew how to 'lead positive change'. Hence, sometimes it is the administrator, like the teachers, who needs to have buy-in if it was not their decision to implement the MYP. If this does not occur, implementation will often suffer as demonstrated by one school where 'the administrator upon whom the programme was foisted didn't feel for the programme [such that] when I arrived the MYP was stagnating'.

The ability of the administrators to hold faculty accountable was a common topic in this discursive theme, with suggestions to have 'enforced planning requirements' and teacher appraisal systems that focus on requirements. It was noted that teachers will 'lift their game as they know that they will be questioned [regarding] the programme they deliver so they consult to ensure that it is sound and in line with the MYP philosophy'. Successful IB authorisation and evaluation visits were also noted to serve as tools to guide the development and act as change agents by ensuring quality control as discussed in section 5.2.7 (page 174). These visits have the added benefit of providing confidence to a school when successfully completed.

6.2.1.3 Organisational Change

As mentioned above, the predominance of top-down decision-making was highlighted as a challenge to the processes involved with implementation and institutionalisation. Whilst someone has to be responsible for making the final decision, the process of making that decision, and how it is communicated, is of vital importance. Different types of schools will need to make use of different decision-making processes, but any organisation such as a school (be they privately owned,

state, or community-based school board run schools) must consider the need for teachers to have input and understand the factors involved. This will allow them to accept the decision that is made, even if it is not the decision which they would have made. Goleman (2006:76-81) highlights the importance of using leadership styles which 'help create a positive climate in which people feel energised to do their best'. From the six leadership styles he identifies, four styles help create a positive climate: visionary, coaching, democratic, and affiliated. Two styles on the other hand tend to sap motivation: commanding and pacesetter (Goleman 2006:79). As a school leader making decisions, effective leadership style and staff management are critical to implementation buy-in.

Implementation strategies that were reported by the respondents to be successful included ensuring there was enough time allocated for effective implementation. One strategy reported to assist with time management was to implement one year of the programme at a time, although it is possible that there will be schools who can implement the program more quickly. For example, a respondent noted a successful simultaneous implementation of years one through three. A school must also assess the financial implications of MYP implementation and the differing views on the efficiency of starting multi-years at the same time as opposed to one year at a time before deciding which model best suits their school. Respondents also noted that it was easier to implement the MYP in a new school or at a school without conflicting programmes, as it did not have to 'replace another program'.

An example of a conflicting program is the British-based International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Whilst a number of schools do offer the MYP and IGCSE concurrently, Guy (2000, 2001) details the fundamental incompatibility between these two programmes caused by their differing objectives and philosophies. Respondents generally supported Guy's findings for various reasons, even though some may have been familiar with them. One respondent noted while the implementation was successful in programme years one to three (grades six-eight), 'it has not been successful in grades 9-10, as they are still preparing for the IGCSE [exams] and do very little which contribute [to the MYP objectives]'. Another respondent stated that it is 'virtually impossible and confusing for students, parents and teachers' as the school insists that 'all our programs prepare students for both the IGCSE and MYP'. The result is dissatisfaction with the MYP, and 'many see the MYP as an imposition'. Schools that attempted to 'layer

MYP assessment over IGCSE assessment and not designing appropriate tasks' were also noted to have been criticised in their IB monitoring of assessment report. Market forces are strong, however, and many schools make the dual-programme set-up work due to parental demands, or administrative preferences.

One successful change strategy employed by schools comprised 'integrating the MYP into existing and ongoing structures' within the school; and my experience implementing the MYP supports this approach. If a school has a solid curriculum, adapting it to fit the MYP framework is a manageable task. Another common feature of most schools is the presence of school-wide learning results, into which the IB learner profile can easily be incorporated. There will still be a number of areas requiring structural changes to introduce MYP-specific features, however, such as criterion-referenced assessment procedures, MYP unit planning methodologies, incorporating the areas of interaction, and interdisciplinary teaching initiatives.

6.2.1.4 Resource Availability and Use

As part of due diligence before making the decision to implement the MYP, decision-makers should evaluate the resources that will be required and then create plans to secure missing resources. One respondent highlighted the necessity to consider the current and projected resource use by noting 'too many programs at our school [are] competing for resources'. As highlighted in section 6.2.2.6 (page 198), the cost of offering the MYP is significant. A cost analysis needs to include not only fees and materials, but also projected professional development costs. PD costs will involve a start-up amount necessary to cover the initial training of teachers who will be teaching the programme, and then the ongoing PD costs.

Of much importance to teachers is the time allocated to effect the required changes. The resource of time was mentioned in various ways in both the MYP drawbacks and MYP promotion sections, but interestingly, only one comment referred to allocating appropriate levels of time for implementation, and specifically in order to help teachers understand the programme, and then plan: 'We provided teachers with time to read through the guides and talk about it [and] also time to plan'. Examples of insufficient time allocation were more prevalent. The majority of the statements noted that implementing the MYP generally involved more work and took more time.

However, some were more specific, recognising there was 'not enough time [for the] recognition of the importance of collaborative planning'. Hence while implementing the MYP requires a time commitment, any school striving to be effective and use best practices will be investing in time as a valuable resource for program development.

As a summary, implementation issues covering what worked and what didn't included topics located within four discursive themes: 1) Teacher factors, 2) Administration factors, 3) Organisational change, and 4) Resources availability and use.

6.2.2 Barriers to Implementing the MYP

This section reviews the corpus of discourses relating to the barriers to implementation of the MYP. As many of these have been discussed previously, this section consequently focuses upon new perspectives and dominant arguments and rationales. Seven broad discursive themes are identified, including:

1. The time-consuming nature of the MYP implementation;
2. Administration support and oversight;
3. Fear of change and perceived need for change;
4. Teacher complaints;
5. Implementation strategies and structures;
6. Costs; and
7. Student and parent resistance.

6.2.2.1 Time-consuming

The discourses related to time as a barrier to MYP implementation arise from the MYP being viewed as 'more difficult as [teachers] have to prepare so much more material', 'develop units and assessment', have 'more paperwork, and also that there are 'more meetings'. Frustrations emerged in comments such as, 'there are only so many hours each week', and 'my biggest complaint with the MYP is that it requires more time than the DP does'.

If not enough time is allocated, it becomes a barrier to implementation as teachers were unable to 'plan effectively because of lack of time' or 'allow [time] for the paperwork of planning and assessment, both individually and collaboratively'. So how much time is ideal? An indication was to allow enough time to help 'focus' and grow the programme, but this will be highly variable in different schools. Time required to 'rewrite curriculum' is a good example, as this will depend on what is already present, the experience of the faculty, and the willingness to undertake the task.

Fine textual analysis identified some attempts to promote a negative discourse by suggesting the MYP is time consuming as it is 'a lot of guess work', 'we are very busy as teachers' and the work preparing materials 'distracts from the core business of teaching'. Such barriers require administrators who want a successful MYP to deconstruct the discourses to find the sources of the perceptions, and then to carefully lead the school to construct now positive discourses based on a better understanding of the programme and its perceived benefits.

6.2.2.2 Administration Support and Oversight

The effect of lack of support and oversight was a dominant topic in this discursive theme. As an educator, it was surprising to see the extent to which this lack of support/oversight was perceived to have been done deliberately by some administrators. For example, one respondent noted their school had gone through three programme evaluations (which occur every five years) and because the feedback was too vague, 'admin won't do anything'. Instead, they noted 'timetabling changes are often made in the year of the visit and then changed back'. If a school was deliberately trying to avoid complying with the MYP standards and practices, the visiting team was most likely to expose it through the evidence required to be submitted by the school, and through face to face meetings with faculty, administration, students and parents. That being said, I have observed some schools displaying superficial buy-in, which when coming from school leaders, it sends faculty the message that the implementation is not important. This superficial buy-in is sometimes in little things which may have just been overlooked, such as one respondent noticing, 'on our website it still says 4 paragraphs about [the] IGCSE in the HS Handbook section, and a couple of sentences about [the] MYP'. Other

schools are reported to, 'keep quiet, put together documents and carry on doing what they have always done'.

Changes in the administration during implementation were noted in the responses to be 'one of many factors in this period of instability' contributing to being a barrier to implementation. Those who were MYP trained were able to be more supportive. Some respondents noted that their administration had a 'poor conception of what makes effective instruction', and a 'misunderstanding of the nature of middle level learners'. This response identifies the possibility that some administrators lack basic instructional leadership skills aside from the extra knowledge and understanding required for MYP implementation.

Some responses also highlighted the importance for administrators to be role models for expected attitudes and behaviours. For example, one respondent noted that the MYP can 'make it difficult for administrators who are not willing to let go of their idea that an examination-based curriculum is more rigorous. This can create real tension in the school'. As noted earlier, the ambivalence of administration can have a trickle-down effect to teachers.

How administration dealt with non-compliance was also an issue to emerge in the responses. When some faculty refuse to use proper criteria or not to contribute correct documentation and seem to get away with non-compliance, it becomes 'very frustrating to the majority of teachers'. This teacher compliance discourse is discussed further in 6.2.2.4 below.

6.2.2.3 Fear of Change and Perceived Need for Change

When asked what the dominant arguments and rationales for resisting the implementation of the MYP at their school were, the most common response included aspects of change, such as 'there were no dominant arguments, just a fear of change', and 'most people resist change'. A few responses went on to give specific reasons for resisting the change, such as 'no consultation in the decision to take on the MYP' and 'poor PD in the implementation phase'. Hence, the perceived need for change emerges as a factor that needs to be addressed in discussions leading up to the decision to implement otherwise confusion can result. There are

many reasons for implementing the MYP, and different schools will attach varying degrees of significance to the discourses in circulation among administration and teaching faculty. For example, one school that reported one reason for the decision to implement was to 'move students towards the diploma'.

A fear of change was noted in the responses of a variety of stakeholder groups. Some teachers, for example, were reported to 'refuse to try something new and foreign to them'. 'Personality, age and laziness, concern about the unknown [and] uncertainty how to do things right' were also reported to contribute to resistance to change. Resistance was often linked with drawbacks to the MYP such as lack of time, as well as a general questioning of the need to change. For example, one comment claimed that 'the pre-IB program was very successful ... and we saw no reason to throw all that out in the name of the MYP'. Another respondent stated that the high school's pre-IB years 'had to undergo drastic change to comply [with] the MYP' because the impetus for the change came from the middle school. The argument that 'things are going fine, what is the need for this change' is powerful and seemingly resonates with teachers who feel like 'we already do this', or 'we are okay as we are'. Yet I am sceptical that this is the case in at least some of the schools where these kinds of comments are circulating, not just because my experiences in schools leads me to believe there is often room for improvement, but because also in the data were comments suggesting there were teachers who were negative towards change and because of this, 'they are always looking for a reason [as to] why we shouldn't do things'. I think it is understandable for a respondent to say 'we are very busy as teachers and when change comes it always brings about uncertainty, worry and the need to start over again. Often it is not a luxury under stress to fill the hours of work'. At the same time, when a need for change is identified and determined to be beneficial for student learning, teachers need to be willing to adapt to the necessary changes, and strategies need to be explored to allocate the necessary time. Many of these views are put forward by major authors in the area of change (see section 2.4.2 page 58 for a discussion on best practices for leaders where a selection of authors are cited).

For parents, the fear of change is often influenced by their own school experiences. MYP assessment, for example, is often noted as a target for that fear of change, as it is so different to what they experienced in school. National preferences such as

British parents trusting exams rather than internal assessment thus wanting the IGCSE emerged as another common example of this.

6.2.2.4 Teacher Compliance

Traditionally, teachers have been free to assume the role of 'Supreme Being' in their classrooms, should they wish to, within the constraints of the mandated curriculum. Contemporary pedagogy disputes the effectiveness of authoritative teaching practices in the classroom, however, and a 'teacher facilitator' is becoming a more accepted role in many schools. This is reflected in MYP practices, such as the involvement of students in reflecting on their own learning. It was not surprising then, to find the issue of teacher compliance (that is teachers complying with school-stated goals) emerging as the forefront of barriers to implementing the MYP.

Non-compliance behaviours ranged from passive resistance strategies such as 'ignoring and silence', and 'general tardiness with responses'; to more active actions such as spreading negativity to other teachers, parents and students, 'sabotage', and 'complaints to the union'. Non-compliant faculty 'rarely collaborated' and 'refused to complete curriculum documentation' or 'use MYP criteria in marking', and 'complained about extra work and said there was no proof of better performance'. These actions were often public, with defiance extending to 'making vocal comments in meetings' and 'refusal to take part in PD sessions'. Others 'figured out [ways of] figuring out grades and assessing their own way anyhow'. Resistance was not limited to teachers, however, with MYP coordinators, a Director of Curriculum, and administrators also being identified in the data as being ambivalent and refusing to comply. As teachers tend to be hypersensitive to equality issues in school, such issues of non-compliance can contribute to school-wide problems if not addressed.

Reasons for the non-compliance was attributed by some respondents to teachers having problems understanding the philosophies of the MYP, disagreements on the decision to implement the MYP or how the implementation proceeded, being forced out of their 'respective comfort zone' and not having enough time to do the required work.

6.2.2.5 Implementation Strategies and Structures

According to the data, barriers resulting from poor implementation strategies or lack of structures to cope with the implementation were varied. The need to consider different strategies and structures to cater for the typically diverse challenges that were experienced by different schools was highlighted by one respondent in an interesting way using analogies to demonstrate the various actions related to resistance to change: 'The ostriches (hiding heads in the sand hoping it would go away); the foxes (pretending to go along but, when behind the classroom door, ignoring the whole affair); the wolves (actively undermining the program at every chance); the magpies (complain, complain, complain, complain); the sheep (quiet but clueless)'. In short, 'where the teachers are resistant to change it can be difficult', and this was perhaps the most common barrier reported in this study, and therefore strategies to address all these types of behaviours is arguably necessary.

Confusion resulting from lack of understanding for the purpose a school implements the MYP was also apparent in the responses. For example, one respondent noted, 'I would have structured it differently if I had realised its purpose at our school was to move students towards the Diploma'. In this case, the implementation decision was possibly not discussed widely, leading to mistaken assumptions instead of a desirable shared goal.

Having effective administrative leaders was also recognised as a necessity by comments such as, 'it has been a long journey that could have been a lot more pleasant with different administrative leaders'. What is the 'right' leader for an implementation is a question that school governance needs to consider carefully. While some characteristics have been mentioned in the findings chapters and the literature review on effective schools, the full answer to this question is outside of the scope of this study.

Poor structural considerations included lack of planning for time, resources, and ensuring that the school programme could cater to IB requirements. If these structures were not present, a more resource realistic strategy needed to be developed. Where this was not achieved, situations such as, 'our curriculum and the DP one do not mesh well' may eventuate. If a school chooses to retain the IGCSE,

structural and philosophical challenges will also need to be considered, as running these two programmes concurrently was considered a barrier by a number of schools.

6.2.2.6 Costs

The costs of the programme were mentioned as a barrier to implementation for some schools, and in particular the 'cost of keeping teachers trained, material updated and fees for all service', which can become a financial 'burden to the school'. Being able to afford the programme is a basic necessity such that costs should be considered before implementation begins.

6.2.2.7 Student and Parent Resistance

A number of barriers arising from students and parents have already been noted such as the IGCSE debate, costs, and buy-in. Consequently effective promotion of the MYP to students is particularly important, as they are the ones who will be most affected by the introduction of the programme. The results of not doing this were reported by one school as follows: 'the MYP functions for them like an advanced honours program... but the students have no deep buy-in to the MYP'. Another example arising from a lack of ensuring understanding of the assessment system was that, 'students who are used to getting 90% are very disappointed when they "only" get a 5 out of 7 or a 7 out of 10'.

6.2.3 Implementation Suggestions and Recommendations

Five discursive themes were identified. Many of these discourses overlap with those reviewed above, revealing a degree of intertextuality in the response to the MYP. They include:

1. Introducing the programme;
2. Organisational change management;
3. Administrative considerations;
4. Faculty considerations; and
5. Resource management.

6.2.3.1 Introducing the Programme

Within this discourse, the following topics are included:

- ensuring teachers were open to buy-in;
- selecting and/or hiring faculty open to the MYP philosophies;
- ensuring teachers fully understand the programme;
- ensuring the decision to implement the MYP is collaborative, and giving all stakeholders a chance to have input; and
- providing high-quality, timely, and varied professional development (refer to teacher factors in section 6.2.3 on page 164 for a list of suggested professional development activities).

Ensuring understanding of the programme (and thus buy-in) was strongly argued for by respondents to highlight the need for all stakeholders to have input, and not just teachers. Suggestions about how to achieve this included 'more transparency' and 'open discourse and discussion' in order to allow for a better understanding of the benefits at the beginning. Suggestions also included the notion of involving 'parents more effectively and substantively'. After the decision to implement the MYP is made, it was argued by some that a 'clear goal from the beginning and to not apologise for change' was needed.

For faculty, professional development covering 'training in the rationale of the programme' in addition to the more usual addressing of specific MYP philosophies such as 'approaches to learning and the other AOs how they apply to curriculum development' were highlighted as being of significance to effective MYP implementation. Also needed were 'clearer presentations' in order to gain 'more staff collected involvement and empowerment'. And in the spirit of the MYP which includes reflective practice, a suggestion was made to encourage 'self reflection on what you would see the advantages of implementing the MYP' in the school in order to internalise the benefits. One strategy mentioned previously in the organisational change discussion (section 6.2.1.3) was elaborated upon by the suggestion that teachers should be 'gradually developed' so as to be 'made ready to understand the

philosophy of the program' by introducing the programme one year at a time. Another suggestion was to 'involve the teachers teaching the final years of the programme right from the beginning rather than involving them at a later stage', which arguably not only encourages participation and understanding, but also assists in appropriate curriculum levels being identified so exit goals were identified by experienced teachers.

6.2.3.2 Organisational Change Management

Within this discourse the following topics emerged:

- using a collaborative decision-making process;
- gaining community buy-in for the implementation;
- planning for the time required to implement;
- addressing the resistors;
- ensuring administration are committed to the programme;
- holding faculty accountable;
- training all faculty - including administrators heads coordinators and teachers;
and
- considering implementation strategies appropriate to the school.

Ensuring that the 'admin team know exactly what the MYP is' and to 'fully understand the parameters of the program' reiterated the need for competent leaders to lead the school through the implementation. In addition to understanding the programme better, the data indicated leaders in general needed more understanding of change management.

Various alternative ways of initiating the programme were suggested (discussed in section 6.2.1.3 above on organisational change). The most commonly suggested structural method of introducing the MYP was to start in the lower grades, and introduce the programme grade level by grade level each year. Smaller schools successfully introduced grades one to three in one year. However, another school noted they 'started with too many grades at once'. An alternative introduction strategy was to introduce various components into all grades over successive years, such as areas of interaction articulation, interdisciplinary units, assessment, and writing unit

plans. It is useful to remember that it is feasible that these contrasting implementing methods actually emerged from respondents in the same school, as it is common to find different perspectives on how successful an implementation is in each school. Which strategy is best for individual schools, then, will need to be identified by the implementation leader/team, after considering the school's goals and capabilities.

With time identified as one of the major resource barriers to implementation, it is important to 'allocate time for curriculum mapping', 'developing unit plans and assessment tasks' and developing 'scope and sequences' for the areas of interaction. Good 'curriculum mapping tools' were helpful, as were 'staged achievable goals' which also ensured a continued 'focus on the big picture'. For teachers, this often means being provided with 'teaching strategies' rather than having to work on documentation.

Reflecting upon my experiences in leading an implementation of the MYP I would argue that while I successfully 'chunked' achievable goals over the implementing years, the long-range plan was largely developed by myself in isolation. More collaboration in developing these goals, and communicating them in their entirety would have been beneficial for teachers to see the full implementation picture. I noticed some teachers were quite happy to deal with the chunks, and did not want to spend time outside of that, so it is important to consider and cater to all styles.

6.2.3.3 Administrative Considerations

Accountability was a significant issue for many respondents, who noted they wanted 'more direct leadership from building principals - holding all teachers accountable'. One strategy to ensure faculty accountability was to make sure the 'MYP was integrated into the fabric of the teacher evaluation process'. 'Long-term "weeding" and strategic hiring of personnel' was another useful suggestion. It was noted that the 'teachers who did not conform generally did not continue on to a new contract and looked for a job elsewhere'. Faculty that do stay, however, need to be made accountable. While it may not be feasible (or perhaps even desirable) to 'fire all the GSCE teachers and only hire those willing to promote the program', it is the responsibility of the administration to ensure appropriate strategies are employed to educate teachers and hold them responsible for becoming proficient. Making 'every

effort to hire MYP trained teachers, or send them on workshops prior to coming to the school' was suggested. However, I have found this does not always ensure that teachers become committed to the program, so care should be taken to consider attitudes towards the MYP when hiring, not just experience or training. One respondent said: 'don't use teachers who [do] not want to teach the MYP'. Faculty who find the 'MYP forced them too far from [their] comfort zone' need to consider (or be led to consider) if they are going to make an effort to learn; or move on to another school that does not offer the MYP. This is easier said than done, however, particularly for faculty who have families and long-term commitments to a particular area; and for schools in countries with protective labour laws restricting the release of faculty. This suggestion may seem harsh, but the bottom line for schools is focusing on what is best for the students. This of course stems from the assumption that the MYP is in fact in the interest of students. The results of this research indicate a very positive overall perception for this, and the limited research to date indicates the MYP can be beneficial to students (see the *MYP: Avoiding the gap* project report (International Baccalaureate 2009e) in section 2.2.9, page 46).

The MYP Coordinator's role is crucial to any successful implementation, so selecting the right person for this position should be made a priority. I have observed that coordinators are in a challenging position, as they are most effective as collaborative leaders, yet need to work with the principals in dealing with faculty who may resist the development of the programme. To assist with this, coordinators need to be empowered to go into the classroom and be given the authority to require teachers to satisfy MYP expectations. It is all too common for coordinators to be left lacking in support, leading to situations such as identified by one respondent who stated that 'more administrative involvement with planning on holding staff accountable' was desired. A related strategy was to try to keep the same implementation team in place over the implementing years in order to 'keep driving the implementation if the coordinator or an administrator leaves', or at least have a succession plan developed. This is very wise advice, as evidenced by the number of schools I know who abandoned plans to implement after an administrator left the school.

Other topics that emerged within the discourse of administrative considerations which have already been covered included:

- Using a collaborative decision-making process;
- ensuring there is enough time;
- selecting implementation strategies that suit your school capabilities;
- considering organisational change strategies;
- holding faculty accountable; and
- addressing resisters.

6.2.3.4 Faculty Considerations

The need for a 'good induction and effective curriculum mapping tools so that non-MYP incoming staff can adapt quickly' was noted in a number of responses, and particularly in schools with a high turnover of faculty.

Suggestions for professional development were also prevalent, highlighting its importance to teachers. In addition to the list in 6.2.1.1 Teacher Factors on page 185, the following PD suggestions were made:

- involving all staff in an 'MYP awareness' day;
- getting experts to work with staff for a longer period of time prior to the implementation;
- providing ongoing classroom-based proven MYP practitioners who can develop a long-term relationship with the implementing school and its unique context;
- have the MYP coordinator work with small teams of teachers;
- establishing relationships with other MYP like-minded staff at other MYP schools;
- using small groups and integrating the MYP into existing and ongoing structures (was much more effective than special events or large-scale presentations); and
- more group meetings rather than massive staff meetings.

Other topics that emerged within the discourse of faculty considerations which have already been covered included:

- addressing fear of change;
- gaining teacher buy-in;
- ensuring teacher compliance and capabilities;
- providing quality, timely professional development;
- providing necessary time, support and resources; and
- promoting a collaborative environment.

6.2.3.5 Resource Management

Within the discourse of resource management, five key topics were raised:

- costs (and in particular professional development costs);
- ongoing costs to the program (after implementation);
- personnel management;
- time; and
- resource evaluation.

The only new discourse regarding resource management was a suggestion to explore the possibility of forming school clusters to share resources. This may be possible in some areas, however, many schools that are close enough to be able to consider cluster schools are competing for students, making it politically difficult even if there are benefits to doing this.

Conspicuously absent within this discourse, however, is mention of school facilities. Perhaps this is because the vast majority of schools are already in a position to cater for an introduction to the MYP, thus rendering this concern simply taken-for-granted. Nevertheless, this concern should be added to the list of areas to consider, as it may be possible that certain courses will need specialist facilities. Performing arts is one obvious area that schools need to consider with regard to what facilities a school has to offer. Another less obvious one is design technology resources that may not be present in some schools, requiring the school to concentrate on computer technology to satisfy the technology component of the MYP.

6.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed findings from the data on discourses surrounding the implementing of the MYP. The data were drawn from questionnaire responses by MYP practitioners in MYP schools around the world. Dominant discursive themes and topics were identified, which have facilitated answering Research Question 3: ‘What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when **implementing** the MYP, and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?’. The three broad discursive themes identified were in relation to implementation issues: 1) what worked and what didn’t; 2) barriers to implementing the MYP; and 3) implementation suggestions and recommendations. Many of the discourses which elaborated these themes overlapped, revealing a degree of intertextuality among those associated with the implementation of the MYP, and to a certain extent the existing of a reasonably coherent discourse community.

In essence, this chapter on implementation highlighted the complexities involved in implementing a complex programme such as the MYP in the diverse settings of unique individual schools. My line of reasoning is the complexities exposed by the CDA on data from those with experiences in implementing the MYP can, and should, be used in conjunction with change literature (as outlined in brief within the basic framework of effective schools and best practices section of Chapter 2) to inform and advise schools considering or currently in the process of implementing the MYP. With regard to the challenges facing new programme implementation, resistance to change, group dynamics, and so on, many of the findings are transferable to programmes other than the MYP as well.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This study has investigated the discourses surrounding the benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP. Literature on 'effective schools' and 'best practices' was used to provide a basic framework with which to compare the discourses. The findings have provided a broad exposé of multiple aspects of the MYP, both academic and life-skill related. These findings will be of use to schools implementing or using the MYP, and the IB itself, to promote positive change in schools and improvements in the programme.

This chapter provides an overview of the major findings, focused as answers to the three research questions. Recommendations and implications from the study are presented. Areas for further research are then suggested, and limitations of the research noted. The chapter ends with the significance of the research and a conclusion.

7.2 The Research Questions and their Answers

7.2.1 Research Question 1

How is the MYP perceived by practitioners to be **beneficial** for student learning?

- *Study focus: What benefits/drawbacks do practitioners perceive the MYP to have?*

The answers to Research Question 1 were answered through the use of two types of questions in the questionnaire. Firstly, respondents were asked to rank their levels of agreement or disagreement to a list of stated MYP benefits and drawbacks commonly found in the literature and amongst IB practitioners. This provided comparative statistical data that measured the intensity of their responses. Secondly, a critical discourse analysis was carried out on textual data collected via surveys in

order to identify discursive themes surrounding the perceptions of how the MYP is considered beneficial. These themes were then considered in reference to the basic framework of effective schools and best practices as outlined in Chapter 2.

7.2.1.1 Benefits and Drawbacks of the MYP

When comparing the relative perceptions of the commonly stated **benefits of the MYP**, the majority of the participants considered all 16 statements to be *beneficial* or *very beneficial*. 10% or less of respondents considered them to be *disadvantageous* and *very disadvantageous*. The full table of results is located in Table 4.1 in section 4.2.1, page 121.

The six top-ranked benefits included 'very beneficial' and 'beneficial' (%):

- The MYP promotes communication as a fundamental concept (93);
- The MYP promotes intercultural awareness as a fundamental concept (91);
- The IB promotes the use of Interdisciplinary Links, which enhances meaningful connections by students (91);
- The MYP promotes holistic learning as a fundamental concept (90);
- The MYP provides a framework rather than a set curriculum, allowing schools to implement the program while satisfying their particular curricular requirements (87); and
- The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment (87).

The six stated benefits perceived to be least beneficial included the following 'disadvantageous' and 'very disadvantageous' (%):

- If your school has the MYP and the IBDP: The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme (10);
- The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes (8);
- The MYP uses criterion based assessment (8);
- The IBO governance structure allows for practicing educators to have input in the continuing development of the programme (7);

- The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment (7); and
- The MYP is flexible, allowing schools in different systems and situations to implement the program yet maintain their core values and/or state-mandated systems (6).

The critical discourse analysis resulted in the following discursive themes and topics being identified, ranked in order of relative strength based on number of times the discursive theme was identified by respondents:

1. School programme benefits included curriculum design; the MYP being a force of change, promoting accountability and collaboration; access to professional development, shared resources and a framework for a common understanding; the holistic nature of the programme; the criterion-referenced assessment methodology; and increases in performance in school.
2. Student-related benefits included the MYP develops a well rounded student; students enjoy the MYP and find it relevant; the MYP brings benefits to gifted students; the MYP offer chances to students with a learning disability; and the egalitarian nature of the MYP.
3. Academic features/Instructional advantages included the MYP treats students holistically, whilst still being academically strong; the MYP affords teachers the benefit of helping them become better teachers; and the assessment methodology gives students responsibility for their own achievement.
4. Preparation for the Diploma Programme (DP)/continuum of learning (from the PYP and on to the DP) factors included the MYP provides good preparation to the DP; the MYP builds connections to high school; benefits of a continuum of learning from the PYP through to the DP; and the continuum provides a relatively seamless transition from the Primary Years Programme to the MYP.
5. Marketing and Public Relations (PR) factors included positive PR and marketing pull of the IB; the MYP is used as a marketing tool in some schools; competition with other schools is a reason some schools are attracted to the MYP; and benefits of the MYP include its challenging programme.
6. Collegial and professional development (PD) benefits to teachers included the MYP provides a framework to focus teaching; the MYP facilitates ongoing professional development; and the MYP promotes collegial collaboration.

7. Topics in an 'other' category included international understanding is promoted by the MYP; international diversity is often associated with MYP schools; and the wider repertoire of skills developed in the MYP assists students transferring to other schools.

In summary, a significant percentage of respondents indicated they have positive perceptions towards the multiple areas unique to, and arising out of, the MYP. The discursive data (summarised in 1-7 above) highlight the major themes and topics identified as benefits of the MYP, with textual examples and discussion covered in Chapter 4 (page 119).

Drawbacks of the MYP were considered alongside the benefits. Two statements were thought to have *some validity* as criticisms (or drawbacks) using a criterion of 25% or more of respondents disagree that the statement was '*not a valid criticism*': 1) The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors); and 2) The MYP moderation processes takes too long. The full table of results is located in Table 4.2 in section 4.2.3 on page 139, and the five top-ranked drawbacks included the following 'valid criticism' and 'significant validity' (%) are:

- The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level (25);
- The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors) (24);
- The MYP moderation processes takes too long (21);
- The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects (19); and
- The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be (18).

Looking at the data from a different perspective, of the ten commonly stated drawbacks or negative aspects of the MYP, the majority of the participants considered eight '*not a valid criticism*' (Table 4.2). The six top-ranked drawbacks respondents did not agreed as valid criticisms were ('not a valid criticism, %):

- The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class and take time away from teaching content and subject skills (61);
- The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting (58);
- The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious (52);
- The MYP is too difficult to understand (43);
- The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be (40); and
- The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects (40).

The discursive themes and topics surrounding the **drawbacks and negative aspects** surrounding the MYP that were identified by the critical discourse analysis included the following, again ranked in order of relative strength based on number of times the discursive theme was identified by respondents:

1. Teacher factors included time and amount of work resulting from the MYP; lack of a perceived need for the MYP; complexity of the MYP; and related faculty issues (teacher negativity, resistance to change, philosophical differences).
2. Programme administration factors included perceived deficiencies of the MYP; lack of cohesiveness; assessment methodology; and cost.
3. Academic concerns included assessment; content; and the AOIs.
4. Administrator factors included change knowledge; anti-admin feelings; and management skills.
5. Student factors included content and DP preparation; student motivation; negative opinions; and programme implementation difficulties affecting students.
6. Parents and board of trustee factors included complexity of the programme, especially assessment; elitism; and personal biases.

In summary, respondents identified with some of the drawbacks and negative aspects surrounding the MYP, however, agreement levels were relatively low when compared to the benefits levels of agreement. In fact, more respondents disagreed with the commonly stated drawbacks than agreed, indicating an overall agreement to, and satisfaction with, the MYP. The discursive data (summarised in 1-6 above)

highlighted the major themes and topics identified as drawbacks and areas of concern for the MYP, with textual examples and discussion covered in Chapter 4 (page 119). Even though the majority of respondents indicated general satisfaction to the MYP in the statements section, the amount of textual responses provided much feedback concerning examples of areas for concern and perceptions of areas of drawbacks.

7.2.2 Research Question 2

How is the MYP being **promoted** in schools? In addressing this question, this study focused on the question, *'What arguments and rationales are being used to promote the MYP in schools, and what kinds of ideas do these arguments and rationales draw on?'*

The textual data gathered from the survey were coded for promotional aspects of the MYP allowing the following discursive themes and topics to be identified. Again, the themes were ranked in order of relative strength based on number of times the discursive theme was identified by respondents.

The discursive themes and topics surrounding the **promotion of the** MYP included the following, ranked in order of relative strength based on number of times the discursive theme was identified by respondents:

1. Middle years schooling philosophy, pedagogy and academic attributes arising from the MYP factors included philosophical statements and pedagogical references used in, and by the MYP; references to affective attributes gained by students in the MYP; the positive effect of the MYP on student academics; providing of a common philosophy for incoming staff; and other programme factors such as moderation and whole school scope and sequence.
2. Marketing and public relations factors included the power of the public relations image of the IB; the confidence in the 'IB' brand name and name recognition factor; the way the MYP is used to drive curriculum and programme development; and the IB provides many resources and professional development opportunities.

3. Teacher factors and professional development factors included increased collaboration and collegiality amongst faculty; professional development provided (and required); and the quality of teachers.
4. Promotion of negative aspects of the MYP included the MYP takes a lot of work, time and effort; the MYP is complex and confusing; negative experiences while implementing the programme; overstated values of the MYP; the MYP as a gifted programme; the relatively high costs; the overly complex assessment process; discontent with the differences between the MYP and the DP; and other factors including accountability with content; the responsibility of the school administrators; programme evaluations feedback is too vague, the MYP is a mixture of too many theories, and the IGCSE was preferred.
5. Student and parent considerations included enhanced communication; enhanced collaboration; support for holistic concept; support for cultural awareness concept; positive outcomes of the IB student learner profile; positive contribution of the areas of Interaction; positive effect on student attitudes and personal qualities; advantage for students entering from different schools and systems; and enhanced parent involvement.
6. Promotion of issues surrounding the implementation of the MYP included the importance and value of professional development; the communication of information regarding the programme to parents and students; issues dealing with change arising from the implementation; and resistance to change.
7. Programme quality control factors included the contribution of the MYP to quality control in schools (school, administration, curriculum and teacher's educational practices); the middle school methodologies employed by the MYP; and the importance of good teaching practices.
8. Preparation for the DP factors included successes with the MYP as a DP preparation programme.
9. Programme coherence and transience factors included the promotion of the MYP's coherence; the advantage of the MYP common structured curriculum framework; the portability of the MYP; and some scepticism towards the IB continuum.
10. Internationalism of the programme factors included the international nature of the programme contributing towards internationalism and providing students a global perspectives; being internationally recognised; contribution to teachers being accountable to international standards; and some scepticism to the concept of internationalism.

11. Other factors noted included the MYP's support for language acquisition; the use of the MYP to get rid of exams; and questions of elitism.

The eleven discursive themes above go a long way in shedding light on what is being promoted about the MYP to schools, how, and to whom. These themes are useful to consider by schools considering implementation in order to understand the discourses they are likely to have constructed within their community upon implementation. Actions to promote positive constructions of discourses can then be planned, and plans to counter any possible negative discourses.

7.2.3 Research Question 3

What kinds of ideas and methods do schools draw on when **implementing** the MYP, and how can they use this information to enhance implementation?

The textual data gathered from the survey were also coded for aspects involving the implementation of the MYP, allowing the following discursive themes and topics to be identified. The themes were again ranked in order of relative strength based on number of times the discursive theme was identified by respondents.

The three broad discursive themes surrounding the **implementation of the MYP** are listed below, with topics noted within each theme.

1. What worked and what didn't

- a) Teacher factors included ensuring teachers were open to the MYP (buy-in); hiring or selecting teachers that believe in the MYP; the benefits of professional development (PD); the results if professional development is poor, or lacking; and professional development activities identified by respondents as being used in their school's MYP implementation.
- b) Administration factors included consideration on how the decision was made to implement the MYP; promoting buy-in; contribution of community buy-in; strategies to gain community buy-in; resistive teachers; administration who are committed to the programme; and holding faculty accountable.

- c) Organisational change factors included the predominance of top-down decision-making; Implementation strategies that were reported to work such as time; consideration of potentially conflicting programmes such as the IGCSE; and structural considerations to implementing the programme.
- d) Resources availability and use factors included evaluation of required resources; the cost of the MYP; allow time to effect the changes.

2. Barriers to implementing the MYP

- a) The MYP is time-consuming and time is a barrier to implementation if not enough is provided.
- b) Administration support and oversight barriers included the effect of lack of support and oversight; changes in the administration during implementation; the importance for administrators to be role models; and the issue of non-compliance.
- c) Fear of change and perceived need for change factors included fear of change; resistance to change; and perceptions questioning the need to change.
- d) Teacher compliance factors included non-compliance behaviours and reasons for the non-compliance.
- e) Implementation strategies and structures: results from poor implementation strategies or lack of structures to cope with the implementation; confusion resulting from lack of understanding; having the right administrative leaders; poor structural considerations; and poor professional development;
- f) Cost was barrier to implementation for some schools, and in particular the cost of professional development.
- g) Student and parent resistance was observed in some cases, highlighting the importance of promotion of the MYP to students; and ensuring understanding of the assessment system.

3. Implementation suggestions and recommendations

- a) Introducing the programme factors included ensuring teachers were open to 'buy-in'; selecting and/or hiring faculty open to the MYP philosophies; ensuring teachers fully understand the programme; ensuring the decision to implement the MYP is collaborative; giving all stakeholders a chance to have input; providing high-quality, timely, and varied professional development; ensuring all stakeholders to have input, not just teachers; and for faculty professional development, cover the rationale of the programme in addition usual specific MYP philosophies.
- b) Organisational change management factors included using a collaborative decision-making process; gaining community buy-in for the implementation; planning for the time required to implement; addressing the resisters; ensuring administration are committed to the programme; holding faculty accountable; training all faculty - including administrators heads coordinators and teachers; considering implementation strategies appropriate to the school; ensure competent leaders to lead the school through the implementation; in addition to understanding the programme better, leaders need understanding of change management; ensure clear goals and clarified purposes; focus on curriculum development and the rationale behind the implementation of the programme; ensure the school curriculum is aligned to the other programmes in place; various alternative ways of introducing the programme were suggested; allocate enough time; provide curriculum mapping tools; set staged achievable goals; keep a focus on the big picture; and provide teachers with the required teaching strategies.
- c) Administrative considerations included using a collaborative decision-making process; ensuring there is enough time; selecting implementation strategies that suit your school capabilities; considering organisational change strategies; holding faculty accountable; addressing resisters; and select the right coordinator.
- d) Faculty considerations included addressing fear of change; gaining teacher buy-in; ensuring teacher compliance and capabilities; providing quality, timely professional development; providing necessary time, support and resources; promoting a collaborative environment; need for a 'good induction and effective curriculum mapping; and suggestions for professional development activities.

- e) Resource management factors included costs (and in particular professional development costs); ongoing costs to the program (after implementation); personnel management; time; resource evaluation; and the suggestion of exploring school clusters to share resources.

7.3 New Findings

Research is useful to test new ideas for 'admission to the canon of knowledge'. However, we should remember that 'new' is not necessarily the same as 'good'. (Pearce & Cambridge 2008:9). The following list of new findings is useful to various MYP stakeholders, and in that sense, I believe they qualify as 'good'.

1. The benefits and drawbacks commonly attributed to the MYP by proponents and critics enabled common discourses to be ranked, and so measure the intensity of the discourses. Findings of interests include:

- The majority of participants in the survey confirmed ALL of the commonly stated benefits were considered beneficial;
- the majority of participants in the survey disagreed that the commonly stated drawbacks or negative aspects of the MYP were valid;
- the fundamental concepts of communication, intercultural awareness and holistic learning ranked first, second equal and third respectively in the list of benefits. The use of interdisciplinary links, which is part of the listed learning, was the other second equal attribute; and
- the three highest drawbacks which participants indicated were very disadvantageous or disadvantages were the areas of: 1) the MYP preparing students for the DP, 2) criterion-related assessment, and 3) Areas of Interaction.

2. A unique collection of discursive themes and topics were identified related to MYP benefits, promotion and implementation. The findings included detailed discussion of the discursive themes identified with the backdrop of the basic framework of effective schools and best practices to compare to; and with the insights provided by a CDA carried out earlier on MYP documentation. As a professional doctoral researcher, my workplace and professional experiences also contributed to the understandings of

these discourses, as intended by the programme design of the 'new EdD at UNE' UNE' (Maxwell, T.W 2003:285). It is not possible to separate out new findings to highlight from this discourse as, while the discourses themselves are not new, the particular set of discourses in this research are, as they represent the constructions of the practitioners surveyed. The results are outlined in section 8.2.

7.4 Recommendations and Implications for Theory and Practice

This section presents recommendations arising from the research for implementing schools and for the IB; and suggestions for further research.

7.4.1 Implications of the Research

The analysis showing the benefits and drawbacks attributed to the MYP indicate the strength of common discourses surrounding the MYP. The high percentage of agreement to the commonly stated benefits confirms that, despite criticisms in the field, experienced practitioners value highly the attributes of the programme. The relatively small numbers of participants disagreeing with the benefits and the indicating drawbacks were also useful as they provided a focus for further investigation into why the respondents did not support the respective areas noted.

7.4.2 Recommendations Arising from the Study

From the very beginning of this study, one of my goals was to produce research that would be practical and useful. I agree with Hayden, Levy and Thompson (2007:2) that, 'Educational research is only as important as the policy and practice that it influences'. Now it has been presented, it is intended that this research will contribute towards aiding understanding of the intricacies surrounding effective schools, best practices, the International Baccalaureate and the MYP. The following recommendations are therefore proposed.

7.4.2.1 Recommendations for Implementing Schools

- The IB provides comprehensive guides on many practical aspects of and implementation, however, the IB does not provide information on change management. Because of this, leaders and leadership teams of implementing schools are advised to make managing change one of the major focus areas for planning when they undertake the MYP. In order for the school to make informed decisions careful thought needs to be given to areas including, but not limited to: decision making processes; leaderships styles and structures; community buy-in; teacher buy-in, accountability and collaboration; and dealing with the inevitable effects of resistance to change; and
- Implementing schools need to consider carefully a proposed implementation plan comprehensively before embarking on any change. Such a plan would usefully consider the findings of this research. The results of Research Question 3, in particular, will be informative (outlined above in section 7.2.3 above, and detailed in Chapter 6, Implementation of the MYP page 184).

7.4.2.2 Recommendations for the IB

- The IB should consider the production of a comprehensive guide to MYP implementation which not only includes practical aspects currently well covered in various guides, but also consider areas highlighted by this study, namely, change management and strategies to ensure a successful implementation; and
- The recommendation by Millikan (2001:7) for a ‘permanent “education squad” which would work with schools leading up to accreditation’ is re-recommended. It may be more feasible to have a global team to assist implementing schools via Skype or some other online media. This would serve to take pressure off the regional managers, provide specialist help, and likely contribute to the ‘quality’ and ‘access’ strands of the IB strategic plan (IBO 2004c).

7.4.3 Areas for Further Research Arising From the Study

1. Further research into discourses surrounding the areas which were highlighted in the stated benefit and drawback ranking tables would be useful to identify improvements to the programme. The six main areas identified were:
 - a. the MYP preparation of students for the DP;
 - b. criterion-related assessment;
 - c. areas of interaction from the benefits table; and
 - d. the issue of not having a scope and sequence;
 - e. only providing exit criteria; and
 - f. the moderation process from the drawbacks or negative aspects table.

Since 2007 when this survey was carried out, it was noted in the discussion that much development has occurred. Some of those developments indicate that the IB is already taking steps to address many of these areas. However, ongoing research on these areas will enable the IB to track improvements to see if initiatives are being effective.

2. Specific areas highlighted by this research include:
 - Respondents noted the benefits of a continuum of learning from the PYP through to the DP. However, fine analysis of comments showed that at least some respondents were not convinced this is true. Further research on the continuum would be useful;
 - Further research is required to determine specifically who amongst the stakeholders agree with the benefits, and who have concerns about aspects of the MYP, in order to better understand the benefits and drawbacks as perceived by various end-users. Likewise, further research comparing the various discourses present amongst the stakeholders and how they relate to each other would inform understanding of the inter-relationships between the various groups;
 - While the results of this study offer insight to what discourses have been constructed for the various discursive themes presented, further research on

- the relative importance of each area would be beneficial to assist the IB and practitioners in allocating resources to address the areas needing attention;
- Further research on differing models of implementing the MYP would be helpful to give more detailed information on the benefits and drawbacks of the various models, and to help highlight implementation successes and challenges; and
 - A wide variety of professional development activities was identified by respondents as being used in their school's MYP implementation (section 6.2.1.1 teacher factors, page 185). Further research needs to be carried out on the effectiveness of the different activities in order to identify which type is more suitable under the varying situations likely to be present in schools.
3. The IB is growing at unprecedented rates and there is much it is doing to ensure the organisation's growth is planned and support is provided for the increasing numbers of IB schools. However, Jim Collins (2001:121) provides a timely word of warning for small companies who 'make it' and begin to grow with their successes: 'As the company grows and becomes more complex, it begins to trip over its own success - too many new people, too many new customers, too many new orders, too many new products'. The recent open letter from the AISH (The Academy for International School Heads 2009) expressing concern with the direction of the IB highlights the possibility that at least at some levels, the IB is in danger of being negatively impacted in some ways over its own success. This research provides insight into discourses surrounding the MYP benefits, promotion and implementation. Further research studies (and particularly qualitative studies), which provide insight to specific areas of interest, will benefit the IB in understanding practitioner discourses and so provide information to assist in planning for the future directions and continued growth.

7.5 Limitations of the Research

Ninety five per cent of respondents came from authorised MYP schools and 96.7% from IB World schools with at least one of the IB programmes. The data, while informed by knowledgeable respondents, come from what is reasonable to consider a *generally* pro-IB sample population. The assumption is that practitioners will be less

likely to work in an MYP school if they are anti-MYP, although there may be some who were teaching in a school before the MYP was introduced. This sample base should be kept in mind when considering the findings, especially as respondents numbered just 122.

This research focuses broadly on the three related research topic areas of benefits, promotion and implementation. The findings tend to be broad, and further specific research would be necessary to draw more specific conclusions to many of the resulting discursive themes identified. Furthermore, it should be acknowledged heavy emphasis was placed on survey as the data collection instrument. Further research using alternative methods would strengthen the findings, and possible highlight alternative areas for consideration.

My data were gathered in 2007, so the resulting analysis reflects the discourses surrounding the MYP at that time. Changes to the programme since that time need to be considered for possible impact on the discourses described in the findings.

It should be noted that using N values in this case is not a highly reliable method of identifying the intensity of the discourses due to the complexity of the data. Data complexity made it difficult to separate out topics from the various discursive themes identified in some of the respondent's answers. With this in mind, N values are given in some cases as an indication to the number of times a topic is mentioned, when it was considered relevant.

7.6 Reflection on Research Design and Methodology

My choice of CDA was fortuitous in that it provided a meaningful research tool to answer my research questions, yet it also presented a number of challenges. Theoretically, as CDA derives from the postmodernist and poststructuralist thought, it is a difficult concept to fully grasp. This makes CDA practically challenging to the inexperienced researcher to know exactly which styles are most suited for particular research topics, and the hybrid version of CDA I chose is likely to be questioned by some. For example, in my attempt to focus on the practical side of my research questions, I failed to give the accepted level of attention to the emancipatory aspect of CDA, and only a cursory mention to power and voice. My defence of this is rooted

in Fairclough's (2004:225) comment that, 'A common critique of CDA is that it has not often attended to matters of learning'. I believe the analysis carried out in this study could be viewed going a small way to correct that perception, with a CDA designed to examine aspects of "learning" surrounding the MYP. I only hope the reader will pick up on these aspects while recognising my intent was not to skip important aspects of CDA, but to focus specifically on answering the research questions.

The questionnaire was too long. While it served its purpose in providing me with a good amount of textual data to analyse, with the experience of this survey to reflect on, I would recommend a similar study to be more focused. Fewer questions would allow the respondent to answer in more depth, and enable more respondents to complete the survey and so enhance the quality and quantity of the data.

Upon reflection, in some ways I think my research topic was too broad. While this provided a useful broad overview, my conclusions have not been able to be as specific as I had anticipated. I was hoping for both, but this was not feasible given the time and space limitations. It would have been interesting, for example, to have focused more on aspects of the benefits, such as specific impact on learning in the middle years. This would have enabled me to build stronger links to the basic effective schools and best practices framework, which has also been a little tenuous in this broad research. Alternatively, focusing on implementation would have allowed me time to explore more links to the literature on managing change, and produce a detailed outline that could have served as a more comprehensive guide to implementation. As research on the MYP is limited at present, however, a broad outline will be useful to provide background for further research.

7.7 Significance of the Research

The significance of my research is encapsulated by Rogers:

Educational research sets out to study what views of learning are important, what counts as important knowledge, what methodologies are worth pursuing, the relationship between researchers and researched it, and how education is positioned with the other disciplines (Rogers 2004a:246).

In particular, this research is significant in being the first I am aware of that makes use of critical discourse analysis to investigate the MYP. The findings therefore provide a unique glimpse into how practitioners of the MYP perceive the MYP and how the IB presents one of its three programmes to the world.

Abbott and Ryan (2000:226) list five research recommendations that have been incorporated into various educational systems, and four which have been dismissed outright in some quarters. These four include aspects of metacognitive skill development, constructivism, information and communication technology, and how to move the agenda from schools and institutions to learners and learning. As these areas are identified as desirable in Chapter 2, there is need for further research on these areas in order to attempt to find out why the recommendations are being dismissed, and how to reconstruct discourses which promote positive change. As the MYP has been shown to claim all four of the above-mentioned areas (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 4), this study has identified specific discursive themes which will contribute to an understanding of the areas, enabling practitioners to address the dismissal noted by Abbot and Ryan above.

Millikan claims:

The three IB programs, when properly understood and implemented, are unique in their respective (and collective) approaches to promoting and assisting the educational development and learning of young people. Where learning foundations have been properly and appropriately established, and there is proper continuity from one stage to the next, and ingenuity, creativity and industriousness of young people has no bounds (Millikan 2001:7).

This research provides discourses which in general support these claims. Further research on how the MYP contributes towards the specific aspects noted is required, however.

7.8 Conclusion

The IB carried out a school satisfaction survey in 2006 (International Baccalaureate 2006a), with the goal of identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement. 90%

of the 1,156 responses agreed or strongly agreed that considering everything, they were *very* satisfied with service the IBO provides their school (International Baccalaureate 2006a:2). These findings are confirmed by the statistical data in this survey as outlined in section 7.2.1.1 (page 207). The open letter from the Academy of International School Heads (2009) to the IB Board of Governors on the other hand noted a strong commitment to the fundamental philosophy of the IB, but also listed five areas of 'deep concern' about present practice and the future direction of the IB. The five areas included the curriculum model, assessment model, training model, procedural model and business model.

These two vastly different outlooks highlight the complexities not only in the administering of an educational programme such as the MYP, but also of the depth and strength of different viewpoints. The results of this study, with the discourse analysis of the textual data, have provided a comprehensive background which can aid understanding of the discourses surrounding MYP benefits, promotion and implementation.

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Endnote edited books:
(Soliman 2009)
(DuFour, Eaker & DuFour 2005b)
(Idea of English as world tongue outdated, says language expert)
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(Minichiello et al. 1999b)
(Rogers 2004b; MacDonald 2004, cited in 'A step towards global learning').
(Popkewitz & Brennan 1998b)
(Hayden & Thompson 2000)

Appendices

Appendix i Human Research Ethics Committee HREC Approval



Ethics Office
Research Development & Integrity
Research Division
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3449
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jo-ann.sozou@une.edu.au
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HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr L Tamatea & Mr G Underwood
School of Education

This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE:	Discourses of MYP benefits, Promotion and implementation in schools.
APPROVAL No.:	HE06/108
COMMENCEMENT DATE:	12/09/2006
APPROVAL VALID TO:	12/09/2007
COMMENTS:	Nil. Conditions met in full.

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: <http://www.une.edu.au/research-services/researchdevelopmentintegrity/ethics/human-ethics/hrecforms.php>

The *NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.

23/08/2010



Jo-Ann Sozou
Secretary/Research Ethics Officer

Appendix ii Invitation to Interview



School of Education

Armidale, NSW 2351 Australia

Fax (02) 6773 3820, Telephone (02) 6773 2773

Invitation for an Interview

Dear Colleague

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview regarding your experiences as an educator with the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO's) Middle Years Programme (MYP). I am carrying out a study titled *Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools* to analyse the discourses surrounding the benefits, promotion and implementation of the MYP.

The information collected in this study will be analysed and presented in a doctoral thesis. Findings may also be submitted for publication in appropriate educational magazines, and will contribute towards educational thought and knowledge of the MYP; and will be of particular interest to authorised and implementing MYP schools.

If you decide that you would like to participate, you will be asked a number of questions concerning your experiences with the MYP. The interview will take approximately 40-60 minutes, and you can decide to stop the interview at any point if you so wish. In the interview, you will be asked to share your experiences and opinions regarding the MYP and how it is used in MYP schools you have experience with.

With your permission, your responses will be digitally recorded for accuracy of transcriptions, and the electronic file stored in a password protected folder. Only I as the principal researcher; Dr. Lawrence Tamatea and Dr. Neil Taylor as my doctoral supervisors; and on request, my thesis evaluators, will have access to the raw data. All the data you provide will be used in a completely anonymous manner, thus preserving your personal privacy, as well as any school-related data you provide. The research and associated analysed data will be securely stored for five years in a password protected folder, and then destroyed.

There is no foreseeable risk associated with participation in this study. However, in the event that participation the interview raises personal issues, counselling support is available at local community health centres; please consult your local city hall for their location. Costs of any such counselling will be covered by the participant.

This survey has been approved by the University of New England Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No. HE06/108). Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at the following address:

Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351, Australia
Telephone +61 2 6773-3449, Fax +61 2 6773-3543

E-mail Ethics@metz.une.edu.au

It is completely up to you whether you participate in the interview. If you wish to discontinue the interview after we have begun, you are free to do so. Please sign below to show your consent to participate.

If you would like to receive a summary of the research findings, let me know at the interview, and I will put you on a list for distribution when my research is completed. Any questions regarding the study may be addressed to Gwyn Underwood, Tel/Fax +81 7 2726 7122, or e-mail gunderw2@une.edu.au

Thank you very much!

Interview Participation Consent Form for interview on discourses of IB MYP benefits, promotion and implementation in schools.

*Please complete and detach this consent form and hand it to the researcher prior to the interview. Please retain the information form for your future reference.

I _____ have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published, provided my name is not used. I agree the interview may be recorded for transcription purposes, and understand I may ask for the recording to cease at any time if I so wish.

.....
Participant Date

.....
Gwyn Underwood (Investigator) Date

Appendix iii Interview Questions

Interview Questions about the Benefits, Promotion and Implementation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) in Schools

Background

Q. Please outline your teaching background and associated MYP experiences

I am a: Teacher MYP Coordinator Administrator Other (list) _____

How many years do you have experience with teaching/administering the MYP?

None <1 year <2 years 3-5 years >5 years

Do you have any formal training on the MYP (i.e. a workshop or similar)? Yes / No

If Yes, What?

How many years teaching experience do you have?

0-2 years 3-5 years 5-10 years 10-15 years >15 years

How many of these have been spent teaching in international schools?

Why do you choose to teach in International schools?

What is the origin of your teaching qualifications?

What is your nationality?

Section 1 – Benefits and Drawbacks of the MYP

What are the aspects of the MYP that make it attractive to schools?

Follow up questions:

If the aspects mentioned are NOT directly related to affecting student learning, ask how important are these to a school to have? Why are they identified as attractive aspects?

Some of the aspects mentioned are most likely present in non-MYP programmes; ask is the MYP really necessary to have to gain from the beneficial aspect?

Some of the aspects mentioned are most likely difficult to measure in terms of importance... (e.g. social skill development, international understanding, personal qualities etc.); ask what rationale do you use to class these aspects as important enough to be stated as beneficial?

What are the main drawbacks of the MYP?

For each of the drawbacks, how could the IB overcome or minimise the drawback (if possible)?

In what ways has the implementation of the MYP in your school affected you as a teacher/administrator personally?

Follow up questions:

a) *What about your teacher colleagues and administration?*

5. If you were the Director General of the IBO, what changes would you propose regarding the MYP to improve the programme?

Section 2 – Promotion of the MYP

What are the most effective rationales or arguments used at your school to promote the MYP in your school?

Follow up question:

Why are these so effective? Could these be effective in other schools too?

What rationales or arguments used at your school to promote the MYP do you view as weak or flawed? Why?

Follow up question:

Should these arguments be dropped, or changed (and if so, in what way)?

Section 3 – Implementing the MYP

1. Why did you implement the MYP in your school?

2. How did you implement the MYP in your school?

Follow up questions if not covered:

How was the decision to implement made? Who were the dominant parties pushing, and why?

What strategies did your school use to promote the implementation?

How effective were these strategies?

What implementation strategies didn't work well?

3. Was the implementation successful, and why?

4. Who were the dominant parties **who did not support** the implementation of the MYP in your school, and why?

Follow up question:

In what ways were these parties managed to allow implementation? To what extent was this successful?

What do you think should have been done with these parties?

5. If you were to become Head of your school today, what changes to your current MYP programme would you propose?

Follow up questions:

What changes would you have pushed for if you were Head during your MYP implementation?

Appendix iv Questionnaire Information Sheet

(sent with invitation to participate)



School of Education

Armidale, NSW 2351 Australia

Fax (02) 6773 3820, Telephone (02) 6773 2773

Questionnaire Information Sheet

Study Title: *Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools*

Researcher: Gwyn Underwood

Supervisors: Dr. Lawrence Tamatea, Dr. Neil Taylor

Survey Explanation

Thank you for considering participating in this study. The purpose of the study is to analyse the discourses surrounding the benefits, promotion and implementation of the International Baccalaureate Organization's (IBO's) Middle Years Programme (MYP). The findings will be used by educators to aid understanding of how the MYP is perceived to affect learning, and how implementation processes can be improved. If you decide that you would like to participate, you will be asked a number of questions concerning your experiences with the MYP. Completing the questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes.

Your responses will remain completely private and anonymous, as they will be collected over a secure SSL encrypted professional surveying company's website and stored in a restricted access folder. The survey company (www.surveymonkey.com) has met Safe Harbor and EU Data Protection standards, and details on their privacy policy can be found on their website. Collated data will be downloaded to my personal password protected computer, with any hard copies made of the data kept under lock and key. Only I as the principal researcher, my doctoral supervisors, and on request, my thesis evaluators, will have access to the raw data. Once submitted, individuals can not retrieve data. The survey results will be securely stored for five years in a password protected folder, and then destroyed.

The information you provide will be combined with information from others for the purpose of developing a summary of views from all participants. This summary is to be analysed and presented in a doctoral dissertation discussing the discourses presented, and their implications. These findings will contribute towards educational thought and knowledge of the MYP, and will be of particular interest to authorised and implementing MYP schools. Findings may be published in appropriate educational magazines, and may be used as the basis for presentations at applicable educational conferences.

It is completely up to you whether you participate in the study. If you wish to discontinue filling out the questionnaire after you have begun, you are free to do so. To participate in this study, you must be 18 years or older. Your completion of the questionnaire will be taken as consent to participate.

There is no foreseeable risk associated with participation in the study. However, in the event that completing the questionnaire raises personal issues, counselling support is available at

local community health centres; please consult your local city hall for their location. Costs of any such counselling will be covered by the participant.

This survey has been approved by the University of New England Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval No. HE06/108). Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at the following address:

Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351, Australia
Telephone +61 2 6773-3449, Fax +61 2 6773-3543
E-mail Ethics@metz.une.edu.au

If you wish to participate in this study, please complete the following questionnaire.
If you would like to receive a summary of the research findings, please send me a separate e-mail and I will put you on a list for distribution when my research is completed.
Any questions regarding the study may be addressed to Gwyn Underwood, Tel/Fax +81 7 2726 7122, or e-mail gunderw2@une.edu.au

Thank you very much!

Appendix v Questionnaire Questions

Questionnaire about the Benefits, Promotion and Implementation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) in Schools

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=862392460306>

Note: This questionnaire will be given via the internet so will be spaced out and divided into sections, with appropriate spaces between questions.

This questionnaire is for teachers, coordinators and administrators who teach at authorised or implementing IB MYP schools.

Instructions

1. Please answer every question in each applicable section. You may expand on your choice in the space provided for extended answers at the end of each section if you wish.
2. To minimise bias from the different questioning techniques used in each section, you should not return to preceding sections once you have moved to the next.
3. There are three general sections, which should take approximately 10 minutes to finish. A short fourth section is situation-specific for MYP coordinators and administrators.

In order to help categorise your answer for analysis, please tick the box that best describes your teaching and MYP experiences:

I am a: Teacher ; MYP Coordinator ; Administrator ; Other (list) _____
(Tick as many as are applicable)

How many years experience have you had teaching/administering the MYP?

None ; <1 year ; <1-2 years ; 3-5years ; >5 years

Have you attended formal training on the MYP (i.e. a workshop or similar)?

Yes / No

Which of the IB Programmes is your current school authorised to offer?

(Tick as many as are applicable) PYP ; MYP ; IBDP

How many years have you worked for your current school?

<1 year ; 1-2 years ; 3-5years ; >5 years

Section 1 Benefits and Promotion of the MYP

In your opinion, what are the main benefits of the MYP?

In your opinion, what are the main drawbacks of the MYP?

In which ways would you say the MYP affects student learning (directly or indirectly)?

Have you observed any 'measurable aspects' of student performance (such as test scores etc.) which indicate advantages or disadvantages of the MYP when compared to non-MYP programmes you are familiar with?

Have you observed any 'difficult to measure' aspects of student performance (such as social skills, international understanding, personal qualities etc.) which indicate advantages or disadvantages of the MYP when compared to non-MYP programmes?

a) What educational theories are used as a rationale for the MYP philosophies?

b) When compared to non-MYP programmes, which of these theories seem to be unique to the MYP?

In what ways does having the MYP seem to give a school an advantage or disadvantage over non-MYP schools?

What rationales or arguments are being used to promote the MYP in your school?

How effective/powerful/productive do these rationales or arguments appear to be, and why?

a) ...Effective 5...4...3...2...1 Not Effective
Why?

b) ...Powerful 5...4...3...2...1 Not Powerful
Why?

c) ...Productive 5...4...3...2...1 Not Productive
Why?

In general, what are the main characteristics you would expect an 'effective' teacher to exhibit?

In general, how important do you think an effective teacher is for the advancement of student learning?

Important 5...4...3...2...1 Not Important

What (if any) impact does the MYP have on the promotion of 'effective teaching' as defined by your characteristics above?

In general, what are the main characteristics you would expect an 'effective' administrator to exhibit?

In general, how important do you think an effective administration is for the advancement of student learning?

Important 5...4...3...2...1 Not Important

What (if any) impact do you think the MYP has on the promotion of 'effective administration' as defined by the characteristics you listed in 11. a) above?

Section 2

This section is for teachers who have taught at a school undergoing MYP implementation (leading up to becoming an authorised IB MYP school).

Have you worked in a school during MYP implementation (now or at a previous school)?

If NO, please [click here](#) to move on to the next section

If YES, please answer the following:

1. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on you being or becoming an effective teacher (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?

Positives:

Negatives:

2. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on your teacher colleagues being or becoming effective teachers (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?

Positives:

Negatives:

3. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on the administration in being or becoming effective administrators (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?

Positives:

Negatives:

4. a) What rationales or arguments about the benefits of the MYP were promoted by your school during implementation?

b) Have these rationales or arguments seemingly proven to be correct so far?

Mostly / Not really / Not sure

If Not really, which have not, and in what way?

c) Who promoted these rationales or arguments?

Administration ; MYP Coordinator ; Teachers ; Other ; (explain) _____

d) Were any alternative rationales or arguments promoted? Yes / No

If Yes, what were they, and by whom were they promoted?

5. Who contributed to the decision to implement the MYP in your school?

Teachers: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Students: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Parents: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Administration: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

School board: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Businesses: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Local Community: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Alumni: (Contributed a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (No contribution at all)

Other (please list if any):

6. a) Who were the dominant parties **advocating** the implementation in your school?

Teachers ; Students ; Parents ; Administration ; School board ; School board chair ;

Other (please list if any):

b) What were their dominant arguments and rationales for pushing the implementation?

c) What kinds of ideas and desires do these arguments and rationales draw on (i.e. why do you think the pro-implementation group promoted implementation?)

d) Which of these arguments and rationales appear to be successful/unsuccessful? Why and in what context?

7. a) Who were the dominant parties **resisting** the implementation in your school?

Teachers ; Students ; Parents ; Administration ; School board ; School board chair ;

Other (please list if any):

b) What were their dominant arguments and rationales for resisting the implementation?

c) What kinds of ideas and desires do these arguments and rationales draw on (i.e. why do you think the anti-implementation group resisted the implementation?)

8. a) Do you think the decision to implement the MYP was beneficial to your school?

1. Very Beneficial ; 2. Good ; 3. Neutral ; 4. Not very beneficial ; 5. Very disadvantageous

b) Why?

9. How did you react to the move towards the implementation of the MYP in your school?
Fully supported it ; Supported it with reservations ; Was resigned to it ; Resisted it

10. What was your impression of how the majority of teachers reacted towards the implementation of the MYP in your school?

Fully supported it	(Most)	5...4...3...2...1	(None)
Supported it with reservations	(Most)	5...4...3...2...1	(None)
Were resigned to it	(Most)	5...4...3...2...1	(None)
Resisted it	(Most)	5...4...3...2...1	(None)

Section 3

This section asks you to indicate levels of agreement on various statements. Please choose the level or statement which is closest to your beliefs and/or opinions. There is room at the bottom to add comments or expand on attributed levels. Please answer without returning to previous sections to minimise bias from the question layout.

1. *The following is a list of benefits commonly attributed to the MYP by proponents. Please rank the extent to which you think each statement contributes towards student learning through the MYP.*

If your school has the PYP and the MYP: The MYP provides a natural progression for students coming from the IB Primary Years Programme.

(Yes) 5...4...3...2...1 (No) Not Applicable

If your school has the MYP and the IBDP: The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme.

(Yes) 5...4...3...2...1 (No) Not Applicable

The MYP provides a framework rather than a set curriculum, allowing schools to implement the program while satisfying their particular curricular requirements.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP is flexible, allowing schools in different systems and situations to implement the program yet maintain their core values and/or state-mandated systems.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP promotes holistic learning as a fundamental concept.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP promotes communication as a fundamental concept.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP promotes intercultural awareness as a fundamental concept.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP promotes leaning in constructivist ways.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP uses criterion based assessment.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The Personal Project provides an opportunity to practice and assess AOI skills.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The IB promotes the use of Interdisciplinary Links, which enhances meaningful connections by students.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The required 8 subjects ensure a balanced programme.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The MYP is based on current research, enabling the programme to maximise learning using best known practices.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The IBO governance structure allows for practicing educators to have input in the continuing development of the programme.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

The IB Learner Profile (implemented 2006) provides a focus for development of knowledge, skills and attitudes espoused by the IBO spanning all three IB programmes.

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous) Not Sure

Other? Please list any other commonly attributed benefits you have knowledge of about the MYP which you think contributes towards student learning, and rank the perceived benefits using the scale:

(Very Beneficial) 5...4...3...2...1 (Very disadvantageous)

2. The following is a list of drawbacks or negative aspects critics have of made regarding the MYP. Please rank how valid you think each statement is as a criticism for the affect it has on student learning through the MYP.

The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects.

The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level.

The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors)

The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting.

The MYP is too difficult to understand.

The MYP moderation processes takes too long.

The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class, and take time away from teaching content and subject skills.

The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be.

The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious.

The MYP is different to the PYP and IB DP so does not provide a good learning continuum from elementary to high school.

(Valid criticism) 5...4...3...2...1 (Not a valid criticism)

3. Why did your school implement the MYP? Please rank the importance of each statement as a reason for implementing the MYP?

To prepare students for the IB Diploma Programme.

To provide a natural progression for students coming from the IB Primary Years Programme.

To enable your school to offer all 3 IB programmes (PYP/MYP/IBDP).

Because of the perceived educational benefits of the MYP.

To promote your school by offering an IB programme.

Because the MYP promotes teacher collaboration.

To make your school distinct from other schools in your region.

Due to parental demand.

(Very Important) 5...4...3...2...1 (Not important at all)

Section 4

This section is for MYP coordinators and administrators at MYP schools.

How was the MYP introduced in your school?
Grade by grade (one grade added each year)
Multiple grades added over time (2 or more grades added each year)
All grades added at one time
Other? (Please explain):

1. a) Was your school already authorised for the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) when you introduced the MYP? YES / NO
b) Was your school already authorised for the PYP when you introduced the MYP? YES / NO
c) If yes to either of the above, did this affect the implementation? YES / NO

If yes, HOW?

2. a) How many years has your school been MYP authorised? ____ Years
b) How long did it take your school to implement and gain authorisation? ____ Years
c) Would you say the implementation of the MYP has been successful? YES / NO
Please elaborate:

-
3. What strategies did you (and/or school administrators) use to promote positive MYP discourses?
 - Presentations
 - Training
 - Sent faculty to workshops
 - Visiting speakers
 - Pre-authorisation visits from IB personnel
 - Letters/documents to parents
 - School website information
 - Faculty Meetings
 - Discussions groups with parents
 - Online Curriculum Centre
 - Other (Please specify): (Used a lot) 5...4...3...2...1 (Not used at all)

Did you use any strategies not listed above?

4. In what way could MYP implementers have been more effective with their strategies?
-
5. For those who resisted MYP implementation in your school, what overt and covert (e.g. practices such as ignoring, silence, non-compliance etc.) strategies did they use, in what context, and with what effect?
 6. What strategies did MYP proponents and implementers use to overcome any resistance?
 7. Based on your experience, what types of training would you recommend to lay the foundation for MYP implementation in implementing schools?
 8. If you were to do the implementation again, what would you do differently?

Appendix vi Letter of Endorsement from the IB

To the Director of particular IB World Schools

This is to certify that the IBO research committee has endorsed Mr Gwyn Underwood's study to investigate discourses of IB MYP benefits, promotion and implementation in schools.

This endorsement means that the researcher is bound by the document "Ethical standards for IBO research-supported projects" on our public web site [www.ibo.org - shortcuts to "research"]. For your convenience, the section of that document concerning research activities in schools is reproduced below.

The IBO depends to a large extent on good research-based evidence for reviewing its programmes and for seeking improved higher education recognition. We believe this particular research is relevant to the future development of the MYP.

I would therefore be very grateful if you are able to facilitate this research even though it will inevitably intrude on valuable time within your school.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Hill (Dr)
Chair, IBO research committee
Deputy director general, IBO, Geneva

14/08/06

Appendix vii Results of Empirical Data from Questionnaire

Discourses of IB MYP Benefits, Promotion and Implementation in Schools

Summary of Questionnaire Results¹

Gwyn Underwood
July 2007

¹ Narrative data from the questionnaire are not included in this summary due to space. Results will be included in my dissertation (planned to be submitted to the University of New England sometime in 2008 – I hope!). I have left the questions in this summary, however, so as to give an idea of the narrative data collected. If you are interested in seeing the complete data in my final document, let me know and I will inform you when the dissertation is complete, and provide you access.
E-mail: gwyn@hcn.zag.ne.jp Alternative e-mail: gwynunderwood@yahoo.com

This questionnaire was distributed to teachers, coordinators and administrators who teach at authorised or implementing IB MYP schools, with results from 122 participants collected. The survey was open for respondents over a period of 3 months (Nov 2006 - Jan 2007) using www.surveymonkey.com. Graphs and tables are provided by surveymonkey.com

Participant Profile

1. What is your position

		Response Percent	Response Total
Teacher		54.9%	67
MYP Coordinator		49.2%	60
Administrator		12.3%	15
Other (please specify)		9%	11
Total Respondents			122
(skipped this question)			0

2. How many years experience have you had teaching/administering the MYP?

		Response Percent	Response Total
<1 year		10.7%	13
1-2 years		14%	17
3-5 years		24%	29
>5 years		51.2%	62
Total Respondents			121
(skipped this question)			1

3. Have you attended formal training on the MYP (i.e. a workshop or similar)?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Yes		86.9%	106
No		13.1%	16
Total Respondents			122
(skipped this question)			0

4. Which of the IB Programmes is your current school authorised to offer?

		Response Percent	Response Total
PYP		50.8%	62
MYP		95.1%	116
DP		66.4%	81
None		3.3%	4
Total Respondents			122
(skipped this question)			0

5. How many years have you worked for your current school?

		Response Percent	Response Total
None		1.6%	2
<1 year		4.1%	5
1-2 years		13.9%	17
3-5 years		33.6%	41
>5 years		46.7%	57
Total Respondents			122
(skipped this question)			0

Section 1 Benefits and Promotion of the MYP (for all participants)

6. In your opinion, what are the main benefits of the MYP?
7. In your opinion, what are the main drawbacks of the MYP?
8. In which ways would you say the MYP affects student learning (directly or indirectly)?
9. Have you observed any 'measurable aspects' of student performance (such as test scores etc.) which indicate advantages or disadvantages of the MYP when compared to non-MYP programmes you are familiar with?
10. Have you observed any 'difficult to measure' aspects of student performance (such as social skills, international understanding, personal qualities etc.) which indicate advantages or disadvantages of the MYP when compared to non-MYP programmes?
11. What educational theories are used as a rationale for the MYP philosophies?
12. When compared to non-MYP programmes, which of these theories seem to be unique to the MYP?
13. In what ways does having the MYP seem to give a school an advantage or disadvantage over non-MYP schools?
14. What rationales or arguments are being used to promote the MYP in your school?
15. How effective/powerful/productive do these rationales or arguments appear to be, and why?

	Not ~	Hardly ~	Some ~	Mostly ~	Very ~	Response Average
Effective	0% (0)	5% (3)	23% (15)	42% (27)	30% (19)	3.97
Powerful	3% (2)	5% (3)	28% (18)	34% (22)	30% (19)	3.83
Productive	3% (2)	5% (3)	24% (15)	41% (26)	27% (17)	3.84
Total Respondents						64
(skipped this question)						58

16. In general, what are the main characteristics you would expect an 'effective' teacher to exhibit?
17. In general, how important do you think an effective teacher is for the advancement of student learning?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Not important	0%	0
Of minor importance	0%	0
Of medium importance	1.4%	1
Important	11.3%	8
Very important	87.3%	62
Total Respondents		71
(skipped this question)		51

18. What (if any) impact does the MYP have on the promotion of 'effective teaching' as defined by your characteristics above?
19. In general, what are the main characteristics you would expect an 'effective' administrator to exhibit?
20. In general, how important do you think an effective administration is for the advancement of student learning?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Not important	0%	0
Of minor importance	1.4%	1
Of medium importance	11.3%	8
Important	26.8%	19
Very important	60.6%	43
Total Respondents		71
(skipped this question)		51

21. What (if any) impact do you think the MYP has on the promotion of 'effective administration' as defined by the characteristics you listed in 11. a) above?
22. Have you worked in a school during MYP implementation (now or at a previous school)?

Section 2 MYP implementation (this section was for teachers who have taught at a school undergoing MYP implementation).

23. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on you being or becoming an effective teacher (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?
24. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on your teacher colleagues being or becoming effective teachers (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?

25. Has the implementation of the MYP in your school had any positive and/or negative effect on the administration in being or becoming effective administrators (as defined by the characteristics you listed in section 1)?
26. What rationales or arguments about the benefits of the MYP were promoted by your school during implementation?
27. Have these rationales or arguments seemingly proven to be correct so far?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Not sure	18.2%	8
Mostly	65.9%	29
Not really (please specify which have or have not, and in what way?)	15.9%	7
Total Respondents		44
(skipped this question)		78

28. Who promoted these rationales or arguments?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Administration	75%	33
MYP Coordinator	75%	33
Teachers	34.1%	15
Other (please specify)	25%	11
Total Respondents		44
(skipped this question)		78

29. Were any alternative rationales or arguments promoted?
30. Who contributed to the decision to implement the MYP in your school?

	No contribution at all	Little contribution	Some contribution	Fairly major contribution	Contributed a lot	N/A (not applicable)	Response Average
Teachers	14% (6)	23% (10)	23% (10)	14% (6)	25% (11)	2% (1)	3.14
Students	62% (26)	19% (8)	10% (4)	5% (2)	2% (1)	2% (1)	1.63
Parents	21% (9)	36% (15)	21% (9)	10% (4)	10% (4)	2% (1)	2.49
Administration	4% (2)	0% (0)	9% (4)	16% (7)	71% (32)	0% (0)	4.49
School board	7% (3)	5% (2)	20% (9)	14% (6)	45% (20)	9% (4)	3.95
School owner(s)	18% (6)	0% (0)	3% (1)	6% (2)	21% (7)	53% (18)	3.25
Businesses	44% (16)	3% (1)	0% (0)	3% (1)	6% (2)	44% (16)	1.60
Local Community	51% (19)	22% (8)	3% (1)	5% (2)	3% (1)	16% (6)	1.65
Alumni	70% (26)	3% (1)	3% (1)	3% (1)	0% (0)	22% (8)	1.21
Other	33% (8)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	12% (3)	54% (13)	2.09
Total Respondents							46
(skipped this question)							76

31. a) Who were the dominant parties **advocating** the implementation in your school?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Teachers	33.3%	15
Students	2.2%	1
Parents	8.9%	4
Administration	75.6%	34
School board	37.8%	17
School board chair	13.3%	6
Other (please specify)	22.2%	10
Total Respondents		45
(skipped this question)		77

- 32. What were their dominant arguments and rationales for pushing the implementation?
- 33. What kinds of ideas and desires do these arguments and rationales draw on (i.e. why do you think the pro-implementation group promoted implementation?)
- 34. Which of these arguments and rationales appear to be successful/unsuccessful? Why and in what context?
- 35. Who were the dominant parties **resisting** the implementation in your school?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Teachers		66.7%	26
Students		2.6%	1
Parents		28.2%	11
Administration		10.3%	4
School board		5.1%	2
School board chair		0%	0
Other (please specify)		28.2%	11
Total Respondents			39
(skipped this question)			83

- 36. What were their dominant arguments and rationales for resisting the implementation?
- 37. What kinds of ideas and desires do these arguments and rationales draw on (i.e. why do you think the anti-implementation group resisted the implementation?)
- 38. Do you think the decision to implement the MYP was beneficial to your school?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Very Beneficial		59.1%	26
Good		22.7%	10
Neutral		6.8%	3
Not very beneficial		4.5%	2
Very disadvantageous		2.3%	1
Other (please specify)		4.5%	2
Total Respondents			44
(skipped this question)			78

- 39. How did you react to the move towards the implementation of the MYP in your school?

		Response Percent	Response Total
Fully supported it		70.5%	31
Supported it with reservations		13.6%	6
Was resigned to it		4.5%	2
Resisted it		6.8%	3
Other? (Please specify)		4.5%	2
Total Respondents			44
(skipped this question)			78

- 40. What was your impression of how the majority of teachers reacted towards the implementation of the MYP in your school?

	Everyone	Most	About half	Few	None	Response Average
Fully supported it	5% (2)	19% (7)	30% (11)	43% (16)	3% (1)	3.19
Supported it with reservations	0% (0)	24% (9)	42% (16)	34% (13)	0% (0)	3.11
Were resigned to it	0% (0)	17% (5)	30% (9)	50% (15)	3% (1)	3.40
Resisted it	0% (0)	0% (0)	12% (4)	73% (24)	15% (5)	4.03
Total Respondents						42
(skipped this question)						80

Section 3 MYP Promotion (this section asked participants to indicate levels of agreement on various statements without returning to the previous sections to allow for cross analysis between sections.

41. The following is a list of benefits commonly attributed to the MYP by proponents. Please rank the extent to which you think each statement contributes towards student learning through the MYP.

	Very beneficial	Beneficial	Minor effects either way	Disadvantageous	Very disadvantageous	N/A	Response Average
a) If your school has the PYP and the MYP: The MYP provides a natural progression for students coming from the IB Primary Years Programme.	15% (9)	39% (23)	12% (7)	0% (0)	2% (1)	32% (19)	2.03
b) If your school has the MYP and the IBDP: The MYP prepares students for the IB Diploma Programme.	22% (13)	42% (25)	17% (10)	8% (5)	2% (1)	10% (6)	2.19
c) The MYP provides a framework rather than a set curriculum, allowing schools to implement the program while satisfying their particular curricular requirements.	48% (30)	39% (24)	8% (5)	3% (2)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.71
d) The MYP is flexible, allowing schools in different systems and situations to implement the program yet maintain their core values and/or state-mandated systems.	53% (33)	29% (18)	11% (7)	3% (2)	3% (2)	0% (0)	1.74
e) The MYP promotes holistic learning as a fundamental concept.	66% (41)	24% (15)	6% (4)	0% (0)	2% (1)	2% (1)	1.44
f) The MYP promotes communication as a fundamental concept.	62% (38)	31% (19)	5% (3)	0% (0)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.48
g) The MYP promotes intercultural awareness as a fundamental concept.	65% (40)	26% (16)	8% (5)	0% (0)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.48
h) The MYP promotes leaning in constructivist ways.	54% (33)	31% (19)	8% (5)	0% (0)	2% (1)	5% (3)	1.57
i) The MYP uses criterion based assessment.	57% (34)	28% (17)	7% (4)	5% (3)	3% (2)	0% (0)	1.70
j) The IBO provides subject descriptors to schools to be used as a basis for assessment.	49% (30)	38% (23)	7% (4)	5% (3)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.72
k) The Areas of Interaction (AOI) emphasises and facilitates the learning of important knowledge/skills/attitudes in all subject classes.	42% (26)	27% (17)	23% (14)	5% (3)	3% (2)	0% (0)	2.00
l) The Personal Project provides an opportunity to practice and assess AOI skills.	52% (32)	33% (20)	10% (6)	0% (0)	2% (1)	3% (2)	1.61
m) The IB promotes the use of Interdisciplinary Links, which enhances meaningful connections by students.	52% (32)	39% (24)	5% (3)	2% (1)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.61
n) The required 8 subjects ensure a balanced programme.	52% (32)	31% (19)	11% (7)	3% (2)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.70
p) The IBO governance structure allows for practicing educators to have input in the continuing development of the programme.	32% (20)	52% (32)	10% (6)	2% (1)	5% (3)	0% (0)	1.95
q) The IB Learner Profile (implemented 2006) provides a focus for development of knowledge, skills and attitudes espoused by the IBO spanning all three IB programmes.	45% (28)	35% (22)	11% (7)	3% (2)	2% (1)	3% (2)	1.77
Total Respondents							62
(skipped this question)							60

42. The following is a list of drawbacks or negative aspects critics have of made regarding the MYP. Please rank how valid you think each statement is as a criticism for the affect it has on student learning through the MYP.

	Not a valid criticism	Some validity	Medium validity	Significant validity	Valid criticism	N/A	Response Average
a) The MYP does not provide a detailed syllabus (i.e. course outline) for each grade level for any of the MYP subjects.	40% (25)	22% (14)	19% (12)	13% (8)	6% (4)	0% (0)	2.24
b) The MYP does not provide a detailed scope and sequence (i.e. specific standards and benchmarks) for MYP subjects at each grade level.	33% (21)	25% (16)	16% (10)	19% (12)	6% (4)	0% (0)	2.40
c) The MYP only provides one set of exit criteria for schools (the subject descriptors)	21% (13)	41% (26)	14% (9)	10% (6)	14% (9)	0% (0)	2.56
d) The MYP requires the compulsory use of criterion based assessment and reporting.	58% (36)	24% (15)	10% (6)	3% (2)	5% (3)	0% (0)	1.73
e) The MYP is too difficult to understand.	43% (27)	33% (21)	13% (8)	5% (3)	6% (4)	0% (0)	1.98
f) The MYP moderation processes takes too long.	18% (11)	35% (22)	10% (6)	13% (8)	8% (5)	16% (10)	2.50
g) The Areas of Interaction (AOI) are too difficult to use in class, and take time away from teaching content and subject skills.	61% (38)	21% (13)	10% (6)	0% (0)	8% (5)	0% (0)	1.73
h) The MYP tends to be more 'project based' than the IB Diploma Programme which is more 'content based', so students are not being prepared for the DP and university as well as they could be.	40% (25)	33% (21)	10% (6)	8% (5)	10% (6)	0% (0)	2.14
i) The MYP forces Interdisciplinary links, making their helpfulness dubious.	52% (32)	29% (18)	11% (7)	6% (4)	2% (1)	0% (0)	1.77
j) The MYP is different to the PYP and IB DP so does not provide a good learning continuum from elementary to high school.	36% (22)	28% (17)	16% (10)	7% (4)	8% (5)	5% (3)	2.19
Total Respondents							63
(skipped this question)							59

43. Why did your school implement the MYP? Please rank the importance of each statement as a reason for implementing the MYP?

	Not important at all	Some importance	Medium level of importance	Important	Very important	N/A	Response Average
a) To prepare students for the IB Diploma Programme.	11% (7)	23% (14)	20% (12)	18% (11)	25% (15)	3% (2)	3.22
b) To provide a natural progression for students coming from the IB Primary Years Programme.	11% (7)	11% (7)	11% (7)	16% (10)	16% (10)	33% (20)	3.22
c) To enable your school to offer all 3 IB programmes (PYP/MYP/IBDP).	10% (6)	11% (7)	10% (6)	11% (7)	25% (15)	33% (20)	3.44
d) Because of the perceived educational benefits of the MYP.	2% (1)	8% (5)	15% (9)	26% (16)	48% (29)	2% (1)	4.12
e) To promote your school by offering an IB programme.	5% (3)	7% (4)	10% (6)	16% (10)	61% (37)	2% (1)	4.23
f) Because the MYP promotes teacher collaboration.	16% (10)	16% (10)	23% (14)	18% (11)	25% (15)	2% (1)	3.18
g) To make your school distinct from other schools in your region.	7% (4)	12% (7)	15% (9)	18% (11)	47% (28)	2% (1)	3.88
h) Due to parental demand.	39% (22)	16% (9)	11% (6)	14% (8)	5% (3)	16% (9)	2.19
Total Respondents							61
(skipped this question)							61

Section 4 Implementation (MYP coordinators and administrators at MYP schools)

44. Are you a coordinator at an MYP school? (If yes, you will be re-directed to section 4; If no, you will be redirected to a final page).

45. How was the MYP introduced in your school?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Grade by grade (one grade added each year)	48.7%	19
Multiple grades added over time (2 or more grades added each year)	23.1%	9
All grades added at one time	20.5%	8
Other (please specify)	7.7%	3
Total Respondents		39
(skipped this question)		83

46. Was your school already authorised for the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) when you introduced the MYP?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	59%	23
No	41%	16
Total Respondents		39
(skipped this question)		83

47. Was your school already authorised for the PYP when you introduced the MYP?

	Response Percent	Response Total
Yes	0%	0
No	100%	39
Total Respondents		39
(skipped this question)		83

48. If yes to either of the above, did this affect the implementation?

	Response Percent	Response Total
No	53.8%	14
Yes (please specify how)	46.2%	12
Total Respondents		26
(skipped this question)		96

49. How many years has your school been MYP authorised?

50. How long did it take your school to implement and gain authorisation?

51. Would you say the implementation of the MYP has been successful? Please elaborate.

52. What strategies did you (and/or school administrators) use to promote positive MYP discourses?

	Not used at all	Used a little	Made some use of	Made a lot of use	Used extensively	Response Average
Presentations	0% (0)	0% (0)	16% (6)	61% (23)	24% (9)	4.08
Training	0% (0)	5% (2)	26% (10)	39% (15)	29% (11)	3.92
Sent faculty to workshops	0% (0)	5% (2)	29% (11)	34% (13)	32% (12)	3.92
Visiting speakers	8% (3)	27% (10)	38% (14)	19% (7)	8% (3)	2.92
Pre-authorisation visits from IB personnel	22% (8)	17% (6)	42% (15)	17% (6)	3% (1)	2.61
Letters/documents to parents	3% (1)	5% (2)	42% (16)	32% (12)	18% (7)	3.58
School website information	8% (3)	32% (12)	32% (12)	24% (9)	5% (2)	2.87
Faculty Meetings	0% (0)	8% (3)	13% (5)	45% (17)	34% (13)	4.05
Discussions groups with parents	5% (2)	19% (7)	49% (18)	22% (8)	5% (2)	3.03
Online Curriculum Centre	14% (5)	30% (11)	32% (12)	19% (7)	5% (2)	2.73
				Total Respondents		38
				(skipped this question)		84

53. Did you use any strategies not listed above?
54. In what way could MYP implementers have been more effective with their strategies?
55. For those who resisted MYP implementation in your school, what overt and covert (e.g. practices such as ignoring, silence, non-compliance etc.) strategies did they use, in what context, and with what effect?
56. What strategies did MYP proponents and implementers use to overcome any resistance?
57. Based on your experience, what types of training would you recommend to lay the foundation for MYP implementation in implementing schools?
58. If you were to do the implementation again, what would you do differently?
59. Do you have any comments or suggestions you would like to add?

Appendix viii Research Design Table used in Dissertation Planning Phase

Research Design Table
Discourses of MYP Effectiveness in Schools

(Table adapted from Stringer:2004)

Planning Stage	Procedure details	Comments/ Reflections
• Setting the stage	<p><u>ID issue:</u> MYP effectiveness, implementation and use. People affected/being affected: Students, Parents, Teachers, MYP Coordinators, Administrators.</p>	<p>Consider relationships, Communication, Participation, Inclusion, engagement index (Stringer:40-43)</p>
• Focusing and framing	<p><u>Research statement:</u> [Problem?] How to enhance the difficult process of MYP implementation and use. <u>Research Questions:</u> 1. How are MYP schools perceived by school stakeholders to be beneficial for student learning? 2. How is the MYP being promoted and implemented in schools? 3. How can implementing schools use this data to enhance implementation, and overcome resistance/perceived difficulties in implementing the MYP? <u>Research Objectives*:</u> Analyse MYP discourses to help ID of ways of enhancing MYP implementation and use. <u>Scope of inquiry:</u> Student, parent, teacher, coordinator and administrator discourses on MYP implementation and use. <u>Participants?</u> OIS [xxx (other MYP schools)] <u>Time?</u> Design/prep/research 2004/5, analyse/write 2005/6</p>	<p>Is a constantly changing process (supports AR designation!)</p> <p>*Applicable to current workplace, but also want to be transferable to other MYP implementing schools.</p>
• Literature Review	<p><u>Prelim. Review:</u> IBO documents – available, v. little on MYP, none specifically on topic. [A few papers on implementation skills, but little none on MYP discourses] 1 MEd level paper found* on effect of MYP on DP scores. Not directly applicable.</p>	<p>Need Lit. Review for link paper. Also look at effective school lit., and research on best practices *Questionable research methods</p>
• Sources of Information	<p><u>ID stakeholder gps</u> (ID participants): Students & Parents: OIS (possibly other schools) Teachers & Administrators: OIS, other MYP schools MYP Coordinators: OIS, other MYP schools <u>Sampling:</u> Purposeful sampling to include diverse representative of all stakeholder groups <u>Sites and settings:</u> OIS, other MYP schools*, interviews in my office, or 2F conference room, interviews at other schools? <u>Records/document sources:</u> IBO MYP docs, School promotional literature (esp. OIS case study) <u>Type of info required:</u> MYP promotional & Implementation discourses from the different</p>	<p>Action research = emergent, so may change...</p> <p>*xxx (other schools)</p>

	stakeholder groups	
• Ethics	<u>Steps taken to ensure no harm:</u> Minimisation of risks to participants*, Planning for insider research participant informed, Informed Permission form, HECS approval process	*Risks ID'd in Ass.2 Adv. Research Methods
• Validity	<u>Procedures to enhance strength of research:</u> Risk analysis – alternatives **Credibility– rigorous planning, triangulation/* <i>crystallisation</i> , participant de-briefing/ member checks **Transferability – Use of rich data, CDA will aid in this **Defendability - processes clearly defined, participant input, inquiry audit ** Confirmability – audit trail, rigorous analysis and clear reporting	*Richardson 2000:934 **Stringer 2004:57
Gathering Data		
• Interviewing	Interviews* In-depth interviews (participants to be determined after interviews and questionnaires returned)	*Purposeful sampling OIS stakeholders
• Questionnaire	OIS, other MYP schools (*Qualitative in nature) (*OIS case study – interviews and questionnaires)	Prepare questionnaire after interviews so as to have informed questions
• Observing	None planned at present	
• Artefact review	MYP documentation (promotional and implementation literature)	For literature CDA *Planned for special topic
• Literature review	On-going: review of MYP related literature, especially as related to educational underpinnings of MYP, effective schools/best practices/'purpose' of schools literature	*For informed research, and for use in linking paper
Data Analysis		
• Analysing epiphanies* and illuminative experiences	CDA → concepts, clarity, understanding of purpose, solutions, ideas that make sense, meanings to experiences → deconstruct to reveal elements on which experiences are built → individual accounts...joint accounts...collective accounts	**'turning point experiences' (Stringer 2004:100)
• Categorizing and coding	Categories → conceptual coding* → themes	*Ensure participant feedback
• Enhancing analysis	Incorporate non-interview data (from literature, documents etc)	
• Constructing category systems	Accurately portray participants experiences Will explore use of small focus group	Possibly use NVivo (alternatives: MS Access and MS Word)
Communication		
• Reports	1. Portfolio proposal / Dissertation	

	2. Summary report back to participants from other schools 3. papers to selected journals	
• Ethnographies	Possible: Article for selected journal a possibility	For eg. IB World Magazine
• Presentations	As part of action phase for implementations (Presentation and/or workshop) Possible: Presentation at conference (for eg. EARCOS, IBO)	
• Multimedia	None planned at present	
• Other (Biographies drama...)	None planned at present	
Action		
• Solving Problems*	MYP implementation phase MYP promotion → Use 'Purpose' planning chart Stringer 2004:156	*Not necessarily a 'problem', but an issue for improvement
• Classroom practices	Indirect: literature review will highlight best practices – discourses may aid in giving teachers	
• Curriculum development	Indirect: as above (also MYP is a framework, not a curriculum)	
• Evaluation	Self, participant, supervisor, EdD portfolio/ dissertation review board Ongoing AR cycle: after first use, review with participants and adjust to improve* → Responsive evaluation (Guba & Lincoln in Stringer 2004:169) → Action evaluation (Wadsworth in Stringer 2004:169)	*Due to cyclical nature of AR, this may be continued after submission of my portfolio/dissertation
• Family and Community	Communications with OIS community regarding aspects of the research (input, involvement & feedback where possible)	
• School plans	Incorporating improvements into school improvement process (SIP) plans where applicable	