NAVIGATING HYBRID GLOBAL POLICY CONTEXTS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF MARKET-ORIENTED EDUCATION POLICY ENACTMENTS AMONG ADMINISTRATORS OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

by

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Abstract

Market-oriented education policies (MOEPs) are becoming increasingly prevalent in public education contexts around the world. However, there is a paucity of study on how public education administrators experience and understand MOEPs enacted within these spaces. In this thesis, I examine how administrators experience and navigate increasingly competitive environments and evolving political economies in school districts contexts. I focus on the cultural, political, economic, and administrative contingencies faced by administrators of International Education (IE) programs in the Canadian province of British Columbia (B.C.). These programs, which have proliferated over the past two decades, are viewed as revenue-generating activities that do not seem to fit well within public school districts.

In this study I take a policy sociology approach employing the Policy Enactment Analytic from the work of Stephen Ball, Meg Maguire, and Annette Braun to analyze how policies play out in specific educational contexts. I also draw upon Ball's work, which positions education policy as dynamic and malleable, keyed by individual policy actors operating within complex networks, and Susan Robertson's research on globalization and education policy. I utilize phenomenology to explore administrators' experiences with MOEPs. Data is collected through interviews with five administrators from B.C. school districts and independent schools.

Administrators identify the emergence of "hybrid policy spaces" in MOEP enactment that opens district policy jurisdictions to market forces from international and global scales. These spaces reveal how the dynamics associated with competing priorities and pressures ultimately reconfigures and reshapes administrators' roles and professional identities within public education settings. These dynamics also have cultural implications, which were somewhat unexpected. For instance, "interculturalization" was a prominent thread weaving through the administrators' experiences, regardless of district context or individual background.

The emergence of these hybrid policy spaces raises questions regarding the scope and magnitude of the impacts of MOEPs on public education. Additionally, the prominence of cultural implications as a strong theme within these policy enactments suggests that economics should not be the lone consideration in attempting to study and better understand the evolving policy landscape.

Lay Summary

I examine K-12 International Education (IE) programs in British Columbia (B.C.) from the perspective of school district administrators working in these programs. IE programs bring international students into B.C. schools and generate significant revenue for school districts. However, the provision of public education is not thought of as a revenue-generating activity. This contradiction has raised questions about how IE programs unfold and if they fit within public education systems.

Conclusions from the study suggest IE programs can bring market forces and policy influences from outside public school districts into decision-making and administrative processes. Additionally, district administrators who manage these programs often do not have the training or experience for this type of work and struggle to meet dual educational and business demands. However, IE programs also bring benefits for B.C. students increasing opportunities to meet peers from other cultures and inspiring interest in global citizenship and the world outside B.C.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, D. Cover.

The University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board approved this project entitled *Investigating the Translation of Market-Oriented Education Policy by District-Level Administrators in British Columbia K-12 Public Education*, certificate number H15-01927.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Marketization of public education has become a politically charged topic in education research and in the public policy sphere, with polarized positions taken up by staunch advocates from the pro-market and anti-market camps. Pro-market advocates point to the benefits of competition and entrepreneurial initiative for increasing efficiency and service quality (Tooley, 1994, 1995), while detractors cite a lack of evidence to support these claims and counter with charges of increasing inequality from marketization (Ball, 2012; Lubienski, 2005). As these debates have grown, there has been limited research into how education policy actors understand and experience this phenomenon and how the phenomenon is actually playing out in local-level education contexts.

In this study I address questions of how education policy actors, specifically district-level education administrators in British Columbia (B.C.), Canada, are experiencing the phenomenon of Market-Oriented Education Policies (MOEPs) and how these policies are enacted in local district contexts. I utilize the term *enactment* rather than *implementation* given that I recognize education policies as complex processes interpreted and translated by policy actors within their local contexts. In many cases public policy research positions policy implementation as a more linear process (Sabatier, 1999). I am interested in the subjectivities of policy actors within and throughout these processes in terms of how they understand the policies and the implications of these policies as they play out in their local contexts.

1.1 Marketization and Education

The increasing prevalence of MOEPs mark a trend toward marketization and privatization of public education, specifically, and social services, more broadly, in jurisdictions around the world (Verger, Fontdevila, & Zancajo, 2016). Education researchers have noted the emergence of market-oriented policies in many developed nations such as the United States (Lubienski, 2005; Lubienski, Gulosino, & Weitzel, 2009), the United Kingdom (Taylor, 2001; Whitty, 1997; Whitty & Power, 2000), Australia (Connell, 2006, 2013), New Zealand (O'Neill, 2011; Wylie, 1994), and Canada (Fallon & Pancucci, 2003; Fallon & Paquette, 2009). MOEPs have also appeared in developing nations, such as Indonesia (Bangay, 2005), China (Mok, 1997), Colombia, and Chile (Arenas, 2004).

Marketization is often closely associated with education privatization, but differs in the respect that the injection of market forces does not necessarily entail a shift from public (e.g., provision, funding, management) to private. However, as Whitty and Power (2000) note, opening up services to greater market forces does often entail more participation from private entities. In terms of education, examples of privatization include academies, trust schools and free schools in England (Ball, 2012); charter schools in the United States (Lubienski, 2013); mini-schools in Canada (Yoon, 2011); low fee private schools in Africa and Asia (Macpherson, Robertson, & Walford, 2014); and private tutoring in China (Bray, 2006; Zhang & Bray, 2016).

1.1.1 Traits of Marketization

Marketization entails the commodification of various aspects of education, which may include provision and/or funding, increased competition between public school districts and schools, and increased school choice for students (and parents), among other policy aims (Whitty & Power, 2000*)*. Commodification, competition, and choice have risen to the top of many education reform agendas influencing education policy actors operationally, in terms of what they do, and discursively, in terms of how they think (Ball, 2012). Marketization as discourse is an important consideration for this study in terms of its potential for shaping how policy actors experience and go about enacting MOEPs.

Marketization discourse promotes economic aims such as improving fiscal efficiency, seeking diversification of sources of funding (e.g., public and private), generating increased revenues, improving marketing practices and public image, and ensuring consumer satisfaction (Ball, 2007; Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011). Bartlett, Frederick, Gulbrandsen, and Murillo (2002) argue that the effects of marketization discourse result in economic considerations coming to outweigh other aims of public education, leading to a narrower view of "schools in the service of the economy" (p. 2). Economic concerns become the primary drivers in policy processes, diverting attention from non-economic implications of policy – namely, political and cultural aspects of social life.

It is important to note that economic aims have long been recognized as bearing heavily upon public education reform, particularly in terms of the role of education in developing

human capital and contributing to economic growth (Gradstein, Justman, & Volker, 2005). This is true of British Columbia, which includes the following wording in the Preamble to the *School Act*:

> The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable all learners to become literate, to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy. (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018d, p. C-12)

Although education researchers such as Cucchiara et al. (2011) argue that a proliferation in market-oriented policies may be, in fact, eclipsing other aims of public education such as social cohesion and democratic participation, as is illustrated in the *School Act* there are potentially competing notions for what public education is to achieve.

1.1.2 Perspectives on Marketization of Public Education

Marketization in public education is highly contentious in education research. In the view of pro-market advocates, allowing market forces to work unfettered by state restrictions and interference ultimately translates into greater efficiency and effectiveness for education service provision (Chubb & Moe, 1988; Tooley, 1994). The market is perceived as the cure-all for bureaucratic entanglements maligning public education systems and necessitating measures toward decentralization of state powers, deregulation of state restrictions on provision and competition, privatization of state-provided services, and the promotion of expanded school choice. However, those in opposition to marketization point out that there is little evidence to support claims of increased fiscal efficiency and effectiveness, arguing that marketization actually serves to exacerbate disadvantages for those with lesser socioeconomic means (Bartlett et al., 2002; Connell, 2013). They also claim that market-oriented reforms shift focus away from democratic

principles that underpin public education, offering equal access and participation to all, and fostering beliefs and skills necessary for social life (Apple, 2005; Whitty, 1998).

Marglin (2008) suggests that moving toward a more marketized environment changes not only economic considerations, such as allocating resources and entrenching market-oriented values, but also relationships between people that are reconfigured and defined by the market. Marglin highlights the shifting of social relationships toward economistic valuation and in doing so, draws attention to implications of market orientation for other areas of social life. Drawing from this argument, I suggest that in the current marketized climate of education reform, much of the production and practice of education policy comes to be viewed through a predominantly economistic prism. This reification of the economic, on the part of policy actors, then sublimates recognition of impacts of education policies upon political and cultural aspects of social life.

1.2 Problem Statement

In this study, I investigate how education policy actors experience MOEPs, how they go about enacting these policies, and how they see the implications of these policies playing out. I take up the argument that marketization discourse shapes the understanding of education policy actors toward the privileging of economic aims in how policies are enacted (Ball, 2007, 2012; Cucchiara et al., 2011). This may connote little consideration by these policy actors for other inevitable correlate impacts, both in terms of intended and unintended political and cultural impacts.

This topic is of importance given the arguments of some researchers who suggest that marketization may undermine the most foundational aims of public education systems – namely, enhancing democratic participation and increased equity to opportunity. For example, Ichilov (2011) notes that among education researchers there is general consensus around the close ties between education and democracy, with the former acting as a nursery, or sheltered context, in which knowledge of democratic principles and practices can be fostered. MOEPs may lead to commodification of public education and promote a business-like climate that privileges competition, marketing, and consumer demand. Despite claims by researchers such as Ichilov that public education should promote equity, foster community, and create a cohesive social fabric, the emergence of MOEPs within public education settings illustrates competing aims that raise questions regarding how these apparently contradictory notions might coexist in relation to the public contributions of education and schooling.

This study examines the argument that MOEPs influence public education and, as a result, social life beyond specifically economic implications. I explore the potential that these policies also have implications for the cultural politics of public school districts. In B.C., there are 60 school districts each with locally-elected school boards – a structure that decentralizes education governance as districts have autonomy in many areas of operation. Each district effectively becomes a micro-political space that is nested within broader provincial political and economic forces, but with its own cultural politics at the local level.

I argue that MOEPs playing out within district contexts may inadvertently establish new constituencies and regimes of affiliation, which reconfigure membership in the political community. However, it is also possible that the political implications of these policies go unnoticed by policy actors working within the education system. In terms of political implications I am referring to the potential for attaining citizenship rights and benefits through participation in public education as a non-resident. I draw upon the work of citizenship theorists, including Sassen (2002) and Ong (2006b), to link the enactment of MOEPs in B.C. K-12 public education to novel (re)articulations of citizenship that are now evident. Specifically, I take International Education (IE) programs as case-in-point of MOEP enactment to illustrate this argument.

1.3 International Education

Education is a provincial jurisdiction in Canada with the B.C. Ministry of Education holding responsibility for the K-12 level and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Trading holding responsibility for the post-secondary level. However, K-12 International Education (IE) programs did not come about as a result of a provincial market-oriented policy or policies from the Ministry of Education. Rather, these programs emerged out of a combination of global forces (e.g., a demand for English language education programs), as well as provincial and local district and school policies that have seen the rise of IE in B.C.

To date, the provincial government has few policies that directly shape district and independent school[1] IE programs. IE programs may be best understood as *policy instruments*[2] selected, implemented, and shaped by the districts, with little provincial-level intervention. IE programs are marketed to an international audience, drawing non-resident students to B.C. K-12 school districts and independent schools for annual tuition costs from approximately $14,500 and up.

IE programs have proliferated across the province, with many school districts establishing new offices dedicated to the IE portfolio to handle the multitude of responsibilities that these programs entail. Examples of these responsibilities include marketing and recruitment abroad, admissions and enrolment, in-school student academic and health and wellness supports, homestay arrangements and program administration, and student discipline. District IE program areas also often facilitate extra-curricular cultural activities (e.g., excursions to popular local tourist attractions or sporting events)

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[1] In B.C., the K-12 school system has both public school districts and independent schools. Independent schools are regulated by the *Independent Schools Act*, which is administered by the B.C. Ministry of Education. Independent schools are eligible for partial provincial grant funding, which is allocated based upon guidelines schools must follow to qualify. For example, an independent school that chooses to follow all criteria established by the Ministry, including employing B.C.-certified teachers, participating in provincial assessment programs, and successfully passing Ministry inspection processes along with other compliance responsibilities, would qualify as a Group 1 independent school. An independent school that chooses not to follow all of the Group 1 criteria would fall into Group 2 and receive a smaller funding allocation. Group 3 and 4 independent schools receive no provincial funding. The B.C. independent school sector is in many ways comparable to private education sectors from other education jurisdictions.

[2] Policy instruments are tools that may be used in public administration to address what are perceived as public problems (Hannaway & Woodroffe, 2003). In public education systems, for example, policy instruments have long included mandates and capacity building. Now, increasingly commonly instruments that take advantage of market mechanisms such as vouchers, tuition tax credits, and forms of school choice are utilized to affect education reform.

to orient international students with the local area and culture, outbound student exchange (i.e., B.C. students going abroad), and short-term (1 to 4 week) language and acculturation camps for visiting (i.e., non-enrolled) international students.

IE programs have become increasingly important as revenue-generating mechanisms, with some districts claiming that these revenues are now essential sources of funding for public education (Vancouver School Board, 2012). Despite this increasing importance, some school districts identify increasing competition for international students from jurisdictions around the world, as well as budgetary concerns from rising operating costs (e.g., travel for recruitment) and falling school district enrolments as key pressures that present challenges for these programs. On a provincial level, Fallon and Paquette (2009) identified the emergence of a government-fostered education policy climate where entrepreneurialism and independent market-driven revenue generation are actively encouraged. IE programs are overwhelmingly the largest, and in many cases only, source of independent revenue generation for B.C. schools.

1.3.1 International Education Programs Through an Economic Lens

IE programs in B.C. and many other areas of the world are conceived of and discussed in predominantly economic terms. The provincial government and many school districts choose to promote IE programs primarily in terms of revenue generation and economic impacts (Kunin, 2017; Vancouver School Board, 2012), which has led to criticism from the public and the media over the privileging of fee-paying international students at the expense of B.C. domestic students (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2013; Sherlock, 2014).

From school districts, the provincial government, the general public and the media, there appears little discussion of other effects of IE programs that are not focussed upon revenue generation and economic impact.

As an illustration, the B.C. provincial government presented the International Education Strategy ("the Strategy") in 2012 forecasting the expansion of IE programs for K-12 public education, as well as K-12 private education, public and private post-secondary institutions, and private language schools. The Strategy draws attention to the economic success and contributions of international education (from the 2010 year), with $1.8 billion in money brought into the provincial economy by international students, $70 million in government tax revenue generated, 22,000 jobs created, and $1.2 billion, or 7% of total GDP, tied to educational services as an export industry (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2012). Additionally, the British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE), the province's Crown Corporation responsible for promoting international education in B.C., has twice commissioned reports from an independent economic consultant to estimate the economic impact of international students at the K-12 and post-secondary level (Kunin, 2012, 2017). These reports do not address any correlate impacts of IE programs outside of economistic benefits.

Media coverage of IE programs has also been predominantly economically-focussed. Examples of prominent headlines reinforcing an economic perspective of IE programs in the media include: "Foreign students inject millions into school coffers," (Baluja, 2011) - from one of the highest circulating newspapers in Canada, *The Globe and Mail* - and

"Cashing in on foreign students," (Findlay, 2011) from the Canadian national newsmagazine *Macleans*. Media coverage of IE programs is important to consider given that their portrayal of education policies can be crucial in shaping public opinion of education reform (Fairclough, 1995; Rawolle, 2005).

1.3.2 Alternative Perspectives

Overshadowed by emphasis upon the economic benefits of IE programs are the implications upon attainment of partial citizenship rights and benefits. In gaining access to B.C. K-12 public education, non-resident students enjoy what had previously been restricted to full members of the political community (i.e., citizens). Ong (2005), in her work on transnational migration and the disarticulation of citizenship rights, provides similar examples in which particular elements of citizenship are commodified and made available without realizing full citizenly standing.

I contend that IE programs present a similar opportunity in providing access to partial citizenly rights of public education, and in this way, birth new constituencies within the political community. Within these programs, education policy actors who are responsible for program administration effectively become gatekeepers for citizenship. By design or by corollary, the enactment, or bringing policy to bear in local contexts, of market-oriented education reforms carries consequences in the political and cultural sphere, such as the rearticulation of the boundaries of the political community and associated rights. However, to date, the voices of these crucial school district-level policy actors have been absent from education research in terms of how they make sense of market-oriented

policy, how they translate these policies into their local contexts, and how they understand the impacts in economic, political, and cultural terms.

For this study I employ an interpretive phenomenological research design, informed by a conceptual framework grounded in a policy sociology approach (Ozga, 2000) I also draw upon Ball, Maguire, and Braun's (2012) work on policy enactment to make sense of the policy spaces in which the education administrators are immersed. Utilizing this approach allows me to explore the understandings of the administrators as they navigate these policy spaces and are implicated within processes of policy enactment.

1.4 Conceptual Framework and Research Design

My conceptual framework draws from policy sociology, which Ozga (2000) describes as emerging from a social science tradition and applying social theory and qualitative research methods to education policy studies. Inherent within the approach is a view of policy processes as unpredictable, potentially even chaotic, within which policy actors have latitude to exercise judgement and interpretation, compliance, resistance, or avoidance, i.e., "micro-political agency" (Vidovich, 2007). An often-invoked model of policy processes, as there are many competing examples, within policy sociology research is that of Bowe, Ball, and Gold (1992) and the *policy trajectory*. The policy trajectory includes multiple contexts that capture policy from the stage of imagination and development through to translation and implementation in specific contexts.

I utilize the *policy enactment analytic* (Ball et al., 2012) to unpack complex policy contexts and to focus analysis upon processes of enactment. The policy enactment analytic posits a model for the spaces in which policy actors find themselves as they are influenced by time and place (i.e., context), and by their own personal histories, values and beliefs in enactment processes. In some policy process models, this stage is often referenced as "implementation"*;* however, as argued by Ball et al. (2012), implementation connotes a more mechanistic process that aligns with traditional perspectives on policy leaving little space for individual policy actor agency and factoring out contextual specificity. These researchers thus state a need to avoid overgeneralizations of policy contexts by taking the experiences and understandings of individual education policy actors as of central import. I share this perspective on policy and endeavour to flesh out in a more nuanced manner the complex spaces in which education policy actors, and more specifically in this study, district-level education administrators, understand and enact MOEPs.

In terms of research design, my approach to phenomenology is influenced primarily by the work of two researchers: Amadeo Giorgi (1997, 2012) and Max van Manen (1984, 2007, 2014). This approach affords a close examination of the policy actor in context through the process of policy enactment. Interpretive, or hermeneutic, phenomenology focuses on the meaning-making of others, while incorporating context as a crucial aspect of the study (Van der Mescht, 2004). This particular school of phenomenology differs from that articulated in the work of founding pioneers, such as Husserl. The Husserlian tradition, identified as transcendental phenomenology, is grounded in philosophical

inquiry and is primarily concerned with the *essence* of phenomenon, grappling with questions of consciousness as opposed to the meaning of experience (van Manen, 2014). This tradition holds that phenomenology must remain at the level of pure description, without delving into analysis. However, over its long period of development, phenomenology has diverged into a number of well-recognized approaches that share basic tenets, but have incorporated different tools that allow for a more empirically-grounded inquiry.

Giorgi (1997, 2012) is considered one of the originators of empirical approaches to phenomenology (Van der Mescht, 2004), making significant methodological contributions, along with colleagues from Duquesne University, in the area of phenomenological analysis. I draw from Giorgi's work adopting a reliance upon perspectives from actors engaging the phenomenon, rather than the first-hand experiences of the researcher, and perhaps most importantly, a grounding in disciplinary sensibilities throughout the inquiry. Giorgi contends that, despite the phenomenological tradition to bracket out a theoretical lens and remain at the level of description, in the social sciences the researcher must engage in analysis and reach conclusions that meet the criteria of (i.e., speak back to) the discipline in which they are working.

van Manen's (1984, 2007, 2014) work is predominantly in the field of education, in which he develops a phenomenology of pedagogy. He depicts his approach to phenomenology as interpretive-descriptive, but falls within a broadly hermeneutic approach. I draw insights from van Manen's work in terms of preparation for undertaking

phenomenological inquiry (i.e., assuming a phenomenological attitude), as well as his contributions toward representation of phenomenological research findings.

An interpretive phenomenological approach is appropriate for this study given that the focus is not on the essence of the phenomenon, as in transcendental phenomenology, but on how individuals understand and experience the phenomenon. Individuals bring embodied experience[3] to the encounter with the phenomenon. The interpretive phenomenological approach allows me to delve into the meaning-making[4] of education policy actors, while remaining attentive to embodied experience as these actors are immersed in MOEP policy contexts.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This project makes contributions to education policy research in a number of areas including: a substantive contribution with an exploration of international education programs in B.C. school district contexts – an as-yet little investigated phenomenon; a conceptual contribution in terms of how education policy enactment processes may play

[3] By embodied experience I am referencing the accumulation of experiences, both personal and professional, in individuals that "sediment a tradition in their way of seeing, feeling, [and] acting" (Bengtsson, 2013).

[4] Bijlsma, Schaap, and de Bruijn distinguish between "meaning-making" and "sense-making" in an education research context on vocational training in the Netherlands. They define meaning-making as "conscious reflection" on concepts, values and beliefs of the individual and what they encounter in the practice of vocational education. Sense-making entails an "ongoing, interpretative process" in which individual learners incorporate what they encounter in the field into their own knowledge base. In other words, meaning-making implies a reflexive process whereby core values and beliefs of an individual may shift through their experiences.

out, particularly at the local level; and a methodological contribution, in terms of applying a phenomenological approach to education policy research.

The phenomenon of marketized education policy has received attention from education researchers such as Whitty and Power (2000), Ball (2007, 2012), and Cucchiara et al. (2011), to name but a few. However, the emergence of IE programs as products of marketized education policy enactment within K-12 public education systems is not a phenomenon that has been extensively researched, or is well understood despite steady increase (Fallon & Poole, 2014; Kuehn, 2012). I draw on the insights and experiences of international education administrators, as key policy enactors, to better understand this phenomenon and how it manifests in local-level school district contexts.

Often research on education policy enactment focuses upon schools and classrooms at the micro-level, and government bodies and policy actors at the provincial, national and even global macro-level. There has been less focus on school district contexts, which may be viewed as intermediary policy spaces, neither key contexts for policy creation, nor for policy implementation. As noted, B.C. school districts are governed by locally elected boards of education with autonomy to interpret policy from the provincial level and to develop policy for K-12 education within their jurisdictional boundaries. School districts also have the key roles of allocating funding and determining a diversity of delivery models (e.g., mini-schools, academies, international education programs) that meet the needs of their community. As described by a participant in the current study, school districts can become “little fiefdoms” with considerable power. This makes school

districts important political, economic and cultural contexts in their own right. This study highlights the crucial role of school districts in the enactment of marketized education policies and potentially in the shaping of political communities.

This research also builds upon the concept of policy enactment originating with Braun et al. (2010), which offers a more sophisticated analytic for examining the substantiation of policy in context. As noted above, much of the work conducted in the area of policy implementation lacks sensitivity and nuance to capture the complexity of the contexts in which policy actors must navigate. With utilization of the policy enactment analytic, I hope to better understand the work of local-level policy actors and, thus, contribute to the ongoing development and increasing application of the enactment model.

Finally, this project highlights the utility of phenomenological inquiry in education policy research, and advocates for its expanded application. To date, phenomenology has not enjoyed wide popularity in education policy research. Researchers such as van Manen (1979, 2014), Van der Mescht (2004), and Kakkori (2009) have argued that phenomenology has much to offer in terms of understanding how phenomenon play out in education contexts. These researchers suggest that individual experiences may be insightful for understanding complex processes (e.g., education policy enactment) that are less accessible through other forms of inquiry. The type of descriptions and insights produced through phenomenological inquiry may also lead to expanded sharing of experiences among policy actors in education policy communities. As Corcoran, Walker, and Wals (2004) advocate, the sharing of individual experience through research can

contribute cohesiveness in a community of practice. These researchers suggest that establishing commonality and a sense of belonging within similar experiences is not always easily accessible to practitioners and the sharing of phenomenological research may be one method to support this type of sharing.

1.6 Researcher Positioning

Within phenomenological inquiry, explicating the positioning of the researcher is key to acknowledging the subjectivity in the interpretive process and to becoming aware of presuppositions the researcher is bringing to the work. This recognition should then be integrated throughout the research process to illuminate situations in which the researcher may be allowing her/his own perspective to emerge, potentially influencing interpretations of a participant's experience. However, this process is far from straightforward and, I feel, should remain a focus for the researcher moving through the research process.

1.6.1 Coming to the Phenomenon

Prior to taking an academic interest in the phenomenon of MOEPs, my background as an educator in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings spanned 15+ years. I worked in multiple countries with learners from three years of age to over 70 years of age, and in contexts from K-12 to post-secondary to private language schools. Within this experience, I would estimate that I have taught students from more than 50 different countries with a range of different purposes for engaging in the study of English. For example, these purposes have included students

fulfilling an academic requirement, students with an intrinsic motivation to improve their language skills, and students with extrinsic pressures from a parent, employer, or their peers. These experiences have opened understandings of ESL/EFL through a variety of lenses, but with perhaps the strongest impression being the commodification of the English language and its value as a key to open opportunities in not only English-speaking countries, but in non-English speaking countries (i.e., the home country for students) as well.

My interest in the phenomenon of MOEPs began with start of my doctoral program in 2011 and a coinciding rapid increase of international students in K-12 school districts and independent schools in B.C. This increase was highlighted by high-profile media outlets with national exposure, such as *The Globe and Mail* (Baluja, 2011), *Macleans* Magazine (Findlay, 2011), and *The Vancouver Sun* (Steffenhagen, 2011). In these instances, IE is presented through an economistic framing focussing almost exclusively on the number of international students in B.C. and Canadian institutions and on the amount of revenue generated as a result. Around the same time, the *British Columbia International Education Strategy* (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2012) was launched by the B.C. government promoting a 50% increase in the number of international students studying at all levels within five years.

During this period, I participated on a research team at the University of British Columbia (UBC) that employed the concepts of privatization and marketization in the analysis of MOEPs and IE programs in B.C. (Fallon & Poole, 2014). This work further

reinforced a focus on revenue generation and specifically the ramifications upon (in)equity between school districts in the province. Absent from these discussions were considerations of political or cultural implications that might result from the ways in which these programs were implemented and played out. In other words, my introduction to the phenomenon very much aligned with the dominant discourse framing MOEPs, while largely ignoring alternate perspectives through which different types of questions about the phenomenon might arise.

1.6.2 The Shift

In 2015, I took a full-time position with the provincial government in the Ministry of Education. My role, ongoing, involves program and policy development, implementation, and monitoring, research and analysis, communicating with sector stakeholders, and providing advice for Ministry executive, among other responsibilities. Within this role, I have had extensive engagement with school district administrators through which I have been afforded insights that I could not have accessed from my position as an academic researcher. Furthermore, these insights were not available to me when I first conceptualized the project and began research. Thus, this shift, while being extremely beneficial in terms of opening the potential for different insights into the phenomenon, has been a challenge to navigate as I attempt to reconcile perspectives on MOEPs from the experiences of the study participants, my original and ongoing position as a researcher, and my work within government.

A key aspect of phenomenological research is responsibility on the part of the researcher to identify and continuously engage with their own perspective and presumptions of the phenomenon. However, my positioning shifted into a space that requires more intentional retrospection and unpacking of what I bring to the study. With some certainty, I can confirm that one aspect of my perspective on IE remaining consistent throughout this work is a view of IE as a highly complex phenomenon. Although the economics of IE programs have dominated much of the public discussion, political and cultural implications emerge as key aspects of the experiences of education policy actors. Phenomenology provides an effective research approach for examining experiences and insights into these programs and, more broadly, into the enactment of MOEPs.

1.7 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized in the following manner:

- In Chapter Two, I provide a literature review of the fundamental concepts that allow me to explore the phenomenon of MOEPs. These concepts include education policy processes and specifically policy enactment, the phenomenon of marketization in public education, and conceptualizations of citizenship as impacted by education and marketization.
- In Chapter Three, I offer a brief overview of the B.C. education system and B.C. school districts as unique contexts of policy enactment. I also examine the emergence of international education as a global phenomenon and then describe the emergence of IE programs in K-12 school districts in B.C.

- In Chapter Four, I develop the research design for this study looking at the origins of phenomenology as a research approach in the work of Husserl and Heidegger. I then discuss the work of Giorgi and van Manen, two modern practitioners of phenomenological inquiry from whom I draw upon to develop a phenomenology of education policy approach. I introduce the notion of the *triptych* as a metaphor through which to present the study findings in a manner that is accessible for the audience. I conclude the chapter detailing the research process and participants for this study.
- In Chapter Five, I present the research findings as three panels of a triptych. The panels are understandings, contexts, and outcomes of the enactment of MOEPs. This chapter includes extensive quotations from district administrators to provide insight and voice to their experiences. Presentation of phenomenological findings in social science research is largely undefined, and I employ the triptych metaphor to provide a structure through which to read these experiences.
- In Chapter Six, I discuss the findings from the study in relation to the phenomenon of MOEP enactment, identifying the emergence of hybrid, global policy contexts and how these contexts shape the experiences of policy actors. I also examine the concept of interculturalization as an emergent theme specifically from IE programs in B.C. school districts, but also more broadly as a sociocultural space opened within MOEP enactment. I close with a short self-reflection to draw back to the phenomenological base of acknowledging what the researcher has brought to the work, but also in an attempt to recognize the dynamism of

experience and explore what reflexivity looks like in the context of shifting relations between an individual and a given phenomenon.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

In examining the experiences of district-level administrators with MOEPs in local contexts, I require a conceptual framework that allows me to think through education policy processes and understand the ways in which individual and contextual factors influence policy enactment. In this chapter, I construct a framework that is founded on a policy sociology approach and utilizes the policy enactment analytic (Braun et al., 2011). I also review key literature regarding marketization, the primary discursive frame for IE programs, and look at intersections between marketization and articulations of citizenship as they relate to education. This intersection opens up the problem for potential political and cultural readings alongside and intertwined with economic implications of these policies.

2.1 Research in Education Policy

2.1.1 A Policy Sociology Approach

Although a dominant perspective in policy research has long been a top-down model of policy development and implementation, alternative perspectives that assume greater variability and agency for policy actors located throughout these processes are emerging. Within studies of education policy, there are a number of researchers who have posited evolving understandings of policy process that not only allow for distributed agency but also draw attention to local context and the influence of individual policy actors upon how policy processes play out. Some of these researchers include Ball (1981, 1990, 2006), with his empirical work on school-level educators as active policy actors, Ozga (1990, 2000), calling for increased focus upon policy implementation as opposed to the

much more heavily researched policy-making stage, and Codd (1988), applying discourse analysis to the (de)construction of policy texts, among others. These researchers are key contributors to the growth of the policy sociology approach that draws upon social theory and qualitative methods to investigate education policy processes (Ozga, 2000).

Shain and Ozga (2001) detail the development of policy sociology as follows:

> the construction of the area of education policy sociology was an attempt by sociologists in a critical or marxist/neo-marxist tradition to re-group and survive as students of policy in a situation where other avenues were being closed down. Although the focus of much of this work was policy, the relationship to policy-makers was distant and critical. (p. 114)

Many researchers working in policy sociology viewed policy processes as "contested terrain" (Ozga, 2000), in which different interests compete to impose their (subjective) values on policy production and implementation. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) opine that, "[p]olicies are about the mobilization of partisan politics, shaped by various interest groups and social movements, organized efforts by social classes and other groups to shape social opportunity" (p. 285). This approach differed significantly from techno-empiricist techniques of policy analysis, which were accepted as objective in terms of research orientation and meant for evaluating policy outcomes to inform policy-makers in terms of the best ways to ensure intended goals (Codd, 1988). Policy sociology, in contradistinction, focuses upon how policy actors in different contexts, particularly those outside formal seats of policy-making authority, experience and participate in policy processes. It is significant to note that the target audience for this type of work is often not policy-makers, but educators and education administrators who might benefit from these understandings to improve upon their practice (Ozga, 2000).

Policy Networks

Taking a similar line of critique, but emerging from a different field of study, policy network approaches originated in public policy research to contest the unquestioned prevalence of hierarchical, top-down views of policy processes (Carlsson, 2000). Researchers engaged in this development also argued for greater integration of considerations of agency for policy actors, deemed *micro-political agency* by Vidovich (2003), and correspondingly, less structural determinism. The shifting role of the state, one from government to governance, was given as a major impetus to recognize transformations in global systems where influences upon policy were no longer constrained within geopolitical borders or within traditional policy lineages (Fataar, 2006). Thus, acknowledgement of the dynamism and unpredictability, the messiness of policy processes (Ball, 2006) was a commonality between the emergence of both policy network theories and policy sociology.

Policy networks are, in some cases, defined as interconnected organizations (Rethemeyer, 2006), although some researchers also recognize the potential for individuals actors to stand as network nodes (Ball & Exley, 2010). Fataar (2006) characterizes policy networks as,

> non-hierarchical and interdependent relationships linking a variety of social actors who share common policy interests. They enter into willing exchange relationships to pursue their shared interests. Policy networks are regarded as consisting of power dependency relationships between Government and interest groups. (p. 644)

This delineation explicates the malleability of policy networks, and draws attention to unequal power relations, significant in that they may constrain but do not deny the agentic potential of individual policy actors. The utilization of policy networks as a

framework for understanding policy processes is not contingent upon the disappearance of the state, as has been discussed by some education researchers (Dale, 2000; Hudson, 2016), but instead a repositioned role in which governments may still exert influence in an attempt to steer policy networks in their favour (Fataar, 2006).

Ball and Exley (2010) also note that ideas are disseminated through and beyond policy networks gaining strength and support through repetition, reiteration, quotation, and collaboration, among other activities. This recognition is significant in light of arguments for the influence of discourses, and the dominant ideas promoted, upon policy actors and organizations. Policy networks may be seen as amplifying and expanding the reach of discourses, and legitimizing particular perspectives on policy agendas and enactment processes. However, policy networks should not be seen as limited to linear relations between policy actors in linked institutions (e.g., provincial ministry to school district to school), as many variations on these networks may in fact exist.

In their discussion of the variability of forms of policy networks, Mintrom and Vergari (1998) emphasize the importance of interpersonal relations and trust between individuals as key to the spread of ideas or practices within networks. The authors state,

> intrapersonal contacts have been found to be critical for facilitating the exchange of information about new ideas. Rather than rely upon mass-media channels or the outcomes of scientific investigations, most potential adopters base their judgments of an innovation on information from those who have sound knowledge of it and who can explain its advantages and disadvantages. (p. 128)

Although perhaps unsurprising, Mintrom and Vergari acknowledge the importance of trust, whether for professional or personal contacts, in the functioning of policy networks.

However, in their work, there are no specific examples from policy actors that give shape to how exactly these processes unfold or from which other potential relationships (e.g., family, friends, colleagues outside their organizational contexts, competitors within their sector) they may derive. Having specific situations in which personal connections may support policy processes would be useful to demonstrate the malleability and variations in policy networks.

In recent studies, education policy networks are also recognized as having global reach rather than being confined by policy jurisdiction or physical boundaries (e.g., geopolitical borders). Robertson (2012) engages the emerging sector of global education policy and raises questions over how *external* (i.e., beyond the state) influences now have potentially significant impact on "education projects, policies and programmes that are now increasingly dispersed over what were once tightly managed boundaries and units of social life" (p. 33). Robertson notes that education policy-making and implementation were, in previous conceptualizations, processes that reflected local-level struggles to meet emergent challenges and capture the values of the community – under whichever boundaries were most relevant to the policy issue under question (e.g., the nation-state or, in the case of Canada's decentralized system in which education is a provincial jurisdiction, the province). However, Robertson argues that under the emerging climate with global flows of people, goods, and ideas, the theoretical and methodological tools available to education policy researchers require revisiting.

Expanding upon discussions of policy networks in global contexts, Robertson cites to the work of Steiner-Khamsi. Steiner-Khamsi (2004) includes considerations of social networks in policy analysis, as well as network analysis techniques to unpack the transnational movement of policy ideas. Steiner-Khamsi is particularly concerned with how policies are transferred, borrowed, lent, and modified across scales (e.g., global, national, local) and policy contexts. I draw on this work to inform my understanding of how policy networks may be formed outside of overt linear relations within policy settings (e.g., districts) and the potential for emergent and unexpected connections to arise. One area of distinction from Steiner-Khamsi's work is with her interest in the power relations that make up global education policy networks. In examining the experiences of education policy actors in B.C. school districts, I am less concerned in how their networks are shaped and influenced by unequal power relations and more interested in how they perceive and experience these networks.

Policy Trajectory

Grounded in the policy sociology tradition and drawing from policy network theories, I view policy as a process of interpretation and negotiation, re-evaluation and adjustment – all of which are mediated through and carried out by policy actors positioned throughout the 'policy trajectory'. As put forth by Bowe et al. (1992), the policy trajectory is composed of three (permeable) stages through which policy processes unfold. These are given as the context of influence, the context of policy text production, and the context(s) of practice. Ball (2006) provides a more detailed description of these contexts stating that,

> [e]ach context consists of a number of arenas of action - some private and some public. Each context involves struggle and compromise and ad hocery [sic]. They are loosely-coupled and there is no simple one direction of flow of information between them. (p. 51)

The later statement is significant given that one of the main criticisms of cyclical policy models is that they implicitly reflect a top-down view of policy that does not account for the real-world unpredictability and context-specific conditions of policy-making (Jann & Wegrich, 2007; Sabatier, 1999). However, Ball addresses this critique, with his designation of multiple flows of information between arenas. This aspect of the model acknowledges the potential for agency on the part of actors located throughout the various contexts, and throughout the policy network. The role of local-level policy actors to influence policy processes is an ongoing theme in much of Ball's research and an underpinning aspect of the policy sociology approach (Ball, 1981, 1997, 2006; Ball et al., 2012).

To unpack the policy contexts in which local level policy actors operate and to better understand the ways in which policy is interpreted and translated into action, I draw from the work of Ball et al. (2012) for the concept of policy enactment.

2.1.2 Policy Enactment

Originating in the work of Braun et al. (2010), policy enactment is posited as a critique of policy implementation models that are insufficient for acknowledging and integrating the complexity and dynamism of local-level policy contexts and the role of policy actors throughout the policy trajectory. Many other education researchers have levied a similar

critique to that of Braun et al. (2010). For example, Gornitzka, Kyvik, and Stensaker (2005) observe that,

> [e]ven if policy analysis still interests many researchers in higher education, and policy documents, white papers and other policy initiatives often are analysed and commented upon, there are few thorough studies that analyse and 'follow' a given policy through the implementation process. (p. 36)

Marginson and Rhoades (2002) offer a similar call, stating that, "[p]olicy analyses should attend to policy implementation at various levels, down to the professionals who enact and formulate policies in the ways that they ration their time and organize their activity" (p. 286).

The need for greater research focus on this stage of the policy trajectory first emerged out of political science and analysis of public policy in general (Bozeman, 2013), but has been taken up by education researchers who suggest education contexts, particularly at the local-level, should not be viewed simply as implementation sites (Ball, 1981; Ozga, 2000). They point to research that details the complexity of local conditions (e.g., in-school politics) and the crucial roles of individual policy actors in schools.

Policy implementation, as a commonly employed concept that can in many ways be seen as further specifying policy practices, raises questions in terms of accuracy. The term *implementation*, evolving from Late Latin, refers to "the filling up of an object" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2014). This connotes a structural perspective for the act, as opposed to one that occurs as a dynamic process. This particular understanding is more aligned with hierarchical perspectives on policy processes in which policy is taken as a set of directives that are disseminated and put into action (i.e., implemented) by actors,

who aim as close as possible to the policy intentions, as they interpret them, rather than utilizing their own knowledge of local context and suitability to determine course of action. In other words, implementation does not capture the agentic potential for policy actors.

Policy Enactment Analytic

Braun et al. (2010) focus on education policies as implemented in school settings, where they observe teachers and school-level administrators exercising agency and interpretation to develop what they dub the *policy enactment analytic*. These researchers articulate the policy enactment processes that they observe in the following light:

> policy enactment involves creative processes of interpretation and recontextualisation – that is, the translation of texts into action and the abstractions of policy ideas into contextualised practices – and this process involves 'interpretations of interpretations', although the degree of play or freedom for 'interpretation' varies from policy to policy in relation to the apparatuses of power within which they are set and within the constraints and possibilities of context. (Ball et al., 2012, p. 3)

These authors define their conceptualization of the policy enactment analytic not as a comprehensive model, but as a heuristic device to encourage investigation and questioning in education policy research.

Braun et al. (2011) state the analytic is intended to provoke study of policy as it unfolds in micro-level educational contexts (e.g., schools). They suggest that the 'materiality of policy' is too often neglected, and that their intention with this work is a recognition and closer attentiveness to the actual conditions of particular contexts as experienced by policy actors:

> [p]olicy-making and policy-makers tend to assume best possible environments for implementation…(we) attempt to disrupt this idealism by introducing the reality of our case-study schools, with their situated and material contexts, their specific professional resources and challenges, and their different external pressures and supports. (Braun et al., 2011, p. 595)

Leithwood (2001), examining educational leadership models, provides a similar perspective arguing that, "the context created by educational policies is among the most powerful influences on the nature of [educational leaders'] work" (p. 227). In the current study, I apply the policy enactment analytic to the school district context, as this is the primary space in which MOEPs are interpreted and administered in the B.C. public school system.

In an attempt to flesh out an analytic frame through which to analyze policy enactment Braun et al. (2011) posit four contexts. They are the *situated*, *material*, *external* and *professional* contexts. These conceptual spaces are intended to capture geography, political jurisdiction (e.g., the school district), physical attributes of educational institutions, relationships, and other aspects that colour the experience of policy enactment in education. They are useful given that these policy spaces are highly complex and continuously evolving, necessitating the development of new tools to unpack and make sense of what is happening – or, more appropriately for the current study, what policy actors understand to be happening.

Modifications to the contexts defined in the policy enactment analytic are expected given that the principle context of interest is at the school district level and not at the school level. In addition, there may be important considerations that are not well defined in the original positing that require elaboration. For example, IE programs are in competition

with jurisdictions on a global scale (e.g., Australia and New Zealand) and a national scale (e.g., Ontario and Alberta), in addition to the provincial scale (i.e., between school districts, and in some cases, independent schools). These contexts of competition encompass school district boundaries in complex ways and influence horizons of possibility as district-level administrators develop strategies and position their programs. Although Braun and her colleagues provide a vague category – *external* contexts - that could include these considerations, additional specificity will be needed to accurately portray these spaces.

Braun et al. (2011) dub the first context the *situated* context. This context encompasses factors that are "historically and locationally" connected to a school's physical place. They specify school location, history, and student population as falling within this category. The latter consideration, student population, is in some cases representative of the local area in which a school sits, as in the case of neighbourhood schools, but in others potentially destination schools, such as the mini schools that are appearing in larger cities (e.g., Vancouver) and drawing their students from across the city rather than the local neighbourhood (Yoon, 2011).

With respect to scaling situated contexts up from the school level to the school district level, I see this category as entailing the geographical location of the school district in the province, its physical characteristics (e.g., distance and total student population) and its history. The types of programming (e.g., mini schools, the International Baccalaureate) offered by the school district may also be a relevant consideration.

The second dimension discussed by Braun et al. (2011) is the *material*, covering physical aspects of school sites such as buildings, other infrastructure, budgets, and staffing. They note that the physical layout of the school site in terms of spacious vs. crowded, clean and new vs. dilapidated, and well-equipped vs. sparse may also be considered.

In terms of school districts, the physical dimension must again be modified to suit expanded scalar considerations. For example, some school districts are very large with many high schools within their jurisdiction, while other school districts may have only a single high school responsible for serving a broadly dispersed student population. The availability of Distributed Learning (i.e., online courses), or DL, may also be a consideration as the majority of school districts in British Columbia choose to offer their own DL programs.

The third contextual dimension included in the policy enactment analytic is the *external*. Braun et al. (2011) offer the examples of policy pressures that originate from outside of the local education context (e.g., comparative rankings from a state, national or global source, broader government agendas from the state or national level), the degree and quality of administrative support, as well as relationships with neighbouring schools and local government. These considerations are undeniably crucial in how policies play out across complex and dynamic scalar contexts. The concept of 'policy networks,' discussed above in Chapter 2, may be profitably employed in this understanding.

The final context included in the policy enactment analytic is that of the *professional*. This factor is characterized as less tangible by Braun et al. (2011), comprised of individually-focused values, commitments, and experiences of policy actors who are key in the enactment processes. These researchers include discussions of leadership characteristics of individuals and administrative environments within schools and local education authorities, as well as the work of 'policy entrepreneurs' in pushing forward particular agendas within schools.

Although there is validity for all considerations in terms of impacting policy enactment, I see the professional dimension of the model as underdeveloped and potentially undervaluing importance of individual education policy actors in translating education policies into local contexts. Despite acknowledging the importance of individual values and experiences in policy enactment, there is little elaboration on how these factors are to be captured and how they might be integrated with the other contexts. One potential response to this gap may be through invoking the concept of embodied experience as introduced above.

Fourcade (2010) suggests that although there is often a tacit assumption that what is felt and thought by individuals in a particular situation is 'natural,' it is in actuality a product of formed understandings, or habituations that shape experience. Bengtsson (2013) refers to this as a sedimentation of experiences that become embodied by an individual and through which all experiences are filtered. Similarly, Hirsh (2013) notes the ways in which an individual interprets phenomena can be influenced by individual physical

characteristics, social environment, cultural background, and previous experience. J. G. Mitchell (1990), a researcher who advocates for phenomenological inquiry in studies of educational administration and leadership, takes up a similar argument grounding it in an educational setting. He states, "the sedimented meanings in the contexts and horizons of education itself are the points to begin a study of educational leadership" (J. G. Mitchell, 1990, p. 4). In terms of exploring the professional dimension of education policy enactment, this necessitates a closer exploration of individual policy actors' previous experiences and understandings toward economic, political, and sociocultural dimensions of educational (e.g., school districts) and interrelated contexts (e.g., the provincial education policy landscape, the global market for IE).

2.2 Marketization in Education Policy

A key aspect in my examination of MOEPs is consideration for the effects of marketization within the space of public education. Marketization is a relatively new consideration, particularly in the B.C. public education context, and alien concept that necessitates different ways of thinking and being for education policy actors. Bartlett et al. (2002) argue that marketization impacts public education both structurally and discursively. This characterization takes into account substantive changes in policy text production, on one hand, and a shift in how education policy actors think about public education and their own roles, on the other. In this section, I review literature on the emergence of marketization as a policy trend in public education, and then look at the discursive influence of this phenomenon in reshaping education for economic aims. I

conclude by examining political and cultural implications of marketization, which I suggest may remain under-acknowledged in the enactment of MOEPs.

2.2.1 The Marketization Phenomenon in Public Education

Marketization of public education entails an injection of the market forces of supply and demand into the provision of education (Bartlett et al., 2002). Advocates of market-oriented reforms, strongly influenced by the work of economist Friedrich von Hayek, argue that market forces left unfettered by state interference lead to increased competition and expanded consumer choice (Chubb & Moe, 1988). These advocates suggest that allowing for market forces to operate without restraint permits a natural equilibrium to be reached, which then delivers maximum efficiency and effectiveness. In this environment, consumers are able to exercise (free) choice and their preferences translate into (demand-side) accountability regulating service provision (Ichilov, 2011).

Although the term marketization is widely employed in education reform, Waslander, Pater, and van der Weide (2010) find it does not necessarily carry the same meaning from context to context. There are localizing adjustments and interpretations. As a further consideration, Tooley (1995) notes that the term "quasi-markets" is a truer description of current education markets than "free markets" that would operate without any state interference or restraint. Whitty (1997) and Lubienski (2005) recognize the same distinction, acknowledging a clear increase in competition and choice in many public education systems, but with strong forms of regulation and accountability on the part of the state still in place that cannot be characterized as a truly free market for education.

These observations further emphasize the importance of contextual specificity in empirically researching marketization of public education.

Marketization in an Era of Globalization

In terms of delineating the emergence of marketization in education reform, many researchers interpret this phenomenon as a response by the state to the evolution of political-economic systems, principally attributed to globalization, (Dale, 2000; Marginson, 1999; Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004). *Globalization*, although still with competing interpretations across and within academic disciplines, is generally marked by advances in transportation and communication technologies that enhance flows of people, goods, and capital across political borders that were once thought less permeable, but are now susceptible to external forces (Held & McGrew, 2000; Scholte, 2002). Education researcher Rizvi (2008) observes the effects of globalization as "giv[ing] rise to new forms of transnational interconnectivity and interdependence…[a]nd while people continue to live in local realities, these realities are increasingly integrated into larger systems of global networks" (p. 63). The adoption of market-oriented reforms in public policy is then seen as reactive to external pressures, a manoeuvre by the state to maintain power, and in some cases to maintain relevance (Dale, 1999). Within this perspective, market-oriented policies carry specific aims such as decreased reliance on the state as funder of public services (e.g., education systems), but while still providing an adequate level of service – with "adequate" remaining largely undefined.

Other education researchers suggest that although globalization may be a consideration, increased marketization in education reforms is intricate to the ideological positioning of neoliberal approaches to public policy (Schuetze, Kuehn, Davidson-Harden, Schugurensky & Weber, 2011). Rizvi and Lingard (2010) depict this interconnectedness between globalization, neoliberalism and marketization as follows:

> As educational systems around the world have become larger and more complex, governments have been either unable or unwilling to pay for educational expansion, and have therefore looked to market solutions. This has led to an almost universal shift from social democratic to neoliberal orientations in thinking about educational purposes and governance. (p. 2)

Originating out of economic theory and offered as a panacea for failures observed with the Keynesian welfare state, neoliberalism is characterized as a powerful overarching philosophy in public policymaking (Connell, 2010). A key aspect of neoliberal policy reform is destatization, in which the role of the state recedes to allow for increased market activity and private-sector control that, it is argued, will deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness of service provision. Accompanying this basic aim are moves toward deregulation, further shrinking state involvement in social life and shrinking the state apparatus itself, and privatization, or the shifting of ownership or control of publicly-provided services to private-sector entities (Whitty & Power, 2000).

Linking neoliberalism to concerns for increasing inequity and unbalance of power, some education researchers contend that neoliberal approaches to public policy afford significantly more profit-generating potential to the socioeconomically and politically powerful (Goldstein & Chesky, 2011). Under the guise of promoting efficiency and expanded consumer choice, there are few questions about who is bearing the cost for

increased efficiency and who has preferential access to choice. Some education researchers have thus looked at neoliberalism in a differently light. For example, Kuehn, Mathison, and Ross (2018) offer the example of "The Commons" to illustrate this shift of common wealth, encompassing natural and spiritual resources, from the benefit of the many to the benefit of the few. These researchers suggest that aspects of the common wealth, such as public education, have been commodified and reduced to monetary value within neoliberalism. Ultimately, these commodities may then be subsumed into local, regional, and global markets through which the benefits are extracted away from the community.

Although privatization and marketization are identified as intricate within a neoliberal political agenda (Ross & Gibson, 2007), the two phenomenon are not necessarily always found together. For example, a privately-held organization, such as an Educational Management Organization (EMO) like Edison Schools in the United States (Saltman, 2005), may be given monopoly-like administrative control over a school or school district, but with no provision of competition. Thus, there is privatization without marketization. Conversely, Whitty and Power (2000) note that public education reforms may enhance marketization, in terms of competition between providers, while maintaining state control in terms of ownership, funding, and provision. Ball and Youdell (2008) identify "exogenous" privatization (i.e., participation by for-profit private entities in public education) and "endogenous" privatization (i.e., public education institutions and actors taking on traits such as entrepreneurialism and profit motivation like a private business). These concepts are useful for analysis of the influence of marketization on

public education contexts, where there may not be the presence of private entities, but clear demonstration of endogenous privatization.

Marketization in public education is realized through policy agendas that serve to decentralize decision-making powers to districts and schools (Gewirtz, 2002), legitimize reliance upon standardized tests and school-ranking tables to enable more accessible comparison between providers (Codd, 2005; Friesen, Javdani, Smith, & Woodcock, 2012), and promote expanded choice for education consumers (Angus, 2013; Carnoy, 2000). School choice is then promoted through policies that entail the dissolution of catchment boundaries, which effectively restrict student mobility to local (i.e., neighbourhood) communities, and the expansion of school programming options. In concrete terms, Bartlett et al. (2002) include an increase in the number of charter schools, voucher programs, and standardized testing regimes (i.e., private-sector companies providing for-profit testing services to public schools and districts) as examples of marketization of education. Burch (2009) points to expanding competition between private firms for service provision and administration of public schools and districts. However, many authors still contend that the most significant impact has not necessarily been in policy and practice, but in attitude toward public education with economic priorities taking precedence over all concerns; in other words, the discursive shaping of education reform into economic terms.

Marketization as Discourse

In defining *discourse*, I intend the Foucauldian understanding of the term, delineating not simply language, but what can and cannot be thought, a frame in which all understandings and thus all actions are delimited (Ball, 2006; Foucault, 1974). Expanding this line of thinking, Ball (2009) suggests that economistic discourse, such as that of marketization, imposes 'private-like' thinking in the public sector. In a similar manner, Cucchiara et al. (2011) investigate market modes of reform in the U.S. city of Philadelphia and conclude that marketization discourse "leads to the positioning of specific values, like efficiency and choice, as obvious (and unquestioned) goods" (p. 2464). The work of Cucchiara et al. (2011) provides valuable insight for this study in that it focuses on the role of education administrators as key figures in policy enactment processes and on how marketization discourse may shape these processes.

Ball (2003) examines the unfolding of education policies in micro-level settings, focusing specifically on classroom teachers. He argues that a de-professionalization of teachers is driven by an imposed climate of surveillance and evaluation designed to serve the demands of the market (i.e., consumer preference). Ball further suggests that this type of coercive work environment shifts teachers' motivations toward more instrumental aims (e.g., increasing class grade averages, restricting curriculum to test-oriented topics), and undermines collegiality between teachers. Taking a similar line of inquiry, but focusing on the role of school managers, Gewirtz (2002) states,

> the market revolution is not just a change of structure and incentives. It is a transformational process that brings into play a new set of values and a new moral environment…The role and sense of identity and purpose of school managers are being reworked and redefined. (p. 47)

Additionally, Whitty, Power, and Halpin (1998) observe a reorientation for school leaders toward more corporatized, entrepreneurial motivations, including school board trustees, among whom those with professional business expertise come to be favoured over a more heterogeneous representation.

Drawing upon the work of Foucault, Youdell (2011) explores the notion of "subjectivation," given as the parameters within which a subject can be constituted and thereby understood. Within processes of performative constitution, Youdell (2011) explains, "[they] help us to understand the nature of the subject, the limits of 'who' this subject might be and the constraints and disavowals that are intrinsic to particular subject positions" (p. 41). Reflecting on the potential for discourse to shape understandings of the roles in which policy actors might find themselves, Ball (2006) offers the following insight:

> We [education policy actors] *are* the subjectivities, the voices, the knowledge, the power relations that a discourse constructs and allows…In these terms we are spoken by policies, we take up the positions constructed for us within policies. (p. 48)

Ball is acknowledging the potential for discourse to define the roles of policy actors to the extent that there is a limitation on individual choice and the range of possible actions that might be available. This reading raises questions regarding the extent to which policy actors are able to see beyond the boxes that a dominant discourse might shape. However, it does not nullify the importance of considering this perspective in terms of developing a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

2.2.2 Economic Implications of Marketization

Critics of market-oriented reforms argue that emphasis upon economic outcomes has fostered a climate in which political and social considerations are sublimated in reform agendas. They suggest that economically-focused policies, supported within a discourse of marketization, connote an instrumental perspective on education, guided by a vision of education for the development of *human capital* (Marginson, 1999; McGregor, 2009; Odden & Kelly, 2008). Cucchiara et al. (2011) observe this phenomenon with the observation that, "policy makers and leaders [now] promote market principles as the solution to a variety of educational problems at the same time that they emphasize schools' economic purposes" (p. 2464-5). Goldstein and Chesky (2011) opine that, "[education] is narrowed to little more than how to get a job and keep the national economy afloat, regardless of their ability to have any direct impact or say in larger public economic and democratic discourses" (p. 19). Their observations conclude a valuation of education primarily in terms of human capital production – an economic grounding that has roots within the very term 'market.'

The origin of market from Old French carried the meanings of "marketplace, trade, commerce" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2014). The reference to trade and commercial activity are expected, but the inclusion of market as a market*place* raises interesting associations. A marketplace is a specific location where participants meet to undertake trade, thus articulating social relationships that accompany economic activity. Moreover, the marketplace is populated by sanctioned vendors, i.e., those deemed legitimate, while excluding others. The designation of market as place is also found in Middle English

(Merriam-Webster, 2014), and did not evolve to specify "sales, as controlled by supply and demand" until the 1680s (Online Etymological Dictionary, 2014). This past history of the term market highlights the ways in which commercial activities, the often-assumed neutrality of the forces of supply and demand, are in fact defining new spaces of belonging in which some people are included and others left out.

Marglin (2008) defines a market system as,

> a world in which markets collectively allocate resources, set prices, determine the distribution of income – in short, a system in which markets provide for our needs and wants and from which we derive our sustenance. And something more: a system that not only regulates itself but also regulates ourselves, a process that shapes and forms people whose relationships with one another are circumscribed and reduced by the market. (p. 2)

The latter part of his depiction speaks to the influence of marketization beyond economic exchange, to a reshaping of social relations and the very way that individuals make sense of their place and purpose in the world. Marglin notes that the field of economics has been largely responsible for legitimizing an unquestioned faith in the market, while ignoring the underlying assumptions such as the primacy of individual self-interest, rational (economic) calculation, and unlimited wants. He does not deny the potential for markets to deliver benefit, although predominantly economic, but suggests that other aspects of social life are often not factored into this calculation.

Drawing Marglin's argument into the context of public education, the aims of marketization and the focus on economic goals are characterized as overshadowing and contradicting alternative benefits that are crucial aspects of these systems. For example, Ichilov (2011) offers the following observation:

> Public schools were established to make education universally available to all children, free of charge, and thus have been recognized as gateways to opportunity. Public schooling was regarded as an instrument for empowering and liberating citizens, doing away with child labor, fostering democracy, and promoting social equality and national unity. It was highly esteemed as a force for setting people free from the constraints of gender, race, ethnic origin and social class. (p. 282)

She then elaborates upon these observations, qualifying that, "[p]ublic goods are usually delivered by government and financed from public funds like taxes. The distribution of such goods is non-competitive and universal" (p. 284). This view of public education as a "public good" in terms of developing a cohesive, informed, democratic political community as opposed to one that positions education primarily in the service of the economy, is one that has had long historical roots (Dewey, 1916). Perhaps surprisingly, opposition to market-oriented reforms from the general public in most locales has been, to date, muted, and promises of expanded choice and greater efficiency have found, for the most part, support (Fallon & Poole, 2014). As a possible explanation, Clarke (2012) notes tenets of market-oriented policy agendas are promoted in political translation (i.e., from politicians to the general public) as "technical efficiency rather than normative choices" (p. 298). He goes on to explain that this effectively masks the basic assumptions underlying a market-based philosophy, creating an air of common-sensibility for these policy aims. The power of policy networks to reinforce and relay this message is also of significance. Regarding voices of contestation, Olssen et al. (2004) point out an exception in educators (e.g., teachers), who have voiced strong opposition to increasing competition in an educational marketplace, and in some cases, teacher unions.

2.2.3 Political and Cultural Implications of Marketization

In observations similar to those of Marglin, Ichilov states that, "[markets] restrict broader citizens' participation in decision making processes concerning education, as business and the better-off parents become the main actors" (p. 284). Her summation highlights an example of non-economic implications of marketization, namely, the exacerbation of social inequalities potentially restricting access to political participation for less-advantaged members of society. This critique has been perhaps the most widely levied against marketization of public education, but others have also been proffered.

Some researchers have argued that political and cultural implications of market-oriented education reforms only emerge when compared against the overarching aims of what public education is intended to deliver for its community. For example, Ichilov also contends that the primary goal for public education should lie in "preparing youngsters to become responsible citizens…[thereby, promoting] tolerance while building a shared culture, [and] reducing inequalities" (p. 284). Taking Ichilov's argument into consideration, the implications of marketization may be seen as working in direct opposition to these aims by exacerbating inequity.

Education researchers Olssen et al. (2004) offer a similar argument stating, "education is a basic right of citizenship and public schooling is a necessary institutional means for the advancement of social democracy" (p. 198). This depiction of public education is similar to that of the *B.C. School Act*, which identifies the purpose of education as fostering a

"healthy, democratic and pluralistic society." Notably, the *School Act* also recognizes economic development as a key purpose of public education, raising questions about potentially competing notions within public education for which there is no necessary reconciliation readily provided. In analysis of the impacts of marketization on public education, Olssen et al. (2004) claim that what is occurring is in fact "[a] reconstitution of citizenship and social relations within education" (p. 174). This reading is provocative in that it opens up a discussion as to how citizenship is implicated in education systems and how marketization may be coming to bear on this relationship. Furthermore, questions of how education policy actors might understand this relationship between citizenship, education, and marketization remain unexplored.

In the next section, I discuss research examining the institution of citizenship and how it intersects with education. I draw from this literature to inform my discussion of the ways in which MOEPs from the B.C. context may be reconfiguring the bases of citizenship as a direct, but muted, corollary.

2.3 Intersections of Citizenship, Marketization, and Education

The discourse of marketization shapes the thinking and practice of education policy actors throughout policy translation processes toward economic framings that afford less attention to political and cultural implications of market-oriented education policies. I argue that, the institution of citizenship, although not always readily acknowledged as an intricate concern, is impacted by marketization in terms of disarticulating and reconfiguring citizenship in novel ways. In this section I examine understandings of

citizenship and its constituent dimensions, based upon previous work by researchers in sociology and political science. I draw upon these scholars given that education policy researchers have not often addressed citizenship in great depth. Following this introductory discussion, I examine intersections between market-oriented practices and the bases of citizenship.

2.3.1 (Re)Conceptualizations of Citizenship

As a point of departure, I draw from the seminal work of T. H. Marshall (1964), often termed the father of citizenship studies, who provides the following basic definition of citizenship: "Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed" (p. 84). The community, as described here, can be specified as the political community (i.e., the nation), given that citizenship is most commonly associated with national polities rather than provinces or states, or more local conceptualizations (e.g., cities) (Dominelli, 2014). Importantly, Marshall distinguishes between rights and duties, a cleavage that is marked by the debate around citizenship as a responsibility of the state to individuals, and citizenship as a responsibility of the individual to the state (i.e., *active* citizenship). Also of significance, he denotes full membership in the community, a designation that becomes relevant as we consider some of the emerging ways in which citizenship is being (re)configured and contested.

Within his careful analysis, Marshall offers what has become a much-cited delineation for the constituent parts, or elements, of citizenship: he offers these as (1) civil, (2) political, and (3) social elements. He explains,

> [t]he civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom – liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice…By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body…By the social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society. (T. H. Marshall, 1964, pp. 71-72)

Marshall derives these distinctions from an analysis of the evolution of citizenship from early Greek and Roman beginnings, to key legal and social developments in Europe through the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries. He points to a division of responsibilities between different institutions in nation-states and in local settings for the separate development of the civic, political, and social elements.

Within his extensive research on citizenship, Marshall also addresses the relationship between citizenship and education. Marshall suggests that education is the institution most closely aligned with the social rights of citizenship. He states,

> Education of children has a direct bearing on citizenship, and when the State guarantees that all children shall be educated, it has the requirement and the nature of citizenship definitely in mind. It is trying to stimulate the growth of citizens in the making. The right to education is a genuine social right of citizenship, because the aim of education is a necessary prerequisite of civil freedom. (T. H. Marshall, 1964, pp. 81-82)

His declaration also speaks to the close ties between education and political aspects of citizenship, since individuals learn about civic and political rights and responsibilities in

the course of compulsory education programming, at least in most Western, democratic nation-states, including Canada (Hughes & Sears, 2008).

Smith (2002), in his discussion of more modern notions of citizenship, notes that, "Marshall's argument has been so influential that many scholars and some political activists, especially in Europe, today equate genuine citizenship with full possession of all three types of rights: civic, political, and social" (p. 110). However, the impacts most often attributed to globalization, in terms of creating more permeable borders for nation-states and facilitating the flow of people, information, and capital on a global scale, levy this type of holistic citizenship increasingly rare in practice and conceptually rigid for analytic purposes in research. Thus, citizenship is being complicated by a dynamic environment in which Matthews and Sidhu (2005) note, "globalising imperatives that are creating conditions of possibility for new identities and working conditions" (p. 55). Mouffe (1991), however, offers the observation that it is not the environment, but citizenship itself that should be thought as dynamic, constantly negotiated, and "intimately linked to the kind of society and political community [sought]" (p. 70).

Sassen's *Denationalizaed* Citizenship

Sassen (2002, 2008), in her work on the shifting role of the nation-state and specifically questions of national state sovereignty in a "Globalized Era", posits the term "denationalized" citizenship to characterize more recent manifestations. She observes that, "[g]lobalization, digitization, the ascendance of human rights and environmental struggles, the unbundling of unitary normative frameworks, the transnationalizing of

identities and experiences of membership – each of these is contributing to and enacting denationalizing outcomes" (Sassen, 2008, p. 23). Denationalization, here, is not to be read as consent for the thesis of the "death of the state" (Douglas, 2007), but instead to theorize the evolution of the state and its continued importance for facilitating global processes through institutions and processes that, Sassen argues, are still very much "of the national."

Sassen advocates a more fluid understanding of political and social frameworks, once taken as unquestioned within the purview of liberal democracies, but now susceptible to rearticulations and reimaginings. She employs the term denationalized citizenship to capture this emerging dynamism, a descriptor that parallels similar terms given by Benhabib (2002) with "disaggregated" citizenship, Ong (1999) with "flexible" citizenship, and Maas (2013) with "multilevel" citizenship. Although differing in their disciplinary groundings, the common recognition throughout the work of this range of authors is that there are now undeniably "mutations" in citizenship (Ong, 2006b), or new configurations that are emerging in a globalized environment.

Benhabib's *Partial* Citizenship

Building upon the pioneering work of Marshall, Benhabib (2002) draws attention to the emergence of "[m]ulticultural enclaves in large cities everywhere in the world [as] harbingers of new faces of citizenship that is no longer based upon exclusive attachments to a specific land, history and tradition" (p. 448). She supports her argument for a deterritorialized view of citizenship by citing examples from different historical

moments. Benhabib (2002) argues that forms of partial citizenship have been long evident where marginalized groups, such as "[w]omen and slaves, servants and propertyless white males, non-Christians and non-white races were historically excluded from membership in the sovereign body and from the project of citizenship" (pp. 451-2).

Additionally, Benhabib identifies the (non-)standing of slaves, who were relegated to outside positions in terms of civic membership, but also from identification with the sovereign peoples by virtue of history and cultural foundations. Building upon Marshall's delineation of elements, Benhabib incorporates her insights into the following reinterpreted criteria: (1) collective identity, (2) privileges of political membership, and (3) social rights and benefits. The latter two considerations quite clearly equate with Marshall's earlier work, but the inclusion of "collective identity", well-illustrated with the example of the marginalized and dehumanized standing of owned peoples (i.e., slaves), draws attention to this emergent consideration. In the current study, I draw from Benhabib's work to inform my understanding of how elements of citizenship may be disarticulated and subsequently rearticulated into novel, potentially new, manifestations.

Also notable in Benhabib's work is the identification of more recent manifestations of partial citizenship in the evolving regional bloc of the European Union. The author examines individuals of questionable standing, who well-illustrate novel rearticulations. She includes, "residents of the commonwealth who do not enjoy full citizenship rights either because they are members of some other commonwealth or because they choose to remain as outsiders" (p. 453). Benhabib notes that these individuals are aliens and

foreigners, but enjoy some of citizenship benefits because of their work status or affiliations, or because of particular treaty conditions. She describes these groups as, "exist[ing] in that murky space defined by respect for human rights on the one hand and by international customary law on the other" (p. 452). However, Benhabib is not alone in identifying some of the complex scenarios where analyses of citizenship must necessarily become more flexible and nuanced.

Ong's *Mutations* in Citizenship

Another researcher taking up questions of mutations in citizenship is Ong (1999, 2006a, 2006b). She offers similar insight to Benhabib, stating, "while in theory political rights depend on membership in a nation-state, in practice, new entitlements are being realized through situated mobilizations and claims in milieus of globalized contingency" (p. 499). This author cites the mass movements of expatriates, refugees, and migrant workers that now populate global flows, and constitute myriad possibilities for how citizenship standing becomes an increasingly complicated concept and practice. She designates the term "spaces of assemblage" in which novel citizenship (re)configurations may now emerge.

Ong (2006b) develops her theory of mutations in citizenship to incorporate intersections with the phenomenon of marketization. She sees the logic of the market, manifesting in a form of market hierarchy, as central to processes of de-territorializing and rearticulating the terms by which citizenship is determined and granted. The author contends that actors without territorial affiliation can gain partial rights and entitlements to citizenship

through consumer activity, while those with territorial standing experience a corresponding loss. Ong (2006a) posits the concept of "zones of hypergrowth," which depict spaces where marketized climates are opened within national terrains, constituting spaces of assemblage that have different determining criteria for citizenship claims and practices. She sees these zones as integrated in wider transnational (policy) networks that articulate universalizing norms based on market logic and neoliberal values, now key in the disarticulation and rearticulations of dimensions of citizenship. In relation to the economics of education policy, citizenship is considered an externality, or falls outside of the range of consideration altogether (i.e., invisible).

2.3.2 Intersections of Citizenship and Education

Despite the fact that citizenship has long been associated with the aims of public education, it is largely an externality in relation to the economics of education reform. The result is that key aims merging at this point of intersection are now in jeopardy. For example, Torres (1998) addresses this relationship explicating the key role that education fulfills in the constitution of the citizenry. He refers to the development of an informed, democratically participatory citizenry, with the social skills necessary to live peacefully and prosperously. Recognition for this purpose is widely-acknowledged in education research, with Sassen (2008) referencing the role of schools in the "forging of a national citizenry" (p. 18); Heyneman (2003) denoting, "the citizenship function of education," (p. 25); and Arnott and Ozga (2010) deeming education the key to developing national identity. This particular intersection between citizenship and education, united as a curricular concern in Citizenship Education programming, is currently undergoing

significant transformation as educators grapple with questions of global citizenry and cosmopolitanism (H. Marshall, 2005; Matthews & Sidhu, 2005; Valenzuela & Brewer, 2011).

The more relevant point of intersection between citizenship and education for this study draws upon the work of Benhabib, and views (public) education as a social right and benefit. Obviously this position is not universally relevant for nation-states, but is applicable to Western, developed states in which marketization of public education is a concern. Benhabib (2002) points to the example of the European Union, in which migrant labourers seek access to public education for their children. These non-citizened peoples may in some cases gain social rights and benefits, in the form of school access for their children, but do not gain political membership or cultural acceptance falling far short of the full citizenship conceptualization given by Marshall.

In another example of access to dimensions of citizenship through education, Mazawi (2013) examines offshore school programs in B.C.[5] Through his interrogation of the ways in which this new manifestation of schooling operates across international boundaries, he claims the emergence of "*graduated* modes of citizenship, each characterized by distinct articulations of rights in relation to the state's authority and power" (Mazawi, 2013, p. 51, italics in original). Mazawi describes this instance as a "re-positioning and re-calibrating of the state" that results in shifting modes of affiliation and new relations to citizenly rights that emerge through private education provision. I draw on Mazawi's work as it

[5] These programs involve the establishment of what are essentially B.C. public schools, but in overseas settings where they offer the B.C. curriculum and may have B.C.-certified teachers on staff, but serve a student body 'local' to the specific overseas location (Schuetze, 2008).

integrates questions of marketized education practices with potential implications for membership in the political community birthed within education contexts.

From the work of the education researchers discussed in this section – Benhabib, Ong, and Mazawi, I am able to conceive of potential rearticulations of citizenship emerging from a marketized education policy context. Drawing from this work, I take these understandings of citizenship into an examination of IE programs within school district contexts. As noted, these programs are a relatively recent emergence in many K-12 education contexts, which bring elements of marketization into the largely unfamiliar context of B.C. public education. I argue that IE programs are in fact enactments of MOEPs that, in a manner similar to offshore schools as described by Mazawi, partially reconfigure articulations of citizenship and constitute a new mode of governance within public education.

In the following section, I develop this argument positioning IE programs as case-in-point of MOEP enactment. I begin with an introduction to the B.C. education system, drawing particular attention to school district contexts and processes of governance. I then move to a presentation of IE programs in B.C., from origin in the early-1980s to the current state. I also examine differing perspectives on these programs, before leading into the research questions that will orient this study.

Chapter Three: Provincial Context of International Education Programs

In this study, IE programs are presented as case in point of the enactment of MOEPs by policy actors into school district contexts. I argue these programs are primarily understood as economically-driven policy instruments, while their political and cultural implications are more subtle and, as a result, go largely unnoticed. The school district is significant in understanding how IE programs play out, with the unique characteristics and conditions (e.g., geographic location, student population, political climate) of individual districts coming to bear. As articulated by Ungerleider and Levin (2007), *context matters*. These authors argue that although similarities exist between school districts across Canada (and in cases, with the United States as well), "structural and values differences…propel educational policies along divergent paths…[and we] caution against applying generalizations from one context to the other" (p. 411). In this section, I develop an argument for school districts as key contextual frames for the emergence of IE programs in B.C., taking Ungerleider and Levin's caution under consideration. I examine IE programs through a number of different lenses, including: (1) as outcomes of policy enactment processes; (2) as economically-focused (i.e., revenue-generating) mechanisms; and (3) as rearticulations of the political community.

3.1 School Districts in British Columbia

In B.C., there are currently 60 school districts across the province ranging in size from under 20 km^2 to over 180,000 km^2. The smallest school district population is

approximately 180 students in 4 schools (elementary and secondary), and the largest, 71,838 students in 128 schools (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2017). As is quite evident from these figures, B.C. school districts have extremely varying characteristics, which result in differing pressures to meet the needs of diverse local populations.

School districts are administered by locally-elected school boards. According to the B.C. School Act (2017), boards are responsible for management of the schools in the district, including the key role of allocating district budget. Young and Levin (2002) detail a range of responsibilities for which school boards are held accountable including handling day-to-day administration of schools with the hiring and paying of staff and teachers, management of transportation services, school facilities and buildings, as well as dealing with local issues and preferences to ensure compliance with provincial laws and guidelines, while reflecting local community interests. Young and Levin (2002) also note that some school boards, particularly those in large urban districts that are comprised of board members who may be affiliated with rival political parties, walk a delicate line between balancing local, provincial, and in some cases, partisan pressures. These pressures can create a politically-charged policy space within the district context that weigh heavily on how policy enactment processes play out.

In B.C., school boards have historically oscillated from having very little power in dealings with the provincial Ministry of Education, to exerting greater autonomy and control over their local jurisdictions. B.C. Education historian Fleming (1989) observes that the early relationship between the provincial ministry and school boards, from

founding legislation in 1865 that saw 650 school boards emerge across the province, was highly centralized with almost complete control by the provincial Governor's office. Inspectors were appointed to travel the province and ensure that policies and regulations were followed, with school boards limited to handling local issues and reporting to the provincial superintendent. During this early period, Fleming (1989) describes the B.C. education system as one of the most centralized education systems on record.

The B.C. school system remained predominantly centralized until mid-century, when voices calling for more local level control grew louder. Fleming (2003) notes that the ensuing shift in power away from the provincial Ministry and toward school boards was paralleled by decentralization in colonial-style power structures in many areas of public administration in B.C. and around the world. During this period, the number of school boards in the province decreased considerably from 650 to 74. The 1972 provincial election of a New Democratic Party (NDP) government marked a key moment for increased local autonomy as soon after the largest school boards in the province were given responsibility for appointment of their own district superintendents. Superintendents, responsible for management and planning in the school districts, were still approved by the central Ministry but now answered to their local board who hired based on terms and abilities that would best befit the local context (Fleming, 1989).

In 1975 the election of a Social Credit government that is described as a "neo-conservative coalition" (Schuetze et al., 2011) attempted to reassert its administrative function over education in the province. Without the ability to place its own people in key

positions of power in the districts, the Ministry opted to introduce technical forms of management through measurement of system inputs (e.g., funding) and outputs (e.g., student performance) as proxies for accountability. Fleming (2003) describes this as a technocratic approach to administration, or power *by remote control*. Simultaneously, the cost of education rose dramatically, increasing nearly 80% between 1976 and 1981 (Fleming, 2003). This rise paralleled a period of global recession that impacted B.C. and Canada as a whole, but also much of the Western world. The fiscal pressures heightened tensions between school boards, which collected a portion of their revenue from local school taxes, local constituents (i.e., taxpayers), and the provincial government.

As a result of the political-economic climate, the Social Credit Government passed two key pieces of legislation in 1982 that reinforced fiscal accountability for government, and directly impacted school districts. *The Public Service Restraint Act* curtailed spending by government ministries, and *The Education Interim Finance Act* limited the ability of local school boards to collect tax revenues (Fleming, 2003). These moves further exacerbated strained relations between the school districts and the Ministry of Education (i.e., the B.C. government), prompting journalist and college lecturer Crawford Kilian to dub this period the "School Wars" (Kilian, 1985). In addition, the lobby from the B.C.T.F. continued to gain momentum pushing forward the agenda that teachers saw as most beneficial for schools and students – one that was at odds with government and school board fiscal priorities. The result was an increasingly complex political-economic landscape for education in the province with escalating economic pressure and multiple stakeholder voices vying for control.

In 1990, another shift in education funding occurred under the Social Credit Government with the move to block funding. Block funding meant that school boards no longer levied local school taxes, with almost all funding coming in the form of block transfers from the Ministry of Education to the school districts based on a per pupil funding formula (Fallon & Poole, 2014). The formula included such considerations as level of education (i.e., elementary or secondary), number, age, and size of schools, as well as transportation. School districts were not permitted to carry budget deficits and the pressures to adhere to the ministry funding guidelines served to shift a measure of power back to the ministry in the ongoing power struggle with the districts.

In 1991 the New Democratic Party (NDP) rose to power in B.C. bringing a strong social democratic ethos to government. However, in terms of K-12 education, some measures taken by the government in that period ironically reflected a more neoliberal approach to governance. Schuetze et al. (2011) point to decisions from the NDP government such as more centralized education funding that reduced the power of school districts to make determinations for their local communities and the imposition of more standardized testing. Schuetze et al. (2011) note that the neoliberal approach toward education was further exacerbated with the election of a Liberal government in 2001. This government would see cuts to education funding, the setting of additional performance objectives for districts as part of a more stringent accountability regime.

This brief review of the history of B.C. education depicts but a part of the complex and continuously evolving relationship between school districts and the central Ministry of Education. Clearly, the political-economic conditions have been prevalent in the relationship and the struggle for power. School districts should thus be understood as confluences of political, economic, and cultural forces that are both internal to the district and external from the provincial level and beyond. The effect of this contextual confluence is to create a shifting landscape where education policy actors are forced to address and balance a range of considerations and demands, as they navigate their day-to-day work and attempt to plan over the longer range. As key moments in policy enactment unfold, this brings rise to questions of which influences and considerations emerge as the most poignant, for which reasons and to which ends. How do policy actors experience these pressures? How do they select which to address, which to subordinate, and which to ignore? How are they shaped by and simultaneously shape the policy enactment processes?

In the next section, I introduce IE programs before turning to a discussion of the marketized policy climate that emerged in B.C. in the early-2000s that saw these programs expand within school districts and spread to new school districts around the province.

3.2 International Education Programs in British Columbia

IE programs at the K-12 level around the province are similar in many respects, including in terms of responsibilities and care for international students. Programs at both districts

and independent schools are generally responsible for marketing the educational programs district or school virtually (e.g., electronic brochures and videos) and in-person (e.g., education fairs, school and agent visits in-country). IE program staff assist international students and their parents with information before they come to B.C., and for supporting the student from the time they arrive in the province. In many cases, communication may occur between the district or independent school and a private education agent in the student's home country who represents the student and family.

Once the student arrives in B.C., some districts and independent schools may have in-house homestay programs, where they identify B.C. families in their local area who are interested in having international students live in their homes, while others rely on an external homestay agency to place their students in nearby homes. While in B.C. schools, international students are often provided English language support (in-class and out-of-class with additional tutoring) and in some cases with multilingual counseling support. Out of school activities, such as visiting local tourist attractions, participating in outdoor activities (e.g., hiking or skiing), or attending sporting events (e.g., hockey games), are also commonly offered to international students for acculturation in the local area and the province. IE program staff are also charged with supporting international students in emergency situations, given that the many international students are not accompanied by their natural parents.[6]

[6] Although no official data is available, international students at the K-7 level would most often be accompanied by their natural parent(s) or live with a relative. International students in the B.C. Graduation Program (Grades 10, 11 and 12) are most often unaccompanied by a natural parent and have a custodian named to act on behalf of the natural parent in an emergency situation.

From a policy perspective, there is relative consistency among IE programs throughout the province. A key consideration in policy development and consistency among districts is the role of the International Public School Education Association (IPSEA). IPSEA has a membership of 38 school districts, accounting for the vast majority, if not all, of the formally established district IE programs in B.C. IPSEA's mission statement includes promoting best practices for addressing student needs and establishing consistency among IE programs for refund policies, health insurance requirements, immigration requirements, and other areas (International Public School Education Association, 2019).

In terms of differentiation between IE programs across the province, scale (i.e., number of international students) has an obvious impact. For example, large IE programs, such as those found in Lower Mainland school districts, can have administrative branches with separate managers for marketing and recruiting, homestays, and student support, including academic support and English language support (Coquitlam International Education Program, 2020). In these programs, each manager could have a number of staff who support their work. Smaller IE programs, in contrast, could have a single administrator who fulfills all of these responsibilities. Differentiation between these administrative groups manifests in the ability of larger districts to hire managers who have expertise in their particular area (e.g., marketing) that a smaller district would not be able to provide.

Recruiting tuition-paying international students into public schools is not a practice unique to the B.C., nor the Canadian, context. Moreover, it has long been a part of the post-secondary education landscape around the world. Altbach and Knight (2007) make the observation that "[u]niversities have been international institutions from their medieval European origins, attracting students and faculty from many countries" (p. 294). Over this history, revenue-generation was not the primary aim. *Internationalization*, or the development of cross-cultural contact and communication, and the sharing of ideas and practices (Altbach & Knight, 2007), was central to the undertaking. This is not to say that there were no economic considerations in these practices, with increased potential for trade and partnerships between exchange nations as residual benefits. However, many researchers now argue that, in the post-secondary context, this aim has shifted to a point where the economic contributions outweigh internationalization as a motivation.

Like post-secondary institutions, basic (i.e., K-12) private education institutions also have a long history of attracting international students, particularly schools of high-standing (e.g., Eton College in the United Kingdom, Phillips Exeter Academy in the U.S., and Upper Canada College in Ontario, Canada). However, recruitment of international students into basic public education is a more recent trend that is now prominently evidenced in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada (Ziguras & Law, 2006). The dominance of the English language as the language of commerce, and thus opportunity, in the international sphere is a key impetus for the widespread emergence of this phenomenon (Crystal, 2012).

3.2.1 A Historical Context

In B.C., IE programs did not necessarily appear as part of an explicit strategy to bring international students to B.C. However, as some education researchers contend, the move toward more independent revenue generation for school districts is enmeshed within a broader neoliberal political agenda (Schuetze et al., 2011). To date, there has been a paucity of education research on K-12 IE programs in B.C., with the exception of two more recently published doctoral dissertations. The first, from Davis (2017), looks at IE through the perspective of educational administration and leadership. Davis contends that IE program leadership is very much shaped by the district context, personal and network relationships are of great importance, and reconciling differences in cultural values and expectations is a major part of the administrators' work.

Lin (2019) takes a more critical lens adopting an anticolonial and decolonizing framework to examine the ways in which IE has come to be understood by international students and members of the public. Basing her work largely on representations and discussions of international students in social media, she concludes that an economistic framing of IE is dominant, and that this framing serves to objectify international students as sources of revenue and, in doing so, perpetuates what she terms "the historical imperial mission of colonization." Although both Davis and Lin briefly discuss historical context for the phenomenon of IE in B.C., neither is able to provide a comprehensive background of how and why IE programs were adopted in the province and subsequently proliferated in the manner that they did.

Some of the first tuition-paying international students were welcomed in the early-1980s, with West Vancouver School District establishing an IE program in 1982 (Davis, 2017; West Vancouver International Programs, 2014). These programs started modestly at the initiative of the districts without the appearance of provincial-level education policy governing IE. In the following decade, additional school districts, many of which were in the Lower Mainland region, started IE programs of their own. These early programs began on a small-scale with policy development occurring at the local level. Around the turn of the millennium, a change in policy direction was introduced by a newly-elected provincial government. This shift in policy direction – one with a much stronger market-driven orientation – led to the expansion of existing programs in the province, as well as the emergence of programs in smaller and more rural school districts, few of which had been involved in IE prior to that time.

As noted, there is little information available about the early period of IE programs in the province, with sparse attention from the media and virtually no acknowledgement from academic researchers. Additionally, districts do not provide much detail on the historical development of their international programs on their websites or through other publicly available, district-issued documents (e.g., minutes from board meetings, newsletters, reports). This dearth of historical documentation on how and why IE programs originated and expanded in the province may signal an area rich for future research.

3.2.2 Emergence of a Marketized Policy Climate

A key moment impacting IE programs in B.C. occurred in 2001 with the election of the Liberal government and the subsequent imposition of a policy agenda with what Schuetze et al. (2011) characterize as overt market-oriented aims. Hallmarks of the policy reforms included increased fiscal efficiency for public service provision, expanded privatization of state-owned services, and greater affordance for market forces to deliver efficiency and effectiveness (Liberals, 2001). In terms of public education, this entailed the opening of spaces for entrepreneurial activity by districts, and corresponding pressure for increased independent revenue generation (Fallon & Paquette, 2009). In this emerging policy context, IE programs were an existing and available policy instrument for districts to adopt or expand revenue-generating activities. Successful programs were already in existence in the province, and across the country, to serve as models for capitalizing upon this space. Thus, districts responded by either expanding their existing IE programs, or by founding new programs if one did not previously exist.

Coupled with these policy aims, Fallon and Paquette (2009) suggest the Liberal Government was fostering a climate of increased competition between districts. Encouraging public school districts to take entrepreneurial initiative, particularly through the establishment of School District Business Companies, the new government envisioned increased accountability, through market pressures to increase efficiency and program effectiveness, and expanded consumer choice within K-12 education as districts moved toward specialization in the areas where they could deliver the best product. It is

also important to note that, although the education policy changes in 2001 were aimed at the public education sector, the independent school sector was also impacted given that some international students might look at districts as a viable, and in many cases more economical, pathway to a B.C. education.

IE programs are not, and have never been, a result of a direct mandate or policy decision from the provincial Ministry of Education. However, international education has been a focus of government attention on occasion. One example of this focus was with the publication of a report by the B.C. Progress Board (2005) entitled *The Role of International Education: Expanding Student Opportunity and Economic Development in British Columbia.* The B.C. Progress Board, set up by the Liberal government in 2001, recognized international education as a key economic driver for the province and recommended brand management and program expansion to contribute to increased revenue generation. Schuetze et al. (2011) cites the report as an example of the development of a "market-like regime" within which public education was subjected.

Government positioning not withstanding, IE programs originate and are operationalized at the district level. Districts make their own determinations regarding how the programs are situated within the district (e.g., if the program exists within core district business or if it functions predominantly separately as a stand-alone business), how much staffing is required (e.g., marketers/business managers, homestay administrators, counselors dedicated to a particular language/cultural group), and how the program is managed (e.g., policy development, strategic planning). Thus, these programs provide excellent

examples of local-level policy enactment. However, there has been little research into how IE programs are understood by policy actors or how these programs fit with other (non-marketized) programs and priorities in the districts.

Some school districts do engage in other small-scale revenue-generating activities, such as online learning, software sales, learning resource marketing, and property management (Kuehn, 2003). However, these other activities generally operate on a small scale generating little revenue in comparison with IE programs.[7] Moreover, IE programs have expanded and become notable to such an extent, that in some districts these revenues are now integral to the financing of a wide range of programs in K-12 districts, and not just the international programs (Vancouver School Board, 2012). This implication is momentous as it shifts IE programs from a supplemental revenue source to an *essential* revenue source, further elevating an economics-first perspective and sublimating considerations of other potential implications.

3.2.3 The Economics of International Education

As of 2017-18, 48 of 60 B.C. school districts reported tuition collected from over 21,000 international or out-of-province students totaling approximately $256 million in revenues for these districts (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018a). This revenue total includes nine districts reporting over $10 million in IE tuition revenues, with a tenth district just below this threshold ($9.93 million). The top three districts for revenues generated from IE

[7] The B.C. Ministry of Education releases School District Revenue and Expenditure Information on an annual basis. Revenue from international student tuitions fees is indicated as 'International and Out of Province Students.' (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018a)

include Coquitlam School District, at almost $37 million, Vancouver School District, reporting over $26 million, and Burnaby School District, at $23.5 million. Outside of the Lower Mainland, Greater Victoria reported the highest revenue total at $15 million. Although there is still great discrepancy, 13 districts from outside of the Lower Mainland region (e.g., the Okanagan region, the Kootenays region, and Vancouver Island) reported significant revenues of between $2 million to $6 million from IE.

The inequity between Lower Mainland districts and rural districts, as a result of urban gravitation, has been a focal point for media (Baluja, 2011; Findlay, 2011; Todd, 2019) and for academic researchers (Fallon & Poole, 2014). For example, Poole, Fallon and Sen (2019), researchers from the University of British Columbia, examine inequity between B.C. school districts in terms of revenue per FTE[8]. They note that the impact of IE revenues may be more accurately understood as a per student increase to FTE base funding rather than as a holistic total by district. Poole et. al argue that breakdown by FTE can be more directly understood in terms of student access to more educational programs or services.

Taking a broader cross-sector view of IE, economist Roslyn Kunin (2017) estimated the overall economic impact of IE in B.C. in 2015 at $3.5 billion for K-12 and post-secondary international students combined. Of this total, almost $400 million was attributed to the K-12 sector. Additionally, as part of this overall impact, Kunin also cited the creation of over 29,000 jobs in the province directly involved with the IE sector.

[8] FTE = Full Time Equivalent. Poole, Fallon and Sen (2019) utilize FTE enrolment per district to calculate the per student impact of IE revenue.

Although Kunin's work is largely a projection taking into account factors such as tuition, homestay fees, other school-related expenses, and personal spending, it is nonetheless an indication of the considerable economic impact that IE has on the education system and on the province.

In terms of identifying trends in the IE sector, Kunin (2017) notes a 44% increase in the number of total K-12 and post-secondary international students studying in B.C. from 2010 to 2015. Specifically, the K-12 sector is cited as increasing from 11,713 international students in 2010 to 16,958 international students in 2015, based upon data from the Federal Government in terms of study permits activated (Kunin, 2017). This significant increase in international student population coincides with the B.C. *International Education Strategy* (2012), produced by the Liberal Government of the day, that established a five-year target of 50% growth in this population between 2012 and 2016. With this particular aspect of the Strategy, the government provided a clear indication of how they envisioned IE within the broader aims of the province.

3.3 Understandings of International Education

3.3.1 Government

During the 16-year reign of the Liberal Government from 2001 to 2017, and particularly in the years from 2012 to 2016 when the International Education Strategy was active, IE programs are often described in economistic terms of independent revenue-generating opportunities for districts leading to greater budgetary flexibility and, in turn, reduced pressures on B.C. tax payers for funding public education (B.C. Ministry of Advanced

Education, 2013; B.C. Ministry of Education, 2013; B.C. Ministry of Jobs, 2014).[9] The Ministry of Education acknowledged the potential of cross-cultural benefits from IE programs, but sublimated to the aims of increasing international student numbers and generating revenue.

Also of note, the International Education Strategy was closely tied to the *B.C. Jobs Plan* (2012) and the goals of developing a highly-skilled domestic workforce to drive economic growth in the province. International students, although more at the post-secondary level than at the K-12 level given proximity to joining the workforce, were positioned as a crucial population for driving this growth (B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2011). A direct alignment between international students and labour force in the interest of economic growth clearly illustrates how the government of the day envisioned the contributions of IE. In public messaging about international education, the government explicitly stated, "international students often decide to stay, live, and work in B.C., applying their experience and education to the growth of our province," and the corresponding aim of "encourage[ing] international students to stay post-graduation to help meet our labour market needs" (B.C. Ministry of Jobs, 2014). Once again, in this messaging, the clear intention of government appears to be positioning of IE in terms of its political-economic benefits in an unambiguous alignment with economic growth.

[9] In B.C., education is the second highest area of public expenditure behind only health care (B.C. Ministry of Finance, 2014). The 2014/15 Budget Estimate for education funding (not including post-secondary education) from the Ministry of Finance was $5,387,000,000 with health care approximated at $16,936,000,000.

At the federal level, IE has also been positioned in terms of its economic value to Canada and the potential for contributing to the labour force. In late 2012, following the release of the B.C. International Education Strategy, the Government of Canada released its own strategy entitled *International Education: A key driver of Canada's future prosperity* (Government of Canada, 2012). The overarching aim of the strategy was, "for Canada [to] become the 21st century leaders in international education in order to attract top talent and prepare our citizens for the global marketplace, thereby providing key building blocks for our future prosperity" (p. viii). Within the strategy, IE was consistently framed in two primary lights: firstly, as "a driver of the Canadian economy,: and secondly, as "a pipeline to the Canadian labour market." The messaging from both the provincial and federal levels of government, consistent in terms of an economistic framing of IE, have also been echoed in some district jurisdictions as well.

3.3.2 School Districts

A notable example of local-level jurisdictions reflecting a similar orientation to government emerged from the Vancouver School Board (VSB) in 2012. The VSB launched a public campaign to garner support for increasing international student numbers, which they indicated would provide "revenue supplements [for] a wide range of non-international programs in the district" (Vancouver School Board, 2012). Within this campaign, the revenue-generating benefits of IE were highlighted and openly promoted, with the district claiming $12 million from international student tuition fees in the previous year (2011). This campaign was also of note given that it placed in direct opposition an increase in international students with the continued facilitation of cross-

boundary enrolment - the latter being a protected right for B.C.-resident students.[10] The issue, as presented by the VSB, was that an increase in international students would ostensibly reduce the number of available spaces and limit cross-boundary opportunities, thereby raising greater revenues than would accompany local students. This decision raises political implications with the potential of international students gaining access to seats in B.C. K-12 public education institutions, while cross-boundary students – *domestic* students interested in applying to a school outside of their catchment – would be denied entry.

3.3.3 Media

In other arenas outside of government and public education, the provincial and national media have also primarily addressed IE programs within economistic terms. As early as 2004, the Canadian national newspaper *The Globe and Mail* picked up on the growing trend of international students coming to Ontario and B.C. A. Mitchell (2004), writing for *The Globe*, highlighted the attraction of public high school experiences, particularly for students from Asia who were paying between $11,500 and $12,500 in annual tuition fees. Mitchell specifically notes that with over 900 international students enrolled, the Vancouver School District generated more than $11 million and utilizes this revenue "as the board sees fit." Years later, *Globe* reporter Baluja (2011) picked up the discussion of international education questioning the stability and reliability of IE programs, particularly with many districts becoming more and more reliant upon the IE revenues.

[10] Cross-boundary enrolments afford the opportunity for B.C.-resident students to attend *any school in the province*, outside of their local neighbourhood, provided that there is available space (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018d). How *available space* is designated remains at the discretion of individual districts.

Baluja explicitly notes her concerns arise from the highly competitive and unpredictable international market for IE, in which the districts must compete on a global scale. She takes a clear economistic focus on IE stating that these programs "inject millions into school coffers."

In another high profile media source, Findlay (2011) published an article in the Canadian news magazine *Macleans* entitled "Cashing in on Foreign Students." She focuses on one particularly successful B.C. district, Coquitlam School District, that is characterized as "the envy of the scores of districts across the country looking to cash in on the growing market for international students." Findlay opens her article exclaiming, "[the district] brought in $16 million selling 1,700 B.C. classroom spots to foreign students." She quotes members of the B.C.T.F. who align a rise in revenue-generating IE programs with a decline in funding from the provincial government, and states that, "what is emerging is a two-tier public education system that punished the districts that need the most help."

B.C. IE programs and their revenue-generating activities have also attracted attention outside of the Canadian context, receiving coverage in the international media. Chow (2014), writing for the high-profile media outlet, *The Wall Street Journal*, highlights the popularity of B.C. in attracting Asian students, in particular, to K-12 public schools. He comments,

> public schools are more than happy to take in the Chinese. Faced with stagnant enrolment, higher costs and cuts in government funding, foreign students are seen as a way to partially make up the revenue shortfall. (Chow, 2014)

Chow also comments directly on the profitability of IE for B.C., noting that, "in Vancouver, the city's main school board forecasts to collect C$20 million in international fees this coming year." Adding to the framing of IE as a specifically economic venture, Chow quotes a source who states that, "there is no quota. Anybody can come. Governments are more than welcoming of international student revenue." Within the article, there is no acknowledgement of IE program benefits outside of revenues.

In sum, the vast majority of media representations of IE programs in B.C. have been revenue-focused. From the provincial to national to international scales, the salient argument is one of profitability and revenue generation for school districts over and above other considerations, whether educational, political, or cultural. This framing within the media is crucial given that media coverage plays a large part in how public policy is received and ultimately understood by the general public (Fairclough, 1995; Lin, 2019). These findings further entrench a common understanding of IE programs within an economistic framing that, in many respects, restricts other readings of the phenomenon that might foreground political or cultural implications of these programs.

3.3.4 Academic Research

In academic research IE programs have received limited attention. This is true of IE programs in the B.C. context, with a few notable exceptions. A number of the researchers who have chosen to examine IE programs in BC have raised concerns, particularly with regard to impacts on equity. For example, University of British Columbia researchers Fallon and Poole (2014) examine IE programs in B.C. in relation to the adequacy of

provincial funding for K-12 public education. The authors express concern that districts may be forced to turn their attention from core educational services as they seek out and attempt to maximize revenues from market-driven funding activities. Poole, Fallon, and Sen (2019) revisit this phenomenon in more recent work and adopt a spatial analysis of B.C. school districts. They conclude that unequal access to revenue-generation from IE programs between B.C. school districts contributes to inequities in terms of programming and services offered to domestic students, and that district administrators working in a market-oriented environment may be desensitized to these inequities.

Larry Kuehn (2007, 2012), Head Researcher for the B.C.T.F., takes up a similar line of critique and charges that IE programs compromise equality between districts as they unfairly advantage large urban districts. Kuehn notes these programs are far and away the largest form of independent revenue generation for public school districts, and he questions whether the injection of market-oriented motivations are commensurate with the B.C. public education system. Kuehn, Mathison, and Ross (2018) include IE programs within a broader examination of forms of privatization in the B.C. school system and suggest that independent revenue generation by school districts becomes normalized as part of education funding and obfuscates systemic budget shortfalls. These researchers characterize this trade-off as "the most insidious form of privatization."

As noted above, a recent dissertation by Lin (2019) focuses on the social construction of IE programs, and more specifically international students, to unpack the ways in which media shapes the public understanding of these programs. Within her analysis, there is an

acknowledgement of how IE programs are framed within an economistic perspective. The primary characterization of IE programs remains the revenue-generating components, and associated impacts. Lin notes there is little attention on the individual students within these broader processes and the ways in which they depicted by this discourse. These observations would appear to reinforce the argument outlined above that suggests marketization discourse is hegemonic, or near-hegemonic, in its influence over the ways in which IE programs are understood. Political and cultural impacts remain, to a large extent, sublimated in these depictions.

3.4 The Case for Study

Given the dominant economistic discourse and contentious nature of market-oriented activity in public education, discussion of political and cultural implications of IE programs in B.C. have remained largely absent. However, there have been occasions where government has attempted to shine a light on non-economic benefits of these programs. For example, the former B.C. Minister of Advanced Education, Naomi Yamamoto, promoted the cultural benefits of IE through having international students in B.C. schools and communities engaging with B.C. students (Yamamoto, 2011). Additionally, the Ministry of Education (2013) included IE programs within the larger goal of 'internationalization.' However, these arguments have not been widely taken up, perhaps attributable to the relative ambiguity of how internationalization is to be defined and a lack of well-defined empirical methods for measuring its benefits.

The political implications of IE are even more sublimated within the dominant discourse of this phenomenon. Nonetheless, political implications have been surfaced. For example, the politics of IE programs became an issue during the B.C. Teachers' Strike in summer and fall of 2014. A provincial media outlet noted the mobilization of international parents from one particular country, which was well-known for sending high numbers of international students to B.C., exerting pressure on the provincial government for a resolution of the labour dispute (Sherlock, 2014). This pressure was expressed through official channels with representatives from the Consulate engaging in discussions directly with Ministry of Education officials. UBC researchers Fallon and Poole (2014) briefly touched upon this issue, regarding the political implications of mobilized pressure by foreign parents. However, following the resolution of the Teachers' Strike, this issue dissolved into the background overshadowed once again by a focus on issues with revenue generation by school districts.

In terms of considerations of citizenship, IE programs are being increasingly aligned with post-secondary institutions in the province in terms of admission criteria (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2013; Kamloops Daily News, 2010). International students gaining admittance to the K-12 level have the potential for preferential status in their application to colleges or universities in the province. This essentially creates a pipeline from K-12 to post-secondary studies and from there, to fuller realizations of aspects of citizenship given that holding post-secondary qualifications from a Canadian institution constitutes an additional qualification toward permanent immigration status. This point is not lost upon the provincial government, which has explicitly positioned international education

as a potential mitigating measure for predicted shortfalls in the B.C. labour force in the coming years (B.C. Ministry of Jobs, 2014). Again, this relationship between international education and labour shortage places emphasis on the economic underpinnings with little discussion of the effects upon the political community, as a whole.

In summary, IE programs continue to expand in scale and in importance as revenue-generating sources in B.C. school districts. These programs are the responsibility of the districts, which operate under increasingly tight budgetary constraints and pressures to act entrepreneurially and maximize independent funding sources. Although the economic implications of these programs appear in full view, discussed and debated in public and in the media, potential political implications of these programs remain largely unexamined.

3.5 Research Questions

Provided the dominant economistic framing of IE programs as depicted above in government, media, and academic research, I adopt an approach that allows me to examine the experiences of district-level administrators. Specifically, I am interested in how these administrators understand these MOEPs, and what economic, political and cultural implications they see these policies as having.

The research questions that guide this study are as follows:

1) How do district-level education administrators understand MOEPs?

2) How do district-level education administrators experience MOEP enactment in school district contexts?
3) What outcomes do district-level education administrators see from MOEPs in school district contexts?

Chapter Four: Research Design

In conceptualizing the research design for this study, I sought an approach that would allow me to unpack policy enactment processes unfolding within specific local contexts (i.e., school districts). I needed a design that would provide insights into how the phenomenon of MOEPs is understood by what Kakkori (2009) terms "experienced persons." Borrowing from the work of Gadamer, Kakkori defines experienced persons as those individuals who have experiences with a given phenomenon that have broadened their horizons of understanding, and who are aware that they possess this experience. In the case of the current study, I focus upon key education policy actors at the local level that were primarily responsible for translating MOEPs into their district contexts. In my review of possible methodologies that would allow investigation of this phenomenon from the perspective of policy actors intricately involved in these processes, I was drawn to an approach not often employed in the field of education policy studies: phenomenology.

Although phenomenology is generally associated with philosophical inquiry, it is an approach that is enjoying increasing application in social science research and practice-oriented fields (e.g., clinical psychology, nursing) that are interested in how individuals experience a particular phenomenon. As Van der Mescht (2004) notes, in education policy, administration and leadership research, there remain few examples of phenomenological inquiry, perhaps attributable to the positivistic traditions in which public policy studies originated. With this in mind, I draw from the work of phenomenological researchers such as Giorgi (1997, 2009, 2012), van Manen (1979,

1984, 2014), J. G. Mitchell (1990), Eatough and Smith (2008), and Aspers (2009) with the aim of positing a *phenomenology of education policy*. The purpose of this approach will be to, as Giorgi (1997) describes it, *speak back to* the field in which one is researching. In other words, rather than depicting the phenomenon through purely philosophical underpinnings – an endeavour that may leave the research in perhaps too abstract or esoteric a place to be useful to others working in the field – I intend to examine the experiences of the policy actors and present those experiences in a manner that contributes to increased understanding of how and why policy processes unfold as they do. Although perhaps unlikely that phenomenology will become a frequently employed approach in education policy research, I feel it nonetheless provides rich insights and an alternative perspective that furthers our understandings of these processes.

4.1 What is Phenomenology?

In current research practices, there is no single unified approach toward phenomenology. As Giorgi (1997) denotes, the application of phenomenology may best be described as sporadic and uneven. As originally conceived, phenomenology attempted to capture the essence of phenomena and to remain at a purely descriptive level, without engaging in analysis (Henriksson & Friesen, 2012). This approach is still very much alive in philosophical applications of phenomenology. However, phenomenology has also gained a measure of popularity in the social sciences and in fields of practice such as psychology, social work, nursing, and, to a more limited extent, education (Dowling, 2007; Finlay, 2012; Van der Mescht, 2004). For the current application of phenomenology, I draw from the interpretive, as opposed to purely descriptive, branch of

phenomenology, as well as from researchers who have taken a more empirical turn with their phenomenological inquiry. However, to enter the discussion of phenomenology, I begin with an overview of the origins and emergence of the tradition from studies of philosophy.

4.1.1 A Brief History

Phenomenology originated in the work of European philosophers, invoked in the writings of German philosopher Kant as early as the 1760s, but formalized in the work of Hegel in the early-1800s as, "the science of describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one's immediate awareness and experience" (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl, working in the period from the late-1800s to the early-1900s, is credited with revolutionizing phenomenology with his distinction between the act of consciousness and the phenomenon toward which it is directed (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl's work is often characterized as *transcendental* phenomenology, seeking how objects are constituted in pure consciousness, without relation to the natural world (van Manen, 2014). He is also credited with development of the *epoché* and reduction as techniques that have become distinguishable features in many branches of phenomenological research.

Another early pioneer in phenomenology is Heidegger (1962, 1988), sometimes referenced as "Husserl's most well-known student," who diverges from the transcendental method to develop a hermeneutically-grounded approach. Hermeneutic, or interpretive, phenomenology holds that pure description is not sufficient, for the ultimate goal is understanding lived experience (Dowling, 2007). Heidegger emphasizes *being* as

opposed to consciousness. In other words, his focus is not the phenomena under inquiry, but the meaning of their being (van Manen, 2014). Heidegger holds that interpretation is inevitable in the phenomenological process and that interpretation is intricately tied to the individual's history and background. Laverty (2003) notes that,

> Heidegger went as far as to claim that nothing can be encountered without reference to a person's background understanding…Meaning is found as we are constructed by the world while at the same time we are constructing this world from our own background and experiences. (p. 24)

Gadamer (1989), another principle contributor to the development of hermeneutic phenomenology, builds upon the work of Heidegger suggesting that interpretation permeates all aspects of inquiry. As Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) note, the consequence of these assertions by Heidegger and Gadamer are that the bracketing of assumptions, be they social, cultural, or gender considerations, from interpretation and reflection within phenomenological research is unattainable. These observations mark a clear schism with some of the most basic principles within phenomenology. However, the emergence of the hermeneutic branch as a legitimate and frequently applied form of phenomenological inquiry speaks to the potential for evolution within phenomenology.

In the current work, I align my application of phenomenology with the interpretive branch of the hermeneutic approach, given that I am interested in the experiences of policy actors engaging with the phenomenon of MOEPs. To further delineate the underpinnings of my positioning, this approach also fits with a constructivist (or interpretivist) ontological positioning, and an interpretivist epistemology in recognizing that reality and knowing are inseparable (Eatough & Smith, 2008). The explication of this positioning also clearly marks a difference in approach from transcendental

phenomenological inquiry and a form of research entrenched within the discipline of philosophy.

In detailing the rise of phenomenology in fields beyond its philosophical origins, van Manen (2014) notes that by the 1950s and 1960s, the phenomenological approach began to appear in research on policy and professional practice (e.g., psychology). He explains that the practical (lived) concerns toward which these domains are oriented spurred innovation in phenomenological approaches that emphasized more context-sensitive inquiry and concern with the experiences of others. Dowling (2007) also comments on this era of expansion in phenomenological research suggesting that this burgeoning approach to a more empirical phenomenology was not welcomed in all corners of academia, particularly by those with strong adherence to the philosophical tradition.

4.1.2 Giorgi and Empirical Phenomenology

A key moment in the turn toward a 'practically-oriented' phenomenology came from the working group in psychology at Duquesne University. This group, in which Giorgi was a key contributor, is chiefly attributed with the development of *empirical* phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Empirical phenomenology may be distinguished from the transcendental approach with a focus not on the phenomenon, but on the *meanings* that human beings make of the experience of the phenomenon (Van der Mescht, 2004). Moustakas (1994), in his depiction of the development of an empirical phenomenological approach, identifies two specific areas in which Giorgi diverges from transcendental inquiry: firstly, the research questions guiding empirical phenomenological study are not

only philosophical, but applicable to the field in which the research is set (i.e., must be grounded in disciplinary-sensibilities); and secondly, data are generated through dialogue with participants who are treated as co-researchers, rather than solely through a philosophical exercise of self-reflection. I draw from the work of Giorgi in adopting these two tenets in my application of phenomenology to education policy research.

It is important to note that Giorgi approached phenomenology from the discipline of psychology. In adapting an empirical phenomenology, he was centrally concerned with developing of approach that was more amenable to practice-oriented research that would hold some value for practitioners working in the field (Van der Mescht, 2004). Relating his own first experiences with phenomenology, he explains,

> [a]s I probed what the phenomenological philosophers were saying, especially Husserl, I began to see possibilities for developing a frame of reference for studying human experiential and behavioral phenomena that would be both rigorous and non-reductionistic. (Giorgi, 2012, p. 4)

Here, Giorgi emphasizes the embracing of a holistic view of human behaviour and resisting atomism, or the artificial compartmentalization of behaviour to fit within a research mode that is consistent with the dictates of natural sciences research. His aim in adopting phenomenology as a new methodological approach is instructive in understanding the historical research climate in which Giorgi worked in his formative academic period (1950s). He intended his approach to phenomenology as a bridge between the philosophical foundations of the method and the dominant positivistic paradigm present in the social sciences, and particularly in the field of psychology, at that time.

Giorgi (2012) intends empirical phenomenology as a method to reconcile the demands of psychology as a science, generally practiced in a controlled environment with a specific, predetermined study focus, and psychology as a practice, constantly adjusting on the fly to whatever spontaneous situations arise in engagement with patients. He suggests that, "if a human science model is adopted and a [phenomenological] method based on its values is being sought, then it is possible for most of the tension between the two situations to disappear (Giorgi, 2012, p. 10). I read Giorgi's advocacy for phenomenology in this sense as a call to shift the intentionality of this particular approach to the needs of the discipline it is to align with. He aims to harness the power of phenomenology in terms of describing and better understanding how individuals experience phenomenon at a level and in a manner not readily available to many other forms of inquiry. Ultimately, the effect is a more holistic picture of the phenomenon and, most importantly, one that may help practitioners address issues they engage in the field.

Toward this end, Giorgi (2009) began building upon the work of his colleagues at Duquesne, basing his approach upon others' experiences rather than the immediate experiences of the inquirer. This move represents a clear break from much of the tradition of transcendental phenomenology, which proffered introspection on the part of the individual to identify the essence of a phenomenon (Dowling, 2007). Following Giorgi, other phenomenologists working in the discipline of psychology have continued to develop the empirical application of phenomenology moving from first order (i.e., the individual's experience) description of a phenomenon to second order (i.e., interpretation of the individual's experience). For example, Aspers (2009) claims that for

phenomenology to be useful in the social sciences, it must be more than a "thick story" (i.e., description alone). He argues that empirical phenomenology must move from first order constructs of the actors to second order constructs, which involve the researcher interpreting the first order constructs with disciplinary-grounded theory.

Another important contribution from Giorgi's turn to the empirical in phenomenology was a recognition of the importance of context. In the transcendental tradition, as well as in some branches of interpretive phenomenology, great effort is given to freeing oneself from the constraints of context for identifying the essence of a phenomenon. However, Giorgi notes that in doing so, much of the colour and relationality of the experience of the phenomenon is lost. Thinking back to Giorgi's intention of applying the findings back to a real-world experience, in the case of psychology by a practitioner in the field for her patient, a decontextualized understanding may retain little value.

In valuing the breaks with traditional forms of phenomenological inquiry that I outline here from Giorgi, and subsequently from van Manen, it is important to note that these researchers working from an interpretive or empirical orientation also advocate for understanding the philosophical origins and maintaining some aspects of this approach (Giorgi, 1997). Without these groundings, to give some examples in the areas of coming to the phenomenon and adopting the proper attitude prior to research, as well as the need for conscious reflection and acknowledgement of potential bias, it would not be possible to claim a phenomenological stance. In other words, despite the difference, there remain commonalties that allow phenomenologists from across disciplines and approaches to

engage in meaningful dialogue and move forward with different conceptualizations of what phenomenology is and could be.

4.1.3 van Manen and Interpretive-Descriptive Phenomenology

In a manner similar to that of Giorgi, van Manen's particular approach to phenomenology emerged in a period in which he was seeking spaces for alternatives to positivism within education research. His aim with descriptive-interpretive phenomenology was to push for "inquiries that address and serve the practices of professional practitioners as well as the quotidian practices of everyday life" (van Manen, 2014, p. 15). Clear intersections with Giorgi's work are evident here with a focus on practice and utilizing research to support what practitioners were seeing in the field, as opposed to a more controlled experimentation that characterized much social science research of the time. van Manen focused his work upon education settings in developing a "phenomenology of pedagogy," which has become a well-respected body of research within education studies (Henriksson & Friesen, 2012).

van Manen (2014) identifies his phenomenology as hermeneutic, or interpretive-descriptive in the Heideggerian tradition. Thus, he rejects the notion of phenomenology as purely descriptive, stating that it can be simultaneously descriptive and interpretive, linguistic and hermeneutic (van Manen, 2014). van Manen considers phenomenology as a mode of questioning, as opposed to answering, and goes to great lengths depicting the importance of attaining the proper phenomenological attitude for undertaking this form of inquiry. Unlike many other researchers who claim a phenomenological underpinning for

their work, van Manen is particularly insightful in terms of how to go about adopting the proper attitude before undertaking phenomenological inquiry. Specifically, he recommends immersing oneself in phenomenological literature, and practicing an attitude of wonder toward the world in everyday encounters. van Manen (2014) suggests that our *naturalistic sensibilities*, or natural sense of wonder, becomes shaped over time by habituation. To undertake phenomenology, that wonder must be regained, or at the very least attempted, so our presumptions of the phenomenon do not overshadow what may be newly discovered.

Alternatively, in his depiction of an empirical phenomenological method, Giorgi does not go into detail in terms of preparation for undertaking phenomenological research. Giorgi's most detailed work on phenomenology, *The Descriptive Phenomenological Method in Psychology: A Modified Husserlian Approach* (2009), dedicates a great deal attention on the necessity of interpretation and analysis to derive useful findings for the field of study. However, there is little discussion of preparation for phenomenological study. Although he is not dismissive of the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology, Giorgi (2009) does suggest that bracketing all of one's knowledge regarding a phenomenon is, if even possible, detrimental to producing disciplinarily relevant findings. I interpret Giorgi's argument here as an attempt to connect findings from phenomenological inquiry back to the discipline, thereby addressing one of the most common critiques of the approach: that phenomenology is a philosophically-based research approach that has little translation to practitioners who are dealing with daily concerns they encounter.

van Manen's approach to phenomenology can be seen as straddling traditions, with a hermeneutic motivation aimed at exploring meaning-making for situated actors in practice-oriented fields, but maintaining a vigilance for the philosophical orientations that birthed phenomenological inquiry. His work is widely applied by researchers in education, as well as other practice-oriented fields, offering new ways of investigating and understanding experiences of phenomena. Dowling (2007), a researcher in the field of nursing, notes that,

> van Manen's writings on a human science approach to phenomenology offers some solutions to nurse researchers facing the difficulties of phenomenological reduction and reflects the ongoing transformation of phenomenology as a methodological approach. (p. 138)

I see the application of phenomenology to education policy research falling within similar parameters in terms of being an inquiry underpinned by the philosophical orientations of the phenomenological tradition, while adopting a pragmatism for the aims of the area of study, and acknowledgement on the importance of context for the experience of the phenomenon in question. In the following section, I detail specific aspects of the work of Giorgi and of van Manen that inform the current approach to a phenomenology of education policy.

4.2 A Phenomenology for Education Policy Research

In establishing his empirical approach to phenomenology, Giorgi provides the claim that, "the phenomenological method is generic enough to be applied to any human or social science – sociology, anthropology, pedagogy, etc. The only difference is that one assumes the attitude of the discipline within which one is working" (p. 11). I take up this

claim in developing a phenomenological approach to education policy research that is grounded in the language and interests of the research area. In terms of applying this thinking to current study, I adopt a policy sociology orientation to understanding education policy processes, along with conceptual grounding in the policy enactment approach. However, as advocated in the work of Giorgi and van Manen, I strive for a balance that retains key aspects of phenomenological inquiry while holding onto a disciplinary sensibility.

In employing phenomenology for this study, I do so fully aware that there is limited previous research utilizing this approach in education policy research and, as a result, potential reservations for how this research may be received in the field. It is my hope that this work contributes to a broad employment of phenomenology in education policy studies for providing new insights and a more holistic understanding of how these policy processes unfold.

I feel a central issue that may impede acceptance of phenomenology in many areas of social science research is a lack of consensus on how exactly phenomenological inquiry should be undertaken. Furthermore, the proliferation of phenomenological research in the social sciences, some of which takes a liberal interpretation and application of its underpinning principles (e.g., adoption of a phenomenological attitude, epoché and reduction, evocative presentation of findings) (Crotty, 1996; Giorgi, 1997), may be leading to further reservations on the part of education researchers.

In addition to phenomenology, I also considered other research approaches for the current study. Ethnography was one such example. A powerful methodology frequently employed in education research, ethnography is often informed by participant observation and triangulated with other forms of data (e.g., interviews, questionnaires) (Hammersley, 2017). However, as Hammersley (2017) notes, there are a wide range of opinions in education research and across the social sciences for exactly what may fall under the banner of ethnography. Given the focus on policy actors' experiences with IE programs and the logistical challenges of participating in participant observation with administrators who are spread throughout the province and can often spend many weeks travelling abroad, I opted not to adopt ethnography as my primary research approach. Ultimately, phenomenology appeared as the strongest option to explore how education policy processes are experienced and understood by education policy actors.

My approach to a phenomenology of education policy is described in detail below. In developing this approach, I have drawn from Giorgi and van Manen, as well as J. G. Mitchell (1990) and Eatough and Smith (2008).

4.2.1 The Proper Attitude

One area of commonality between Giorgi, van Manen, and many other phenomenologists regardless of the academic discipline in which they locate their work, acknowledge the centrality of adopting the *proper attitude* prior to beginning inquiry. However, the method to attain this positioning is not always overtly depicted. For example, van Manen (2014) suggests that one does not need to be steeped in philosophical knowledge to

undertake a phenomenological inquiry, but that preparation in terms of immersion in classic phenomenological texts is beneficial. Although immersion in foundational readings may seem a necessary requirement for virtually all research, the purpose in this case is to understand and adopt a phenomenological approach toward research, shifting one's attitude to openness toward the phenomenon and resisting presumption of what the phenomenon is or might be.

Alternatively, Giorgi (2012) does not specifically identify immersion in phenomenological texts, but still advocates for adopting the proper attitude through the mental exercise of examining one's presumptions about the phenomenon prior to beginning research. He states,

> [one] has to begin by assuming the correct attitude. First of all, [the researcher] has to assume the attitude of the phenomenological reduction, which means that she must resist from positing as existing whatever object or state of affairs is present to her. The researcher still considers what is given to her but she treats it as something that is present to her consciousness and she refrains from saying that it actually is the way it presents itself to her. In addition, she refrains from bringing in non-given past knowledge to help account for whatever she is present to. She concentrates on the given as a phenomenon and everything that is said about the phenomenon is based upon what is given. (Giorgi, 2012, pp. 4-5)

As noted above, I find van Manen's (2014) depiction of the proper phenomenological attitude, one in which we take everyday phenomenon and attempt to look at them in a different light, one less enmeshed in our presumptions and biases, as a point of embarkation.

4.2.2 Epoché and Reduction

Foundational concepts that both Giorgi and van Manen address are the *epoché*, or bracketing, and the act of reduction. van Manen (2014) describes the epoché as, "the act by which the natural attitude of taken-for-granted beliefs and the attitude of science are suspended" (p. 215). He notes that Husserl originally equated epoché with the term *bracketing*, which was as an analogy for the setting aside of presumptions. van Manen then depicts the act of reduction as a separate, but complimentary act that involves turning back to the phenomenon and regarding it in a naïve state of wonder. Alternatively, Giorgi (2009) refers to bracketing and reduction as a single act with the same intended outcome, but acknowledges that other phenomenologists may take a different approach. Although a basic aspect of phenomenology that is universally accepted, regardless of which branch of phenomenology a researcher may locate themselves, bracketing and reduction illustrate the spaces of contention that remain in pinning down *an* approach to phenomenological inquiry.

Other aspects of bracketing and reduction have also been debated within phenomenological communities and critiqued by researchers outside of these communities. There has been disagreement over the extent to which reduction is even possible, given that one cannot escape one's preconceptions entirely and may not be fully aware when they are creeping back into our phenomenological practice (van Manen, 1984). These methods have also been critiqued in terms of desirability, particularly by researchers in the human sciences who aim for practice-oriented inquiry (Giorgi, 2012). Adopting a transcendental stance can be seen as further divorcing the researcher, and as a

corollary, the inquiry, from the phenomenon in context. This would be, in effect, defeating the purpose of the empirical turn back to the discipline in which both Giorgi and van Manen find merit.

Another point of contention regarding bracketing and reduction is in who should be undergoing these moves. This issue has arisen with the move away from first order self-reflection in transcendental phenomenology to reliance upon others' accounts of phenomena by researchers in practice-oriented fields. van Manen (2014), for instance, recommends phenomenological reduction on the part of interview participants in order to achieve the purest description of experience possible. However, from Dowling's (2007) perspective, if study respondents are asked to employ reduction in an interview, the responses may move away from their experiences with the phenomenon in practice to a philosophical exercise inconsistent with the aims of empirical phenomenology. Giorgi (2009) shares this view suggesting that reduction take place on the part of the researcher in designing the research study and in analysis, but not on the part of participants.

For the current project, it was challenging if not impossible to require interview participants (i.e., district-level administrators) to attempt bracketing and reduction prior to interviews. Firstly, they lacked the background to fully immerse in phenomenological literature and develop understanding for how and why these moves are necessary. Secondly, this level of preparation in addition to the time they contributed to take part in the interviews may have deterred busy administrators from participating. Given these

challenges, I did not ask participants to engage in bracketing or reduction prior to our discussions.

In reviewing education research that claimed a phenomenological approach (Barrette, 2007; Owen, 2013; Roberts, 2015; A. S. Webb, 2015), I found that many of the researchers provided little or no description in terms of how they went about practicing bracketing and the reduction. It was uniformly acknowledged and in some cases discussed in conceptual terms, but there was not a single researcher who depicted a method for undertaking these processes. Taking a different approach, I draw upon the work of Hipsky (2006) for the *pre-conceptual map* (from this point forward, "the map"), an overt process through which the researcher clearly lays out (to the extent possible) biases regarding the phenomenon. I describe this process in greater detail below.

4.2.3 The Pre-Conceptual Map

Hipsky (2006) develops the map as a method of addressing validity concerns in qualitative research in situations where the researcher is closely associated with or deeply knowledgeable about the subject, to the extent that it may bias inquiry. She offers the example of her own research in curriculum evaluation, in which she was employed as an external researcher and investigated educational materials that she had had a hand in originally developing. Hipsky notes that the map was intended to clarify her own assumptions about the curriculum and her insider knowledge of the development process to be aware of inherent bias, on her own part, and to openly acknowledge this bias, for others reading her research. She records her own assumptions in a tabular format

including: a short title, a descriptive summary, and a potential outcome, explained in disciplinary terms. Hipsky then utilizes these shorthand notes, referring to them on an ongoing basis throughout data analysis.

Following Hipsky (2006), I developed a pre-conceptual map for the current study (Appendix A) through the following processes: (1) recounting of experiences – personal, educational, and professional – that may contribute to biases regarding the MOEPs; (2) list general assumptions about MOEPs; and (3) categorize experiences into subsections with short, descriptive headings that easily accessible and understandable. I utilize the map for reference in multiple stages of the research process including before and after (a) drafting interview questions, (b) interviews with participants, and (c) data analysis. Reiterating, the purpose of this map is to bring the researcher to an awareness of her/his own presumptions regarding the phenomenon and to incorporate these potential biases into researcher reflection.

4.2.4 Phenomenological Interviews

For data collection, I selected interviews as an appropriate tool for opening understandings of district administrators' experiences with enacting MOEPs. Interviews are an often-employed method in social science applications of phenomenological inquiry (Englander, 2012). van Manen (2014) specifies the phenomenological interview as distinct from other forms of qualitative interviews, based upon the aim of gathering prereflective accounts of a phenomenon. However, as noted above, participants in this study were not asked to employ reduction techniques upon their accounts. Thus,

development of a flexible interview protocol and vigilance on the part of the interviewer in terms of capturing rich descriptions of individuals' experience with the phenomenon was crucial.

In a general sense, van Manen (2014) suggests phenomenological interviews should gather "experiential narrative material, stories, or anecdotes that may serve as a resource for phenomenological reflection and thus develop a richer and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon" (p. 314). Eatough and Smith (2008) explain that semi-structured interviews are the most often employed in interpretive phenomenological studies, as a process that is dialogical, with the participant taking an active role in shaping the conversation. Following these researchers, I employ a semi-structured interview design (Bryman, 2012), given that this approach allows for some preparation of questions that may loosely lead the discussion to probe engagement with the phenomenon, while providing space for participants to relate their experiences within their own naturalistic sensibilities and for the researcher to follow in greater depth statements or experiences that shed light on the phenomenon. This approach resulted in a path of "co-navigation" through the participants' experiences that is not directed by a pre-determined agenda on the part of the researcher.

Approach to Interviewing

Another consideration for interviewing within a phenomenological approach is Giorgi's view that reflection on the part of the experienced subject may be necessary to fully explicate a phenomenon. He explains that, "in straightforward perception the act is lived

through but not noticed. It takes an act of reflection to detect the meaning-conferring or interpretive act and once it is detected it can be described" (Giorgi, 2012, p. 6). These observations are important for the interview process, given that the participant may require parameters to be immersed back into an experience or given a hypothetical correlate to revisit events in the past. In other words, it is not enough to simply ask the participant to talk about their experience, because, as Giorgi suggests, this may produce only a partial description likely in reductionist terms. Seidman (2013) also cites this concern, noting that a "one-shot" interview may not offer the necessary depth of exploration, nor a sufficient opportunity for reflection upon the experience on the part of the interviewee. Seidman thus posits a three-interview process for phenomenological inquiry, which I employ in this study.

Seidman (2013) elaborates upon the three-interview process explaining that each interview serves a specific purpose in relation to the assumptions of the phenomenological method. According to Seidman, the first interview should explore the participant's background, and offer insights into the development of values, beliefs, and assumptions the participant might hold from experiences in their past. The second interview should focus upon experiences with the phenomenon itself, and the processes of meaning-making that the participant engages in. In the current study, this entails discussion regarding the participant's experiences with IE programs and the work of policy enactment with regard to MOEPs.

The third interview offers participants an opportunity to reflect upon the first two

discussions, to review the transcripts, and to discuss, elaborate upon, or revise their accounts. This final stage is crucial to allow for reflection on the part of the interviewee, and is consistent with the more general method of increasing validity in qualitative studies through "member checking" (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Seidman also recommends 90 minutes as an appropriate length to gather sufficient detail, without being too onerous on the participant's time.

Identifying Participants

Englander (2012) notes that participants for phenomenological interviewing require experience with a phenomenon in order to be able to provide an account, but it need not be measured in terms of *how much* engagement they have with the phenomenon. Additionally, he clarifies that multiple participants in phenomenological studies need not strive for a representative sample as in quantitative approaches. The interview participants for this study required familiarity with IE programs and needed to be centrally involved in policy enactment processes that see MOEPs translated into local contexts. I targeted district-level administrators from B.C. school districts with active IE programs to capture this base of experience, including IE directors and managers, superintendents, and assistant superintendents. Given the ways in which school districts generally structure their organizations, with IE programs occupying their own department and often having a dedicated staff, I felt these individuals would offer the greatest potential for insight into the enactment processes of MOEPs.

In addition, I have attempted to broaden understandings of MOEPs in the provincial

context by inviting a participant from the independent school sector. The addition of the independent school perspective provides experiences of the phenomenon of MOEPs in the same overarching provincial policy context, but with potentially differing experiences between the public and independent sectors in relation to market pressures. The independent school sector, which is similar to private schooling in many jurisdictions outside of B.C. (Barman, 1991), has a history in an education environment that includes competition between schools and, thus, the use of marketing practices to attract students. By gaining a better understanding of how independent school policy actors experience MOEPs allows for a richer, more holistic understanding of the phenomenon as a whole.

The addition of independent school perspectives may also help to sensitize understanding of the wider context of educational politics in which MOEPs have emerged. Independent schools have different funding arrangements with the provincial government than their public education counterparts in the school districts (Barman, 1991) and are held to differing expectations by the public. They also enter into labour agreements without the intervention of the provincial teachers' union – a union whose relationship with the provincial government has been described as frequently contentious and highly politicized (Poole, 2015). These considerations, which distinguish the public school sector from the independent school sector, may impinge upon the ways that policy actors experience MOEPs, specifically in terms of how these actors understand and choose to address this marketized policy climate, and in terms of how these policies are brought into being.

In terms of selecting an appropriate number of participants, Creswell (2012) notes that phenomenological studies generally draw between three and fifteen individuals. Eatough and Smith (2008) opine that in some approaches to phenomenological inquiry, multiple participants are preferable to establish greater variation in understanding the essential structures of phenomenon, and to establish validity with common perspectives among the participants. Giorgi (2012) is also supportive of this view. However, in other cases, Eatough and Smith (2008) note that a single participant may be sufficient if the primary aim is a deep interpretation sought through extended and potentially multiple interview sessions with the same individual, to establish the richest understanding of the experience possible. These authors also note that a rich understanding may also be reached through interviews with multiple participants, but that in these situations cross-case analysis should not occur until after each case has been fully interpreted in its own right. I take up this approach and had initially set the desired number of participants between five and ten given the constraints of time and data management.

4.2.5 Data Engagement and Writing

In his work depicting an empirical phenomenological method, Giorgi (2012) suggests multiple stages for engaging data. In the first stage, he advocates for a naïve reading that explicates individuals' experiences of a phenomenon without applying disciplinary sensibilities. In the second stage, Giorgi brings theoretical frames to a rereading of the individual accounts so the product of analysis may speak back to the discipline. My own approach to data engagement aligns with Giorgi in a general sense, but diverges in his

choice of method of analysis where I draw from other researchers working in empirical phenomenology.

Initial Engagement and Naïve Description

As a foundational stage, Giorgi suggests reading the entire description from the participant to get a holistic impression, or a global sense of the data. Similarly, Eatough and Smith (2008) recommend multiple full-length readings to establish holistic understanding as a point of departure, as subsequent readings become finer in focus and in identifying emergent themes. Aspers (2009), in depicting what he labels clear steps for conducting empirical phenomenological inquiry, describes this stage as relation of first order constructs. He advocates for attention to the experiences of individuals with a given phenomenon as an initial step, but reminds that empirical phenomenology must also include a move to second order constructs, with the interpretation of the researcher grounded in the discipline in which they are working. Aspers echoes the work of Giorgi in this sense, but also provides some basic description for how to go about achieving this aim.

After initial engagement to arrive at a naïve understanding, Giorgi advocates a second engagement aimed at identifying *meaning units* that are correlated with the attitude of the researcher. He explains,

> the parts must be determined by criteria that are consistent with the scientific discipline…For example, one might say that one could make a 'meaning unit' out of each sentence, but a sentence is a unit of grammar and may or may not be sensitive to the [disciplinary] aspects of the description. (p. 246)

I interpret Giorgi's suggestions here as an attempt at balance between a philosophical phenomenological approach and a more theoretically-grounded research design. He notes, "[a] merely cognitive a priori specification of what one is to look for would not satisfy intuitively based phenomenological criteria" (p. 247). Thus, I envision this process as iterative and reflexive, working between the individuals' accounts and my conceptual framework established with groundings in policy sociology and application of policy enactment processes.

One point at which I diverge with Giorgi's approach to data engagement is in his use of *imaginative variation* (Giorgi, 1997). Imaginative variation, drawn originally from Husserl and philosophical phenomenology, is a tool that allows for the essence of a phenomenon to be discerned by exchanging aspects of the phenomenon with alternative structures to determine what remains as identifiable. What remains is then considered to be an aspect of the very essence of the phenomenon. However, the principle aim of my inquiry is not the essence of the phenomenon, but the individuals' experiences of the phenomenon.

Analytic Themes

Eatough and Smith (2008), working in the interpretive phenomenological approach, focus on the emergence of analytic themes in data engagement to capture participant experience. The researchers state that the writing up of interpretive phenomenological research offers a narrative of the participant's meaning-making of the topic under investigation and the researcher's more conceptual interpretations. They describe the

process of analysis as, "[moving] through a series of levels, each attending closely to the participant's personal experience but, step by step, taking us to a more interpretative stance" (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p. 191).

Although instructive in terms of process, Eatough and Smith do not specify the substance of what the researcher should be looking at as she/he moves through these levels. van Manen's comments on thematic analysis are similarly indeterminate. He states,

> [i]n analyzing texts, we ask of each fragment: 'How does this speak to the phenomenon?' These reflective methods of thematization are an interim part of the larger reflective process that eventually must prove itself in the phenomenological writing activity. Phenomenological themes are like creative shorthands that are supposed to help with the process of carefully spinning out a detailed phenomenological text. (van Manen, 2014, p. 312)

Alternatively, Nitta, Holley, and Wrobel (2010) employ a thematic analysis within a phenomenological study that offers greater explanation of this process.

Nitta et al. (2010), studying school consolidation as experienced by students and educators through a phenomenological approach, suggest the stages of thematic analysis should unfold as follows: (1) the highlighting of significant statements that provide insight into participants' general impressions of a phenomenon; (2) the development of clusters of meaning from these statement into themes; (3) the writing of a textural description of what participants experience; (4) the writing of a structural description of the context that influences the participants' experience; and (5) the writing of a composite experience. Step four, as outlined by Nitta et al., aligns well with the policy enactment analytic and a similar recognition of the importance of context on participant experience.

Turning back to the work of Giorgi (2009), he notes that phenomenological processes are iterative and inclined toward adjustment of insights and readings. Eatough and Smith (2008) provide some detail on how this might be achieved suggesting, "[a]nalysis continues into the writing-up stage and finishes with a narrative of both participant's and researcher's meaning making of the topic under investigation" (p. 187). More specifically, they denote that the final narrative account should include rich description as well as abstract and conceptual interpretations. This approach holds true with the overarching interest in presenting a holistic account of the individual's phenomenal experience, as well as reflexive interpretation on the part of the researcher.

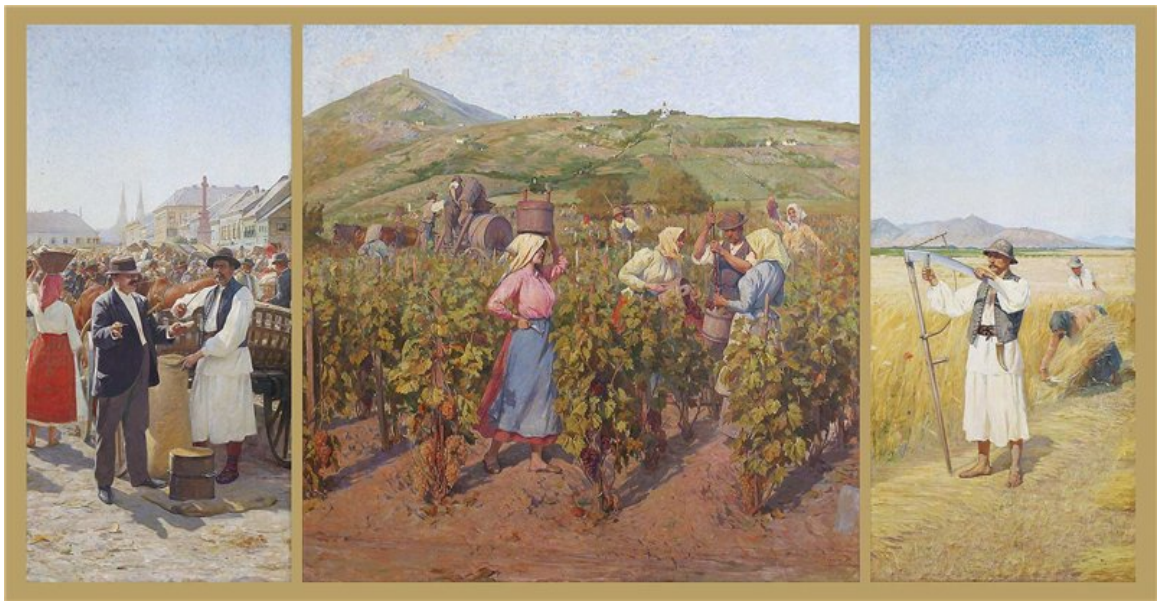
4.2.6 Phenomenological Findings Through the Metaphor of the Triptych

As noted above, the ways in which phenomenological research is presented is far from succinctly prescribed. This may be, in part, purposive, given that many researchers approach this work as creative process rather than standardized, mechanistic form of output (van Manen, 2014). In the interest of establishing a middle ground on which there is an easily-accessible, organizational form for presenting findings, I draw upon the metaphor of the *triptych.*

A triptych is, most conventionally, understood as a painting or other form of artistic work presented in three separate sections (e.g., panes or frames), each self-contained, but simultaneously meant to be interpreted as a whole. The origin of the term triptych is from the mid-18th Century where three writing tablets or relief carvings on wooden panels

were physically hinged together ("Triptych," n.d.). See Figure 4.1 below for a visual representation.

Figure 4.1 – Vršac Triptych, attributed to Serbian painter Paja Jovanović (1895) ("Vršac Triptych," 2018)



This work, entitled the Vršac Triptych, is attributed to the Serbian painter Paja Jovanović (1859-1957) from the year 1895. It depicts everyday life in the region in that time period (Filipovitch-Robinson, 2008). Filipovitch-Robinson (2008), an Art History Professor from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., analyzes Jovanović's work and argues that the Vršac Triptych was intended as political commentary in support of the regime of the day. She notes that the work was commissioned by the local city council. Filipovitch-Robinson suggests the painting belies tensions that existed in this region during this time along both cultural and religious lines. In other words, despite depicting places and interactions that seem unremarkable, the triptych combines to hold meanings

that only emerge with a deeper understanding of the context and the individuals in the scenes.

In terms of clarifying my intentions in invoking the triptych as a metaphor, it is evident that each of the three panels may stand alone and provide self-contained meaning. In other words, all panels of the triptych are not necessary to understand what is being presented. However, taken together as a single scene, meanings are richer with the scenes complimenting one another to paint a much fuller understanding of the region and the people of that time. This type of simultaneously individual and holistic relationship should be kept in mind in reading through the following chapter. One may read a single section in Chapter Four (4.1, 4.2, and 4.3) to better understand a particular aspect of the phenomenon, but taken together, the sections create a more nuanced, fuller understanding of the whole.

Chapter Five is organized around the metaphor of the triptych with three panels of findings presented as follows: (i) *understandings* of the phenomenon, (ii) *contexts* of enactment in which the phenomenon unfolds, and (iii) *outcomes* of the phenomenon. These panels should be read as independent and self-contained, given that each captures a particular aspect of the phenomenon understood in terms of hermeneutic interpretive analysis. However, each panel should simultaneously be understood as a part of the whole that takes into consideration context, meaning, and enactment as co-constitutive factors for how actors experience the phenomenon of MOEPs.

Having described in detail the particular approach I am taking toward phenomenological data collection, analysis, and presentation, in the next section, I move to a discussion of research procedure, participants, and contexts.

4.3 Research Procedure, Participants and District Contexts

4.3.1 Ethics Approval and Recruitment

The University of British Columbia (UBC) Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB) approved the research study on August 6, 2015. Invitations to participate in the current study (see Appendix B) were sent to 15 B.C. school district and independent school offices. In cases where school districts requested formal application through a research permissions committee, all required processes were followed. In other cases, the BREB-approved Letter of Introduction and a research description were sent to the district superintendent's office. In the case of independent schools, the Letter of Introduction and a research description was sent to the school principal's office.

Securing participation from school districts and school district representatives proved challenging for a number of reasons. Firstly, some school districts declined participation given that they were already participating in a number of other post-secondary research projects concurrently and did not want to place further strain on staff capacity. Secondly, some districts did not respond to the first inquiry for permission to conduct research, or to a second follow-up inquiry. Finally, some districts approved the research at the district office level, but when individual administrators were contacted regarding participation they declined as either too busy, or did not respond. Six school districts and one

independent school approved permission to contact staff directly and invite participation in the study.

4.3.2 Interviews

In terms of the interview process, each administrator was required to provide written consent for participation (see Appendix C). Each individual was interviewed on three separate occasions. As noted in the research description above, the purpose of the first interview was to develop a rapport between interviewee and interviewer, the second interview focused on the IE program in the participant's school district or independent school, and the third interview was intended as a follow up to revisit any points that required further clarification or for the participant to add or amend any of their previous comments. The interviews followed the Interview Protocol (Appendix D) that had been approved by UBC BREB to guide the first two interviews with each participant. The third interview did not have a predetermined protocol and was guided by participant preference for revisiting a previous topic or by researcher interest in having participants expand upon experiences they had noted in previous discussion.

Each interview, three interviews per participant, lasted between 65 and 100 minutes, and took place between December 2015 and December 2016. Interviews were audio recorded with participant consent per the UBC BREB guidelines. During the interviews, I took notes by hand to highlight significant points or recurrent themes either for follow-up questions in the same interview, or for informing discussions in the third summary interview.

The participant group for this study is comprised of five individual district-level administrators from four school districts and one independent school. To protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, each has been given a pseudonym for the purposes of discussion. From this point forward the participants will be identified as Amy, Ben, Christine, David, and Evan.

Each of the five participants was the individual with administrative control over the IE Program in their school district or independent school. In other words, these were the individuals most responsible for selecting and establishing program policy and guidelines, hiring and training staff, setting and often participating directly in marketing and recruiting, in some cases dealing directly with student support and discipline, and representing the program inside the district (e.g., at school board meetings, in public school district events) and outside the district (e.g., at provincial and national conferences and meetings).

As noted by one of the research participants, the naming conventions for job roles shifts from school district to school district depending on the chosen administrative structure. In general, naming conventions may relate to the administrative hierarchy and pay scales. Although the four participants from school districts had similar responsibilities with respect to their international programs, their titles included one district principal, one director of international education, one manager of international education, and one

program administrator of international education. The independent school participant held the position of vice principal.

All participants for this study had backgrounds as educators, some as classroom teachers, counsellors, and school and/or district administrators. None of the participants brought a business background, although it is worth noting there are some IE programs in the province that have more recently begun to hire IE program administrators with business training (e.g., an MBA degree or previous marketing experience). Each of the participants was also highly experienced with a minimum of ten years experience teaching and/or working as an administrator in B.C. Three participants had over 20 years of experience each as educators and education administrators.

4.3.3 School District Contexts

As noted, the school district is of crucial importance for this study given that IE programs are established by the school board and governed, for the most part, independently at the local level. Thus, the characteristics of the school districts come to bear upon how the programs are intended within their district contexts and how they play out. For the purpose of differentiating and better understanding district IE programs, I draw from Davis (2017), who in his research on educational leadership in IE Programs provides distinction between small, medium, and large programs. Davis bases this differentiation upon program size (i.e., number of international students enrolled), as well as providing some description of characteristics that are generally associated with different sized programs in terms of staffing, administrator responsibilities, and other factors.

Davis (2017) acknowledges that the differentiation is approximate rather than definite in some cases, as local context and program history can create some anomalies. However, IE programs throughout the province can basically be separated into small programs, with less that 200 international students enrolled; medium-sized programs, with 200 to 400 enrolled; and larger programs with 400+ enrolled. In terms of staffing, Davis notes that smaller programs generally have limited staff, with one to three individuals including the head administrator, modest program budgets for marketing and recruiting, and considerable autonomy operating outside mainstream district business. Medium-sized programs have less than ten staff members, although at least some who specialize in areas such as homestay and overseas marketing and recruiting. These programs tend to operate in an in-between space where they are not large enough to command significant attention within their own districts and, as a result, operate with budgetary constraints and staffing limitations. Large IE programs, on the other hand, are often the most long-standing programs with staffing of more than 10 in which there can be a great deal of specialization with, for example, marketers who are experts in their particular region of the world and only work on that region. Large programs are also often well-integrated into district business, with head administrators that are a part of the district leadership team, and long-range business plans that complement the overall district strategic plans.

As noted, there may be some variance in the details of different IE program operations, but Davis' work provides a baseline from which to compare. In terms of the current group of district-level administrators, there are two from smaller programs, one from a

medium-sized program, and one from a larger program. The regional distribution of these programs around the province and in terms of rural-urban classification is also fairly even with one program from the Lower Mainland/Southern Vancouver Island region – incidentally the most highly concentrated region of international students in the province – one from a region close to but outside of the urban center, and two from different rural areas of the province far removed from the urban center. Given that context is a potentially important factor in terms of how policies are enacted, and in terms of how they are experienced by policy actors, much more description of the district contexts follow in the sections below. However, it is also important to note that all efforts have been made to protect the anonymity of the participants by remaining somewhat vague in how their districts are described.

The independent school administrator works in a school with what could be considered a medium-sized IE program, not in terms of enrolling between 200 and 400 international students as with the much larger districts, but in terms of the percentage of international students against the overall enrolment of the school. Of the over 300 independent schools in the province, some enrol more than 50% non-resident students, putting them into the category of Group 4 independent schools and not eligible for provincial funding (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018b). Other independent schools have international students but at less than 50% of their total enrolment, and many independent schools enrol no international students at all. Additional detail regarding the independent school context of the participating school administrator, like the district administrators, follows in the sections below.

4.4 Limitations

Despite the attempts outlined above in relation to conveying the experiences of individual participants to the extent possible, van Manen (1984) reminds that,

> [a] phenomenological description is always *one* interpretation, and no single interpretation of human experience will ever exhaust the possibility of yet another complementary, or even potentially richer description. (p. 3, italics in original)

Aspers (2009) also recognizes this distinction clearly distinguishing between first order constructs and second order constructs of individuals' experiences. I acknowledge this limitation, and although I employ phenomenological tools described above to mediate my interpretations and limit personal bias, I make no claims on the production of truth beyond the limits of the methodological rigour I follow.

I recognize that interpretive phenomenological research does not aim at generalizability or theory development in a grand sense. This project is very much focused on relating the experiences of education administrators to contribute to the body of knowledge in education policy research for policy enactment of MOEPs, and potentially for insights that may be of value for educational administrators in practice. As Eatough and Smith (2008) state, interpretive phenomenological research intends to present rich descriptions and interpretations of a limited number of participants to further understanding. Thus, the concerns of sample size and other measures of validity and reliability, raised out of traditions of natural science research, are not of central concern. Validity and reliability are gauged in relation to the rigour with which the phenomenological method, as established by forebears such as van Manen and Giorgi, is maintained. The employment

of reduction and utilization of the pre-conceptual map represent attempts to meet these expectations.

In terms of the challenges of accessing the experience of others as a source of data for academic research, I draw from Ball (1997) who opines:

> Policy research is always in some degree both reactive and parasitic… Both those inside the policy discourse and those whose professional identities are established through antagonism towards the discourse benefit from the uncertainties and tragedies of reform…researchers, apparently safely ensconced in the moral high ground, nonetheless make a livelihood trading in the artefacts of misery and broken dreams of practitioners. (p. 258)

I do not have a background in education administration in the K-12 public system, and thus rely on the insights and experiences of the professionals that contribute to this project. Ball's words above are an instructive reminder for researchers situated outside of the field of education administration who take up the task of examining the contexts and individuals who live these moments day by day. In providing second order interpretations of experiences, I do so in full recognition and respect for the professionals living and working in the field. Although phenomenology dictates measures that attempt to limit the biases of the researcher, I acknowledge the limitations in this respect.

Chapter Five: Findings

This chapter, presenting data from the study, is organized utilizing the metaphor of the triptych. The findings are framed in the following three panels: (i) *understandings* of the phenomenon, (ii) *contexts* of enactment in which the phenomenon unfolds, and (iii) *outcomes* of the phenomenon. These panels may be read as independent and self-contained, given that each captures a particular aspect of the phenomenon understood in terms of hermeneutic interpretation. However, the panels are simultaneously a part of a whole that integrates understandings, contexts, and outcomes as co-constitutive factors for how actors experience a phenomenon.

In this chapter, I include extensive quotations from the education administrators. My intention in presenting the findings in this manner is to convey a sense of the administrators as individuals with personal histories, values, and beliefs that shape the ways in which they experience their worlds. Phenomenology provides insight into the experience of a phenomenon. However, these insights are drawn from individuals who have a specific positioning and bring their own experiences to the phenomenon. Thus, I feel that developing a sense of the individual is necessary in terms of interpreting the findings and making sense of contributions of this study to education policy research.

5.1 Panel One - Understandings

How do education administrators understand international education in the B.C. context? How do they see these programs in relation to broader aims of public education in B.C.? How do they see themselves within this work? The dominant theme to emerge from

discussions with the administrators regarding understandings of IE is of a business within education. For these individuals, this understanding is a lived contradiction between how they see themselves, first and foremost as educators, and the roles they feel they must fulfil to be successful in IE. Thus, their experiences are shaped by processes of negotiating these new terrains and attempting to find their way in what is largely uncharted territory for B.C. educators.

5.1.1. A Business Within Education

Within their understandings of IE, administrators are aware of the uncomfortable fit in public education settings as IE necessitates the business practice of recruiting students in a global market. This duality has been met by contestation in the public and within school district and school administrations, colouring the ways in which educators are able to work within their professional contexts and are perceived by their colleagues. The administrators also come to IE in many cases ill-equipped to fulfill the business requirements of this work. There is thus the feeling of continual learning and encountering new and unpredictable obstacles, challenges, and outcomes within the evolving contexts of IE.

The administrators in this study expressed the experience of living the duality of a business within education, while maintaining a focus on and the integrity of the educational program. It should be kept front of mind that all five of the administrators began their professional careers as classroom teachers before moving to roles within IE administration. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that the administrators unanimously

advocate the primacy of quality education over and above the promotion of business success (i.e., program growth and revenue generation). Through the relaying of their experiences, the role of entrepreneur does not seem to come naturally to any of the administrators in the group. This creates tension between the expectations and demands of the business role and their aspirations and instincts as educators. This complex positioning raises questions regarding how these administrators struggle to reconcile their identities, and in understanding how and why they do what they do.

Educational Quality and Student Care Within IE

Each of the administrators expresses a strong commitment to education and the quality of the educational experience for international students in their discussions of IE. This is significant given that research suggests the discourse of marketization may shape individuals' dispositions toward prioritizing economic interests over educational interests (Ball, 2012; Lubienski, 2005). For this group of education administrators, a shift toward an overtly economistic perspective on IE does not align with how they describe their experiences.

Amy, on a number of occasions, reiterates her belief that the quality of the educational program and the care of international students must unquestionably be the guiding principle for the IE program, and moreover the motivation for the people working in that program:

> Our program has not been about getting more and more and more students. Ours has been about getting a quality program, and the interculturalization of our domestic students and staff…[I don't like] that attitude of getting more and more and more students, but the quality of

> looking after them goes down and down and down…I feel lucky I don't have that pressure [to generate revenue], and I can focus on what I believe all of us in [IE] programs should be focusing on…quality.

Amy's assertions regarding the purpose of IE, both within her district and in a more global sense, is consistent throughout our discussions. She repeatedly speaks of the importance of educational quality and an overall positive life experience for international students while in B.C.; Amy's claims may be partially attributable to the context in which she is working, at least with respect to the natural contextual limitations of population and geography. In other words, if she were in a Lower Mainland district with more emphasis on growth and revenue generation, her motivations may be differently shaped. Given that she works in a low-pressure context for growth and revenue generation, Amy is afforded the space to approach her work in a way that aligns with her education-first approach.

Amy's conscious depiction of her motivations and commitment to quality education appears as more than simply lip service to these values. Her description of the ways in which she goes about marketing, recruiting, dealing with students on an everyday basis, and building capacity within her staff and district are all evidence of bringing these values into being. This commitment is clearly demonstrated by Amy right from the very beginning of her experience, as she describes it, with international students. She explains that in the beginning she did not have any prior IE or international students, and was not provided any specialized training to prepare her:

> [I was] asked if I'd take [an international] student and I was a Grade 5 teacher. So I took this student and it was just a dump and run program. It was awful. They [the district] just basically brought these kids in and said, 'here you go. Have a good time.' We saw no resource money, nothing.

This student was the first international student Amy's district had ever enrolled. They were without infrastructure or processes in place to support the student or the teacher. The lack of resources and support was a major issue for Amy, given that it conflicted with what she felt was necessary for delivering quality education. These deficiencies were, in Amy's thinking, entirely unacceptable and led her to voice her concerns in no uncertain terms to the district executive and the board: "At the end of my five months with this student, I wrote a letter to [the district] and the board that said basically everything wrong with the program [for the international student]. Then I said, here's how you can fix it." Her recommendations included equipment in the classroom to support the student and teacher (e.g., a computer with translation software), additional EA [Education Assistant] support in the classroom, and training for teachers and counsellors to better understand how to support the student and address any issues associated with studying in a foreign country.

Given that this was the first international student in her district, Amy was a pioneer in laying the groundwork for the IE program. She did not, however, work alone. She acknowledged that support from her superintendent was fundamental in making progress toward realizing the recommendations. In transitioning from her role as a classroom teacher to that of head administrator for the IE program, Amy has carried a focus on education program quality for international students. She has championed measures such as increased language and academic supports for international students within her district, as well as care for international students, which addresses their particular unique situations in the district and at the provincial level through the International Public

School Education Association (IPSEA). It is important to note that Amy does not strive for international students to have more support or better resources than domestic students, but a minimum level to allow them to succeed as with domestic students. She fits the description of a *policy entrepreneur* (Mintrom & Norman, 2009; Mintrom & Vergari, 1998), particularly in relation to promoting the cultural benefits of IE – a discussion I will revisit in greater detail in the section below.

Amy also describes a strong motivation to reinforce a student-first approach to IE in her staff and colleagues within the district. Her advocacy encompasses all students, both international and domestic, but given her location in the IE program, she has found herself arguing for the former in terms of responsibility and belonging. As an illustration of this, she describes a district meeting in which she was challenged by a member of the local teachers' union who declared, "we have to look after our Canadian kids first." Amy was taken aback at this comment, countering with, "these [international students] *are* our kids. They pay tuition, and our board policy is clear, they are ours."

This notion of claiming students is of interest given that, in the case of international students, Amy is referring to the emotional connection, encompassing the care that educators feel for children for whom they are responsible, as well as possibly the legal responsibility, intersecting with custodianship of international students, as described above. She provides the following examples:

> If they are in the hospital – we just had a girl who was rushed down from the ski hill – I had to spend time with her last week…because I'm the custodian. When you're the custodian for a number of students, that's a huge responsibility. So much so that with Immigration Canada we're

> seeing some issues because students are leaving our program after a year, going to Toronto or other, but I'm still on as custodian. It's becoming an issue…[and] it has a whole mess of legal ramifications that we're dealing with.

Amy also describes her sense of responsibility towards the students in terms of providing emotional-social support while they are living and studying in B.C. She offers situations from simply having a discussion with a student who is struggling, either academically or with adjusting to life in B.C., to seeking out additional support from counselling or medical professionals if the issues are more serious. Perhaps most poignantly, Amy expresses in no uncertain terms that she feels international students are equal to domestic students, not because they are 'buying' equality with their international student tuition fees, but because they are children for whom she feels responsibility as they have been left in her care.

Amy describes how she sees IE in her district not in economistic terms, but predominantly for the non-economic benefits it brings. She cites opportunities for intercultural engagement opened up for local students that they would otherwise not have access to as the primary benefit. This dimension of IE may not be immediately evident, particularly for individuals who live in more metropolitan areas of the province with a much more heterogeneous makeup. However, this same aspect of IE is also raised by David, who works in a similar district context – one that is smaller and quite far from the metro center. Like Amy, David's area of the province is relatively homogenous in terms of ethnic composition and domestic students in his area do not have the same opportunities for engaging with people from different cultures.

Amy is, however, well aware that not everyone is able to, or in some cases interested in, seeing IE programs through the lens of cultural benefit. She relays an incident of strong resistance that lasted a good part of a year from a teacher in her district. She explains,

> he targeted international students from the first day, any complaints he could make of them. He would allow Canadian kids to do certain things [such as be late for class], and if the international students thought they could do that, he would phone me and I'd have to be at his classroom. So we started to say to him, 'is that the way you treat the Canadians?' He'd get mad and say, 'there are different expectations for international students.'

Amy's first inclination in encountering this teacher was worry over how widespread this attitude might be with other teachers in her district. However, through subsequent discussions with teachers and administrators, Amy believed that this feeling toward international students was not widely held and she proposed the idea of undertaking an extensive program-wide review to determine how the program should proceed.

The course of action that Amy chose was to develop a program review to capture a range of stakeholder opinions (e.g., domestic and international students, educators, administrators, and parents) and determine how the program was perceived and where it faced challenges. Through the program review, Amy determined that the negative perceptions were not widespread, but that the program enjoyed overwhelming support: "we point-blank asked [domestic students], *do you like having international kids in your school?* It came out to 98% yes, with a thousand kids responding." At the same time, the review also revealed that Canadian students, although in favour of having international students in their schools and classrooms, lacked the understanding for how to engage with people from other cultures:

> we asked [domestic students] *do you hang out with international students?* [They said] 'I don't know how to because they speak their

> language with their friends. I don't know if they want me to talk to them…we want to hang out with them, but we don't know how.' It just opened all of our eyes that the Canadian kids were feeling insecure about how they approach international students…it was really interesting.

Amy's program review revealed an aspect of IE that is absent from discussions of economic impact: namely, the relationships and inevitable challenges that are raised in situations of cross-cultural engagement. However, these "rubbings," as Amy terms it, between cultures also provide great learning and growth opportunities particularly for students and communities in areas of the province with a less multicultural local demographic.

Another important aspect of the program review, on an individual level, was the effect it had on Amy propelling her to focus on intercultural engagement. She explains, "[the review] was my push. That is why I [began doing] interculturalization education right on campus in the schools." Her motivation to bridge the gap between domestic students and international students was always a part of Amy's approach to IE; however, the program review provided the type of evidence-based decision-making that encouraged her to implement her ideas on a much broader basis. She was also able to leverage the data from the program review to guarantee buy-in from the board and executive, as well as others in the district who were sceptical of her work.

As has been raised above, intricate to Amy's understandings of IE is the value of intercultural engagement for domestic students with the international students. With such a modestly sized program, revenue generation is not necessarily the driving force. She

holds that the real value in IE is in what the students can learn from each other – a perspective that is reflected in the student-first approach she espouses:

> I always tell [my staff] that we are here because of these students. Without them, none of us would be employed. Therefore, we want to meet [their] needs…and [make the experience] good for the kids…we will build a quality program, and maybe we won't have as many numbers [i.e., large international student population], but it will be a good program and kids will be taken care of.

The natural restrictions on program growth in her district, given the limitations on seats in classrooms and homestay spaces, very much shape how Amy sets her program goals. In other words, if there were more capacity to grow in the district, she might shift her focus more toward marketing and recruiting to increase international student numbers. However, without limited growth potential, Amy has placed focus on developing a student-first, educational program-quality focus.

Christine describes a very similar approach in her experiences with IE. She promotes a focus on educational quality within the IE program in her district and states, "I never focus on [revenue]. I'm an educator first, and I'm not coming [at IE] from a business [perspective]." In understanding why Christine and Amy might have a similar ethos toward IE, it is key to acknowledge both administrators had a very similar career trajectory, with over a decade of experience as classroom teachers before beginning work in IE. In addition, both administrators describe a similar belief that shifting more of their attention to marketing, recruiting, and other non-educational (i.e., business) aspects of IE would leave less time to ensure the quality of the educational experience for their students. This is an interesting admission given that critical education researchers have put forth a similar argument: namely that marketization discourse influences educators by

shifting their thinking away from educational concerns toward increasing competitiveness, profit, and efficiency.

Given her thinking outlined above, reconciling the business side of her responsibilities with her concern for education has also been a challenge for Christine. She explains that it is less about finding a balance and more about keeping one's priorities clear:

> Number one, [economics] cannot be the primary focus. Financial [considerations] cannot be the primary focus. That is the bonus that comes along with everything. You have to maintain that it is…a business within an educational scope. And so you have to understand that there's a business side to [IE], but your primary focus in every decision you make is based upon educationally-sound reasons…[however] you might have a different response if you're talking to a marketer, someone that's come through business [and now works in IE].

Christine's description of the positioning of IE within public education is again similar to Amy, acknowledging that the business is an inevitable part of the work. However, this is not the sole or even primary aim. The primary aim, for Christine, is delivering a strong educational program to international students and ensuring they have a good experience while in B.C. She does acknowledge that her experiences and perspectives on IE are not universal for all administrators. Other administrators, particularly those with a business background, might have different ways of thinking and take a different approach. However, education-first has always and continues to be her motivation.

Despite her strong feelings, Christine expresses an interesting opinion regarding succession planning for her role as she nears retirement. She suggests,

> once I leave this position, I think the district should hire differently. I think they should have an administrator that stays home and just deals with the administrative stuff. Then you have someone who is specifically

> responsible for the recruiting, the marketing, you know the branding [because], yeah, [the work is] just twofold.

Her description of the work being "twofold" again highlights the dualistic demands placed on administrators working in IE: meeting business-related responsibilities, while maintaining the delivery of a strong educational program. Christine also refers to the branding of programs – potentially a more strategically complex undertaking than simply promoting an IE program and one at which career educators may not be particularly knowledgeable. Branding may represent one of the areas where administrators either require additional training or must hire individuals with the type of specialized training and skills needed to successfully build a brand. As Christine notes above, currently the expectation, at least in her district, is that the head administrator fulfill both of these roles. However, in the best interest of the program, two individuals – one with a skillset in education administration and one with a skillset in business – may be optimal.

Another key aspect to emerge from my discussions with Christine is in relation to the backgrounds of IE administrators in B.C. public school districts. She explains that while the majority of IE administrators in B.C. have long-been like her, with backgrounds in teaching and in some cases education administration, more IE administrators with business backgrounds, and no teaching background, are joining the sector:

> Within [the IPSEA] membership, there are different people: [some] come from being an educator, [some] come from marketing, [another] is in business. [They bring] totally different perspectives in how you deal with international [education]. And the business people have to learn the education piece, whereas the education people have to learn the business piece. So it's interesting.

Her observations here point to a potentially emerging trend in how public school districts may be changing their approaches to IE where it was previously looked upon as an

educational endeavour with business considerations and may now be shifting to a predominantly business endeavour with education considerations. This observation again highlights the dualistic nature of IE and suggests there is not necessarily a single, generalizable way of viewing the sector. In some cases, there may be a stronger focus on the business side of IE, while in other cases educational considerations remain primary.

In terms of thinking about the international students, themselves, Christine emphasizes her concern for their potential vulnerability as minors living in a foreign culture, in many cases, without parental or other family support nearby. This perspective connotes a view of international students not as customers who are paying for a service, but as individuals and, moreover, as children who require care and attention. Thus, Christine chooses to describe her role as, first and foremost,

> [the] responsibility and supervision of students. To me that's all-encompassing because everything that we do [in IE], it's all of that. Number one is being custodian for the [international] kids. You just take on that responsibility as if you are the parent, and that's our lens every time.

As noted above, custodianship is an interesting aspect of the IE sector as it is a technical term and a requirement for a study permit from the Federal Government of Canada, while also entailing a responsibility for care of an international student. However, the details of the custodian's responsibilities toward the child are not clearly defined by the Federal government in their study permit guidelines, or by the Provincial government in any policy relating to international education. In Christine's case, she takes her role as custodian for international students in her program very seriously, describing it as her "key responsibility."

Shifting to a larger district context, Ben's responsibilities have changed over his career from his early days in IE where he had significant one-to-one contact with international students and was much more involved in supporting individual students and ensuring their care and safety, to his current role where he delegates much of that work to his staff. However, he echoes a similar sentiment to that of his other administrator colleagues stating, "the way that I view it is that international students should be treated in the same manner as local students." He clarifies this statement explaining that he does not feel the tuition fees paid by international students should offer them access to special privileges or additional resources, but to the same resources that domestic students have access to.

Ben also notes that from his experience in IE, he has encountered many instances where other individuals, within the school system (e.g., teachers, administrators, school and district staff) and outside of the school system, have held a differing perspective. This "anti-international" sentiment is particularly strong when international students are seen to be benefitting from resources or services not provided to domestic students. Ben offers the examples of dedicated international student counselling services, provided through the IE office and not generally school-based, and international student activities (e.g., tours to other parts of the province, weekend outdoor activities, such as hiking or swimming, and local tourist activities). He points out that, in his district, these services are funded out of revenues from the IE program and are crucial to allow international students to succeed in their studies in B.C. The appearance of inequality between international and domestic students based on these services that are exclusively for international students is nonetheless understandable from Ben's perspective: "We have

these departments [e.g., counselling, excursions/activities] to fill in the gaps [for international students]…I think that sets a difficult orientation for people [looking at] the public system." He also notes that he has worked, and continues to work, toward addressing misconceptions of inequality by providing details of how the programs are funded and what benefits they deliver.

In a related point, Ben comments on a misconception that funding for international student services could or should simply be reallocated to support domestic students. He explains that removing these services would have two potential negative consequences. Firstly, the likelihood of international students succeeding in B.C. schools would decline given that international student counsellors better understand what these students require to complete their programs of study, what additional tutoring or language-support resources are available, and what challenges international students face in terms of acculturation and adjusting to their new surroundings. Secondly, without these services, international students may be more likely to choose another jurisdiction in which to study, if those other jurisdictions are providing a wider range of services. A decrease in the number of international students would, of course, lead to a loss of revenue for the district and reallocation of the funds to support domestic students would not be possible.

As Ben and the other administrators in this study explain, the IE programs in their districts do not receive operating funding from the districts, but rather the other way around: generally, a portion of the IE program revenue does go back into district funding to support programs or additional resources that domestic students do benefit from.

Although Ben is reluctant to state that this is the case for all IE programs in the province, he notes that this is the case for many of the programs. This unique relationship – one in which the IE program contributes financial benefit for the district – is rare in public schools districts and, as such, is not well-understood in Ben's opinion. The financial implications of IE programs are an area of controversy and one that I revisit in section 5.3.2 below.

In terms of balancing the business within education duality, David is the administrator who appears the most comfortable. Like the other administrators in the study, David is a career educator with little business experience or training. However, he has taken it upon himself to enhance his understandings of marketing and business planning in the interests of furthering the IE program in his district, despite the challenge of being in a rural part of the province. In comparison, Amy, who also works in a rural district, has taken a different approach promoting the benefits of the program within her district and community and placing less emphasis on marketing. David initiated his commitment to learning better business practices after his initial experience at his first IE student recruitment fair abroad. He explains,

> the first fair I went to in Japan, my booth was the absolute worst…When I first started, I didn't realize that I probably wasn't going to generate a lot of kids from [fairs abroad]. That I was going to have to go and do another follow-up trip, follow up with agents and do all those things. I kind of thought I was just going to show up [and] all these kids are going to jump in [and sign up], and that's what it was… [but] you're going to have to do two or three more visits before you're really going to generate any kids…those kinds of things, which I didn't know. Nobody really kind of explained it to me. The types of things that when you're going to a fair you need to have, like your promotional materials, your website…[a plan for] how are you going to market your district, those types of things.

This experience was decisive in how it influenced his understandings of IE and was the impetus for him to seek out better business practices. Of note, David's program is also the most recently launched in comparison to the other administrators in this study. He adopted the program at a stage where he was working to gain a foothold and establish the program, while Amy, Ben, and Christine already enjoyed relatively stable international student populations in their districts.

After his first experience at the IE fair abroad, David describes a period of self-reflection where he determined a need to improve his business acumen. He felt this type of specific expertise did not exist within the school district, where marketing was not an activity regularly practiced, so he sought out a friend from the local area who worked in this field in private business:

> I went to one of my friends in sales, and spent some time with him, had him review my [promotional materials]…and [asked] how do I package it? How do I sell [this town]? What types of things do I need to do?

Taking advice from his friend, as well as making other connections in the local business community to gather input, David began researching what was being done in other districts and improving his materials. He describes his approach now as one of continuous improvement: "Whenever I'm out now [at IE fairs], I walk around and take pictures of things that I see that people [i.e. other IE programs] have done that are good to make sure I can add to our [promotional materials]." David also developed a business plan with strategic aims for his program that maps out potential growth markets to target in coming years, as well as resourcing and infrastructural enhancements that may make his small district more attractive to international students.

David's decision to increase his business knowledge and skills through mentoring and business planning are not reflected in my discussions with other IE administrators. The other administrators express much more aversion to the business side of IE as a necessary evil rather than as an area to focus upon. It is possible that David's approach is partially attributable to timing in that he took over a fledgling program, potentially in danger of being closed down by the district if they were not able to show even modest program growth. As noted, the other administrators all have programs that are healthy and not aimed at growth. There is less incentive for them to improve their business practices to survive.

Another consideration may also be David's personality as a self-starter, always looking to improve his skills in education or in business. Looking back to his university experience, David took every opportunity, including summer studies, to make himself more marketable and ensure he would be able to find work as a teacher. This particular point of divergence between David and his fellow administrators supports a view of IE as a heterogeneous sector in which individuals in key positions, such as program head, may significantly influence how programs are shaped and purposed.

It is also important to note that, despite working to improve his business skills, David does not necessarily privilege the economics of IE to the detriment of educational value. He simply places more emphasis on this area than some of his colleagues in IE administration. David relays a recent discussion with his superintendent in which he emphasized, "if the [School] Board asks what's the number one goal of our [IE]

program…it's interculturalization." In promoting interculturalization within his district, David has worked closely with administrators in other districts in the province, including Amy. Although he explains that this initiative is still in its early stages, David comments on the clear benefits he sees in promoting aspects of the IE program other than the economic benefits. He notes that interculturalization may present a discursive tool with which he is better able to promote the program and help to integrate international students within the local community.

As a stark contrast to David, Evan presents little to no concern with improving his business practices or more successfully marketing his program. As noted above, Evan's school is faith-based and despite having an active IE program, the economic benefits of IE have never been the school's or Evan's priority. In addition, Evan's school has tuition fees for domestic students, so there is less distinction between domestic and international students – although it should be noted that international student tuition fees are considerably higher than domestic tuition fees. In any case, the contradiction of IE being a market-driven, for-profit endeavour within an educational context is less pronounced in the independent school context. Despite this context, Evan notes that economic considerations have constituted a minimal part of his experience in the school, and as an extension, with IE:

> [no] marketing…we haven't built the [IE] program by going to fairs. We don't generally go to fairs. I know that some schools do. I've been to one in Seoul. I didn't think it was particularly effective. And going means you've got to travel a lot and pay lots of money for a table. So I've heard both good and bad about that…[we recruit] people that already knew about our school from somebody else [e.g., a previous student], so it was word of mouth. The reputation of the program carries, people are happy, that translates into them telling their friends about it and then us getting

> applications, which is pretty great. I like getting it that way because you don't have much to sell anymore, right? Whereas if I'm at those fairs, you're in about like 80 competitors around you and I always think, why would somebody want to come to my little school?

With his participation in a single IE fair, Evan demonstrates that he is aware of the business side of the work. However, his particular context allows him to avoid much of the expectation to market and compete for international students. Moreover, in listening to Evan describe his experience in IE, the program at his school might best be considered a *nice-to-have* rather than a *need-to-have* in terms of the economic benefits it contributes. Thus, the influence of marketization on his context is relatively minimal.

One aspect of Evan's school context that is noteworthy is that the capacity exists for increasing the number of international students. This is a distinction from many school districts that no longer have the ability to expand their programs, due to lack of capacity in either schools or homestay homes. However, without pressure from the school authority or senior leadership to increase numbers, Evan is able to maintain the status quo and avoid the need to step up his marketing efforts. In our discussions, when presented with the hypothetical scenario of being asked by his school senior management or school authority to increase international student enrolment, he states in no uncertain terms,

> I would push back. That would be a big deal for me because then you're saying, the only reason we're doing this, it's just about money. You just want to fill the place up, and I think that's wrong. I think we're bigger than that.

In his final statement, Evan makes clear his opposition to an education-for-profit model. His operating assumption is that the IE program is an extension of the domestic student program, in other words, in place to spread the beliefs of his particular faith. To alter this aim and attempt to generate profit from the IE program would be, as he clearly states,

"wrong." In characterizing his long years of experience at the school, Evan is also confident that his opinion is not isolated and would be supported by his colleagues and school community.

Another area in which Evan's approach to education, in general, and to the mission of his school, in particular, is clearly illustrated is with his feelings toward international students and parents. Within a marketized climate, international students and parents are positioned as customers dictating demand, while the school provides supply. However, this type of instrumental relationship is unrelated to Evan's thinking. In terms of setting tuition fees for international students, he explains:

> I don't think it's fair to gouge people because some of those families, they work hard for it. Yeah, for some of them it's a drop in the bucket, but for some of them they do work hard for it and I think, no, I don't think I want to take advantage of a different culture and of a certain class of people...I don't care how rich they are, I just don't want to do that. And I get to say that.

Evan is also careful to put in place a policy of equality between students, international and domestic, regardless of which country they are from and of their socioeconomic status. As he notes, he has been given virtually complete control over the IE program at his school, including recruitment, enrolment, student support and discipline, and policy design, and in some cases, even arbitrary policy ratification. With this power, Evan states that his aim is to create the best possible experience for international students at his school out of compassion and professional pride, not for the purpose of improving his competitive advantage or bowing to market pressures.

Reconciling Personal Values Within Professional Responsibilities

For some of the administrators, they describe not simply a prioritization on education in their work, but a strong aversion to the work of marketing and recruiting. As noted, the background of these five administrators – all beginning as classroom teachers and working as lifelong educators – may go some way in explaining a student-first approach and limitations in their business knowledge and experience. However, it does not necessarily explain feelings of reluctance, and in some cases outright disdain, toward the work of marketing and recruiting for their IE programs. These negative feelings toward the business of IE may be partially attributable to a personal stance taken by an individual; however, there may also be a reflection of the deeper contention between the business and education sides of IE.

Within the group of administrators I interviewed, Ben voices the strongest feelings of negativity toward the business responsibilities entailed in IE. For example, at one point in our discussion, Ben uses the term "mature markets" to describe countries that have long been active in international education, but then immediately retracts his statement saying, "I hate using the term markets – [I prefer] mature *regions*." He also explains that when he goes abroad to international student fairs, "I never call it recruiting or promoting, because that's not actually what I do…I think parents and agents, they know right away if you're being straight up with them. They know a sales person versus an educator." Of note, Ben states that he does not think of his work as recruiting or promoting. However, his role with the IE program in his district requires him to go abroad, attend IE fairs, and visit international agents. In other words, Ben participates in work that is commonly

understood as the marketing and recruiting function within IE, despite how he chooses to individually think of the work.

One notable point within Ben's description above is how he positions the work of an educator in opposition to the work of a salesperson, stating, "[t]hey know a sales person versus an educator." He objects to the characterization of IE as a business and of IE administrators as primarily recruiters of international students. Additionally, he notes that he tries to be "straight up with" prospective international students and parents. His choice of wording connotes that within IE, Ben feels that not all recruiters are honest with international students and parents. Perhaps that some recruiters are more interested in securing the tuition fees than ensuring the student will have a good educational experience. He argues that fit with a particular district and educational program is more important than the revenue from the tuition fees. Ben's privileging of the fit of the educational program echoes the sentiments of his fellow administrators Amy, Christine, and Evan as outlined above.

Somewhat ironically, Ben's first role in IE with his district was specifically focused on the marketing of the program and the recruitment of international students. He notes that although he enjoyed working with the students, he was never comfortable being associated with the market-oriented functions of the role:

> I was called the Marketing and Student Support Services Coordinator, which I hated, having the term 'marketing' in my title, because I really - as much as there's this narrative around us going and selling and promoting our programs, when I go out and about I do everything I can to avoid that because I don't think talking about education is like selling a car…If someone wants me to start a [sales pitch], I actually get irritated

> because there is no pitch. It's like, okay, if it's a one-on-one…I have my presentation, based on the audience [but] each one's different. I don't have an elevator speech. I refuse to do that.

As above, Ben reiterates his aversion to the label of "marketer" to describe his work. He stresses the fact that from his understanding, IE is also not something that can be captured with student numbers and revenues. For him, when he goes abroad, it is about matching the right students with his district and the broader community, so there are benefits for everyone.

Ben directly references the positioning of IE as a business within education, reiterating his belief that IE must be about education and not about bowing to the demands of market, which lead to diminishing IE as an educational endeavour:

> I don't come from a business background, and I don't really look at it [IE] as a business because you're not really out there selling cars, right? School districts are not set up as businesses, you know…I know some people do [think that districts can be businesses]. They're like, this is a business and we're in the business of generating revenue for the school district and it is what it is. But I don't actually view it that way. I've never taken that position.

In articulating his perspective on IE, Ben clearly distances himself from those people who approach IE as a business. In his opinion, this approach is, in some cases, detrimental to the educational quality of the program and the experience for international students. Ben is also distinguishing himself from some of his fellow administrators, such as David, who do not necessarily privilege the business side of IE, but have made more of an effort to integrate business practices into their work. Again, Ben's stance may be partially attributable to individual disposition in that Ben is simply not a person who is willing to compromise his beliefs as an educator for the demands of IE as a business. Additionally, the district context in which Ben works – one in which the IE program has a long history

and enjoys stability with little pressure to increase student numbers or revenues – affords him the latitude to prioritize his beliefs over and above the demands of the market.

Christine is another administrator who, although less overt in her opposition to the business requirements than Ben, still resists positioning her district's IE program as a pure revenue-generating practice. In messaging to her district executive, Christine explains, "I've said to them, I can fill our program and it can be all Chinese [students], for revenue…but it's not what I want. It's important for us to keep that diversity in there." Diversity is an aspect of IE programs that many districts have taken up as an important measure. Diversity may be understood from a number of different perspectives. Within an economistic framing, program diversity may protect against market shocks, where an overreliance upon international students from a single country or region could debilitate an IE program. An example of this can be found in the Saudi government's public dispute with the Canadian federal government in 2018 resulting in a withdrawal of Saudi international students studying in Canada back to their home country (Remiorz, 2018). Although the Saudi student withdrawal was much more impactful for the post-secondary sector in Canada, the incident served as an example of how quickly and unexpectedly a shock to the sector is possible. The Saudi incident is also an example of how closely tied IE is to political machinations on a global scale – a relationship that is discussed below in section 5.2.2.2.

The other perspective on diversity, and the one that is raised more readily by the administrators in the study, is the value of having international students from many

different areas of the world in B.C. schools and communities to bring different perspectives and backgrounds and enrich intercultural engagement. Although all of the district administrators acknowledge the benefit of insulating their programs from overreliance upon a single source country, their focus is on the cultural value of diversification. It should be noted that this diversification approach does not appear to be a universally-held belief for all districts in the province. Although the four district administrators in this study describe their efforts to diversify in their own IE programs, they offer the observation that other districts in the province remain heavily reliant upon one or two source countries.

The ways in which Ben, Christine, and other administrators approach the business requirements of IE highlights a reluctance to prioritize business interests over the educational integrity of their programs. Districts also seem hesitant to shift their staffing practices, as evidenced by the lack of marketing and sales specialists employed in IE roles in B.C. districts, to improve business outcomes. The root of this hesitancy may simply be a slow evolution that will eventually see districts fill administrative positions in IE with trained business professionals – as recommended, at least in part, by Christine in her district to replace her upon retirement. Alternatively, this hesitancy may be a further illustration of how the business of IE does fit well within the school district context, and one that may not be fully resolvable given their mandate for the delivery of public education.

As an illustration of the challenges of IE to date, Ben suggests that within his district IE still remains outside of many people's thinking regarding what constitutes core district business. This is significant given that the IE program in his district is one of the oldest in the province having been established over 20 years ago. Although the profile of the program has risen within the district and is well-understood and supported by some members of the district executive, Ben feels it has remained an enigma for many educators and much of the general public. However, through his efforts to promote the benefits of the program, focusing on the cultural value as opposed to the economic value, there has been progress:

> We [IE] are unique and we are different [than other departments in the district], but I want us to become more a part of the day-to-day [so] I go to all these meetings [both district executive and public board meetings] and nobody looks at me like, 'oh, that's the weirdo from International [Education].

Ben's choice of descriptors for IE, *unique* and *different*, are significant given that it provides insight into how he understands IE. He notes that there are preconceptions of IE that are noticeable as soon as he walks into a meeting. This raises a question of whether this positioning – in other words, IE as little understood and outside of mainstream district business – is a reflection of external perceptions, or if it is partially or predominantly within the perceptions of IE administrators who *feel* as though they are outside of the mainstream. As noted, all five administrators who participated in this study are career educators. None were familiar with IE before they began working in this area. Perhaps there is some level of discontinuity with their previous roles and understandings of what education is and should be that contributes to a lingering sense of difference and being outsiders within their district organizations. For some administrators, this appears

to lead to establishing connections with colleagues outside of their district contexts through policy networks.

Myths and Realities of Marketization Within IE

Competition is an aspect of marketization of education that has been raised in education policy research. Examples of increasing competition between schools or school districts presumptively necessitates a greater focus on marketing and public image, by means of attractive brochures or sales videos (DiMartino & Jessen, 2014), in some cases, perhaps over and above what could be considered *substance* (e.g., educational quality, student support). However, the administrators in this group suggest little influence from competition between districts, at least for the specific district contexts in which they work. They do, however, acknowledge that competition is a consideration for some other districts in the province where they have more pressure from their board or executive for revenue generation, and more competition to fill seats in large IE programs.

One specific practice that appears to contradict suggestions of a competitive market context for IE is the administrators' apparent willingness to direct international students to other B.C. districts with the best of interests of the student, and not their own district, in mind. For example, Christine presents the following illustration:

> I had an email about sailing from Italy and the student wants to get into laser racing. And I said, you know what, we have that here, but I've never been involved with sailing, so I honestly don't know [about the program]. And I know that this is the girl's passion, so she's looking at [another district, too]. [I said], here's the website, got her to do a bit of research because I can't promise anything, but maybe [another district] is better because it's [program is] bigger.

Ben echoes this sentiment, particularly when speaking with international students and their families who are looking for information about study in B.C.: "I actually spend a lot of time saying, well, you know, if you want this, you should go to this [other] district. If you want this, you should come to [our district]…that's the approach I take." Although these administrators are self-reporting and thus the reports are not possible to corroborate, these depictions are consistent with the overall ethos toward their work in IE and collaboration with other administrators in the IE sector.

On the surface, this practice is in opposition to aims of maximizing students recruited and tuition revenues generated for one's own district. However, there are alternative explanations possible that take a less altruistic view of the administrators' actions. For example, it may be that some administrators provide information about other districts when there is little hope the student will actually enrol in their district. A scenario for this situation may be when the district does not have the type of program a student is looking for. Alternatively, it is possible that administrators refer students to other districts when their own district is at or near capacity. In the case of Ben's district, it enjoys a high-profile, in-demand location that allows it to consistently maintain student enrolment numbers. In this context, the ability to refer prospective students to other districts may have little to no impact on Ben's district. In cases where there is more pressure to secure enrolment and generate revenue, administrators may be less inclined to recommend another district.

From the independent school context, Evan illustrated a similar willingness to direct students to rival independent schools when he feels his own school would not be able to meet the needs of the student. Although a somewhat unique situation, he provides the following example of personal relationships that populate his independent school context:

> the principal at [a nearby school] used to be a teacher in our school. The principal [at another school in the area] is my nephew, and I want to help their schools. I want to help their programs. I wanted to do that - I don't think we should be hogging all the good [international] kids, right?

Evan's stance is perhaps unsurprising given that he professes an aversion to competition and an altruistic ethos, which is at the root of his faith, and appears to shape both his personal and professional lives. As another example, Evan recently directed two international students to another school in the area with the thinking that that school would be better able to provide a program of interest for them. Evan then explains that the students have turned out to be very high achievers, who have contributed greatly to the other school in extracurricular activities. He admits, "I kind of shot myself in the foot, that time." However, he insists the outcome is still a success, given that the students are having a good experience studying in B.C. – which, he states, is ultimately his end goal.

If the ways in which the administrators portray their experiences are to be taken at face value – in other words, competition is not a consideration – then it is possible that the IE sector operates in a manner contradictory to what may be expected from a marketized education policy climate. This is not to argue that IE is entirely free of market influence, but perhaps the influence is more subtle, and the context more complex, than can be captured by a single generalization. Speaking to this potential understanding, Christine suggests:

> [I] understand that I'm only as strong as the weakest link in B.C. All it's going to take is one program to not live up to a standard, and we're all going to be painted with the same brush. And it's a team thing, the only way that I can remain strong is if the other members stay strong. And I think that's so important…I don't have a problem if people call me [for advice]. I'm happy to share with what I know, there's no secrets for me because it's two-fold: when I need something, I go to those people and they're happy to share with me. Because I don't know it all, they don't know it all. We're all just working our way through this as best we can, and we're really relying on each other.

From the descriptions of the administrators, there are undeniably districts and individual recruiters who experience higher pressure working conditions and are less inclined to work in a collaborative manner with other districts. However, Christine's depiction of IE in B.C. highlights experiences that do not appear to reflect a highly marketized education climate.

David, also representing a smaller district like Amy's, relays positive experiences in both receiving mentorship from colleagues in larger districts when he was trying to get his program off the ground, and providing mentorship for other smaller districts to share the lessons he has learned. David notes that when he first entered the IE sector, there was less collaboration between districts. However, this trend has shifted and the current climate is extremely collegial and positive: "Everyone has the same goals, and everyone's looking in the same direction [for future planning], so it's good." Another key aspect of David's relationships is reaching out for support from larger districts for issues (e.g., legal matters, foreign government relations) that he and his small staff are not well-suited to handle: "over the [holiday] break, one of my [international students] got into a car accident. So I called one of the big districts and said, 'here's what I've done, is there

anything I've missed?'" The other district was then able to provide support for David that he otherwise would not have been aware of.

In a highly competitive market-driven climate, these types of collaborative relationships would appear to contradict what might be expected. Why would larger districts, with greater staffing and financial resources, provide support to smaller districts that are unable to compete with them? Why wouldn't the larger districts simply allow the smaller districts to fail and cease to operate, thereby reducing the amount of competitors within the province and, likely, increasing the number of international students they might recruit? In this way, it seems that the IE sector is operating less like a marketized endeavour and more like other areas of school district business – e.g., financial services, educational services, information technology, human resources.

In more well-recognized areas of district business, such as Human Resources and Educational Programming, it is not uncommon to hold province-wide meetings, often led by the B.C. School Superintendents Association or the Ministry of Education, that bring together representatives from the districts to collaborate and share information on current issues or policy changes. An example would be a meeting of heads of educational services or instruction to discuss changes to the provincial curriculum that would affect all districts. This type of meeting would be for informational purposes and likely aim at sharing ideas for successfully integrating the changes. These instances are not competitive environments. The districts are provincially funded, alleviating financial competition, and they are responsible only for students within their catchment

boundaries, alleviating recruitment competition. In all areas of public school district business, with the exception of IE, there is no competition between districts and collaboration is neither unexpected nor strained: it is the usual operating context. For IE administrators and their staff, predominantly with teaching and administrative backgrounds in the public school system, bringing these expectations to the work of IE may still seem natural. These individuals simply may not have developed the disposition, or embodied experience (Bengtsson, 2013), necessary to engage in competition and perform as market-driven actors.

Although the administrators in this study experience relatively little pressure to increase recruitment and generate IE revenue, this is not to say that competition does not exist in the provincial IE sector. The absence of pressure may relate directly to the particular district context administrators find themselves in. Although she does not work in this type of environment, Amy describes the experience of her colleague from a larger urban district:

> [She] was telling me she gets pressure all the time – 'how much money can you bring in next year' is often the topic that starts a [board] meeting, so she feels great pressure. A lot of them do in the big districts. They feel great pressure to maintain that money [coming in]…and some of them are brilliant recruiters, but a lot of pressure on them.

Clearly this is a different type of experience than that of the administrators from the current study describe – one with internal pressure from their board, as well as external in terms of pressure on recruitment numbers as the field becomes increasingly crowded with competitor jurisdictions from around the world.

David comments briefly on competition from other English-speaking jurisdictions outside of Canada that draw international students from the same global pool as B.C. school districts and independent schools. He notes that the same types of collaborative relationships that exist with B.C. districts are difficult to establish with individuals from other jurisdictions:

> [I] don't really [have any relationships with other jurisdictions]. The country stuff is pretty separated and still fairly competitive. People will kind of hide their [strategies]. Unless you develop a personal relationship with somebody, they are not going to tell you their market secrets because you're going to cut into their market share. Plus, some people are on commission [for] how many students they get.

This last revelation speaks to a different recruiting climate than what the administrators shared in our discussions, or what I have gleaned working alongside the districts in my role with the Ministry.

Another aspect of marketization in public education that not well-received by this group of administrators is in regards to school rankings. These rankings are seen as a form of commodifying education to facilitate greater consumer (i.e., parent and student) choice (Ball, 2012; Raptis, 2012). In the B.C. context, the validity and effects of school rankings have been a subject of debate, with supporters lauding the rankings for enhancing competition and providing a resource for students and parents to base their schooling decision upon, while detractors cite the rankings as exacerbating inequalities and penalizing schools and districts that have fewer resources and are located in less socioeconomically privileged areas.

School rankings come into relevance in IE given that the majority of international students in B.C. K-12 districts and independent schools are from Asian countries, where comparative tables for schools, K-12 and post-secondary, are a valued and expected resource available to students and parents. Thus, the B.C. school rankings, published by the Fraser Institute (The Fraser Institute, 2018), come up in discussions between B.C. IE administrators and prospective students and parents thinking of studying in B.C. Thus, this aspect of marketization in education is relevant for IE. In fact, in my discussions with the administrators, two administrators reference the school rankings as part of the landscape when dealing with prospective students and parents.

Christine is one of the administrators who speaks specifically to the issue of school rankings in her experiences of IE. She opines that although the school rankings provide a type of information easily understandable, particularly for international parents who are looking for the best education possible for their children, the rankings also mask many of the complex aspects that make up a quality educational experience. Reliance upon these rankings effectively circumvents the expertise of B.C. recruiters who have intimate knowledge of their district and may be best positioned to match an international student with a school placement that will allow them to succeed:

> I think how people will look at [one school] as a school that is not as good as [another higher-ranked school]. And I think, what's the difference? It's really the culture of the kids. They are loving kids, you know, and they do so well and they exceed in so many different things. So I wonder where that mentality comes from. It's interesting now because I kind of fight for [the lower-ranked school] in terms of the support that my kids - especially for ESL - they get tons of great support there and teachers are accommodating and make so many changes. Yet, families don't recognize this because the bright kids want to be at [the higher-ranked school] where there's less support. So it's frustrating to say,

> this is where you should be and your kids are going to excel because of that extra support. [But] no, they won't hear it, and I struggle with that.

This aspect of competition between schools and the influence on international families choosing schools for their children is clearly disturbing to Christine, effectively disempowering her and delegitimizing her professional knowledge.

Christine's views on school rankings parallel publicly-voiced concerns over their validity, particularly since the rankings in B.C. are generated by a private organization with a clear political agenda guiding their work (Raptis, 2012; P. T. Webb, 2011). Her perspective is also interesting given that she is in effect going against the wishes of the client, who want the highest ranked school, and exerting her own opinions for what will deliver the best educational experience for the student. She later notes that in many cases, international parents remain insistent upon the higher-ranked schools as their school of preference, and when that school is unavailable (e.g., at capacity for international enrolment), they chose to attend another district or jurisdiction. In these situations, Christine maintains her vigilance for what is in the best interest of student success (e.g., better ESL support in the classroom), rather than simply acquiescing to consumer demand. Her experiences reveal a further contradiction with what might be expected from a policy actor in a marketized climate.

The other administrator who describes school rankings within his experience of IE is Evan. Typically, independent schools benefit from the B.C. school rankings finishing higher than public schools. As an example, in the 2016/17 school rankings, only one public secondary school finished in the top 20 of the province, with the other 19 places

held by independent schools (The Fraser Institute, 2018). However, Evan is not swayed in his strong opinions toward the rankings:

> international students, in some cases, the parents…are just looking to get the [school] rankings, strictly the rankings. I think we slid from [previous year ranking] to [current year ranking], and my Chinese agent is kind of concerned about that. Part of [the agent's] job is to tell people the rankings are stupid and here's why they're stupid. Tough, but an important message to get across…That whole [rankings] thing just drives me crazy.

Despite a recent fall in the rankings, Evan's school remains in the middle of the table for the city in which they place above many of the public secondary schools. Prior to the most recent year, his school was in the top five for local secondary schools. Nonetheless, his view of the school rankings is clearly less than positive. Like Christine, Evan explains that the rankings are not able to provide a nuanced impression of a school and may not be a good fit for international students. He far prefers to meet the students and parents, when possible, to determine if his school will be a good match and present the best environment to help the students succeed. Once again, like Christine, he opines that he is more than comfortable making a determination that keeps the best interests of the student's educational experience in mind, even if this means that the student ultimately ends up not enrolling at his school.

5.1.2 Panel One Summary

In this section, I examined how the administrators understand IE within the B.C. public education context. Conflict between the education context of K-12 public education and the business requirements of IE emerges as a dominant theme. The administrators describe the challenges of adjusting to the new context of IE on a global scale,

specifically in terms of IE within a global *marketplace*, while remaining true to the education values and aims they all brought with them from their former positions as educators and education administrators in non-marketized areas of K-12 education. They also note that often the public perception, as well as that of their colleagues within their district, fails to account for the intricacies of the IE sector, viewing IE as a purely economically-motivated undertaking with little consideration for educational values. In their experiences, this perception is skewed toward the economic and away from other potential understandings of IE.

The administrators relate through their description that the pressures of a marketized education policy climate are not universal in that the local context and the disposition of the individual administrator may dictate how market-orientations are acknowledged (or sublimated) and addressed. In other words, there is not the generalized imperative to focus solely on marketing and recruiting for the purpose of increasing international student populations and increasing revenues. Administrators are able to, depending on their context, relationships with board and executives, and individual values, shape IE within their districts to a large extent. This recognition also acknowledges that B.C. school district contexts are not homogenous – a fact that may seem obvious, but is often forgotten in the discursive shaping of the IE sector in economistic terms.

For the individual administrators in this study, collaboration with fellow administrators in other districts is also a primary aspect of their experiences and understandings of IE. Collaboration is identified in terms of the sharing of best practices for policy

interpretation and policy making, as well as in the areas of marketing and recruitment. The types of collegial relationships that the administrators describe appear to run counter to what is dictated by a marketized policy context. This finding may raise questions regarding the generalizability of the assumptions associated with marketization for the experiences of education policy actors. However, there is also potential that the collegial relationships described by the administrators are in some manners strategic to mitigate the effects of competition. In other words, these relationships may be forged not simply out of collegiality, but out of self-interest for strengthening one's relative position to competitors in an effort to disarm in some cases stronger competitors (particularly with relations between larger districts and smaller districts) from overwhelming them.

5.2 Panel Two - Contexts

In this section, I utilize the policy enactment analytic (Braun et al., 2011) as a heuristic to conceptualize the complex assemblage of policy spaces that the administrators encounter. In undertaking this discussion, it is important to recognize that policy enactment is a process. Thus, the contexts in which enactment takes place should be viewed as dynamic spaces that evolve as these processes play out, rather than as static environments and relationships.

In the second part of this section, I invoke the concept of *embodied experience* (Bengtsson, 2013) to draw potential insights into the enactment of MOEPs and to reflect upon the place of individual experience within the policy enactment analytic. Individual experience is acknowledged within the professional context of Braun et al.'s (2011)

analytic. However, these researchers delimit experience in the analytic to specific policies or relationships with professional colleagues in the work (i.e., educational institution) context. They do not consider life experiences from childhood and the potential impact of sedimented understanding. In an effort to expand the scope and sensitivity of the analytic for unpacking policy enactment, I present the findings from some of the IE education administrators who share their early life experiences and descriptions of how those experiences may hold relevance for their current worlds.

5.2.1 Experiences of Policy Contexts

The experiences of policy contexts are significant with this particular phenomenon given the ways in which the local, provincial, national, international, and global policy spaces interact and overlap. Additionally, with IE being a relatively new emergence, administrators experience the continual shifting of these spaces as a challenge. The four contexts delineated in the policy enactment analytic – situated, material, external, and professional – are helpful in terms of making sense of the complex policy spaces of IE.

Situated Context

Situated context within the policy enactment analytic is intended to include geographic location, in terms of community size (kms^2) and population, as well as socio-cultural homogeneity, emerge as important considerations for how IE programs are shaped and how administrators experience these programs. For administrators working in or in close proximity to the urban center of the province, there is a natural attraction for international students who demonstrate a marked preference for these areas (Illuminate Consulting

Group, 2016). For administrators working in rural areas, attempting to overcome negative perceptions of smaller towns (e.g., boring, lonely) by reframing these preconceptions is a key aspect of their work.

Over 80% of international students in the province choose to study in the Lower Mainland area (Kunin, 2017) drawn by the global reputation of Vancouver as a world-class city and all that big-city living offers. Ben acknowledges that geography is important for IE explaining, "[our district] is doing reasonably well in a B.C. context because we've got a good location…it sells itself." He is in the enviable position where the reputation of his community is so strong within the global international education sector that there is less need to promote and market extensively to ensure international student enrolment. His experience with the situated context of the district is extremely positive and creates affordance in terms of relaxing pressures to compete with other jurisdictions.

In Christine's case, she also benefits from geographic location and emphasizes location in promoting her program:

> I talk about our location and that's a huge selling point I think on our behalf. Because I try to say we're not too big and we're not too small. So we're kind of a community where kids can have everything from a big city, but as a parent, thinking, I don't really want my student in the middle of [a Metropolitan city]…we have that [too].

Christine's strategic promotion of geographic location emphasizes the critical place of situated context in how administrators experience IE. Obviously, geographic location is not a factor that one can alter and it raises the question of inherent inequality between

districts in terms of ability to compete on a level playing field for attracting international students (Fallon & Poole, 2014).

Amy, working in a smaller district context, acknowledges the geographic limitations on IE programs. However, she also notes that her district's geography can work to her advantage. She notes, " because I'm distant, physically distant [from the center of IE in the province], I could stay away from competition…before, I didn't understand the dynamics of the [competition between districts]. I didn't understand the competitive climate…[but] I sure learned quickly." Thus, in some ways, Amy experiences her geographic location as an advantage facing less pressure to grow the program and generate revenue, and being able to stay away from the district-to-district competition within the province. In addition, Amy has attempted to turn her rural location into a strategic marketing advantage by identifying international students who are looking for the type of experience her district offers and will fit well with her community:

> for us, the [students] that we get, they want small. They want to know they have lots of attention and are not forced to hang out with a lot of [students from their culture]. [Many students] also like the climate [i.e., weather] because it's not that different [from their home country].

This strategy is a key aspect of Amy's work and of her orientation toward IE highlighting the importance of geography for her experience.

David's school district shares similar features to Amy's, being relatively small and far from the metropolitan center of the province. David is also keenly aware that his district will only appeal to a select group of international students who are looking for this particular experience and highlights the benefits of his district location:

> I generally market [our district] on being small, relatively safe, [and] it's easy to get around. When I talk to parents, I say when parents come to visit they like it because it's small and safe, and not a lot of distractions because you're paying a lot of money for your kids to come here and study.

David notes that these qualities resonate with some international student parents and international agents concerned about the well-being and safety of their children while they study internationally.

David's insight into this aspect of, what is essentially, consumer demand raises an aspect of IE that is sometimes lost within marketized discourse: K-12 international students, under the age of majority (19 years of age in B.C.), are children coming great distances often without a family member to accompany them and entering a foreign culture faced with the pressures to perform academically in a foreign language. Care and safety of young children would, presumably, be first and foremost over and above considerations such as tuition fee prices, rigour of academic program, or potential post-secondary pathways. However, external perceptions of IE (i.e., outside of educators working in this particular sector), which are perhaps driven by economistic framings from media, do not always acknowledge this reality. Age and maturity of the international students is also a significant distinction between the K-12 and post-secondary levels.

For David, emphasizing that his district is small and safe is specifically designed to appeal to international parents and is clearly strategic to draw a particular customer niche. David notes that this strategy has been successful in recruiting students and growing his

program. The situated context of geography and demography are a constraint, but not to the extent that he is unable to run a viable IE program in the district.

In some cases, geography of a school jurisdiction is linked to larger external forces that may impact how IE programs emerge. For example, external economic forces can be important for IE programs in rural areas that are largely dependent on natural resource production. David raises the example that when the local economy is strong, directly linked to forestry and mining activities, this has affected a shift in the ethnic composition of the population: "Our community was pretty white [Caucasian] when we started [the IE program]. The community is more multicultural now…it's more driven with the economy. People need workers." David also notes that the economic climate has other direct impacts on IE, such as in the area of homestay capacity: "When the economy is really rolling up here, [homestay capacity] is a little less. When things are a little slower, we've got more capacity." He attributes this relationship to families needing extra income, which they get from hosting international students, when the economy slows down, and not requiring the additional income when the economy is strong and work is readily available to these families.

The linkage between the local demographic climate, as an aspect of situated context, and the regional, or even global, economy, as an external context, is an excellent example of context overlap. This overlap serves as a reminder that although the contexts in the policy enactment analytic appear separately for the purpose of analysis, they are within the experiences of individual policy actors intimately intertwined. In other words, the divides

identified between contexts are artificial and emergent within education policy research, but do not limit the ways in which education policy actors experience these spaces.

Community Culture

Another aspect of the situated context that emerges from discussions with the education administrators is not simply the geographic location of the district, but the culture of the local community. I am referring here to the feeling of connection that international students feel to the local community, particularly in smaller communities. For example, Amy notes that many international students who come to her district are interested in meeting local people, having opportunities to speak with them and get to know them. In her community, this is a regular occurrence with international students often taking on an almost "celebrity status" in that they bring experiences considerably different from people who live in the area. This acknowledgement highlights recognition of quality of experience in terms of geography rather than simply the physical location or other physical attributes of place.

For the most part, the other education administrators indicate that their communities, and B.C. communities on the whole, are accepting of international students. They do, however, acknowledge that IE programs in general have met resistance in the media and internally from different interest groups within school districts. This resistance, it is important to note, has not been directed toward international students, but toward the practice of IE in general. In fact, administrators highlight the success of international students in their school districts and the willingness of community members to welcome

international students, particularly in the capacity as homestay families. In this light, the criticisms of IE programs that administrators report truly have little impact upon their experiences in IE.

As a specific example of local community reception of international students, Amy provides a passionate characterization of her community. She is a long-time resident and is fiercely proud of the people and the place for all it offers:

> there's something about the culture here that is just so embracing. Some people say, well, our city is accepting. [This city] is way beyond accepting. They embrace the diversity and they welcome it…it's really kind of neat. The community is wonderful, it's why I'll never leave.

That being said, Amy does acknowledge that there have been instances where there has been negativity toward the IE program. In these situations, Amy's approach has been to meet criticism head on by trumpeting the benefits that the IE program brings to domestic students, classrooms, the district and the community, as a whole.

David, also a long-time resident of his small community, faced a challenging start in the early years of the program, but notes that he has seen great strides in terms of acceptance from the community as the demographic makeup shifts with the local economy. Like Amy, David has chosen to address criticisms of the IE program by providing insights into the program that may not be well-known and educating, rather than seeking confrontation:

> I posted a Facebook ad for homestay a couple years ago…[and] I got a comment that our schools are full, why are we recruiting more [international] kids to come…I replied to him, I said, you're right, our elementary schools are full. That's why we're only recruiting at the high school level because there's space there. He replied, that's fine, but I believe in providing for our kids first…I wrote back that this program

> actually generates money, and with the money that we generate we put it back into the system to support our local kids. But then there was a lot of reaction to those comments….like positive reaction. So obviously he was not the only person thinking that. So it was good getting that positive message out there.

David's use of social media to promote the program and convey a positive message to the community is strategic. In his area, IE has a relatively low profile, at least in comparison to the province's metro center and other areas where the international student population is much larger and attracts more attention. Through Facebook, David is employing a strategy to engage misunderstandings about the program and highlight the economic benefits, but with a focus on what revenue can deliver for local students and not simply on revenue alone.

Ben's experience with public opinion regarding IE differs from Amy and David given that his context is quite different being in a much larger city with a far more diverse population, ethnically and culturally. Although he has fielded questions from the media and from the public in open meetings, Ben feels his attempts to quell their concerns have been successful. He cites strong long-range planning and integration of the IE program within larger district mandates – both aspects of the professional context – as effective in terms of addressing criticisms and concerns:

> I went to a Board meeting and addressed [public criticism], where there was concern that there were too many [international] students at one school and that could limit opportunities for local kids at the school. As a result of all of that, there's [a new committee] that I'm on. As well as demystifying some of the perceptions that were inaccurate…[for example], there are international students at all schools, not just one [in the district]. Probably, every year, there are two to three very significant, controversial issues that come up…[Messaging] is just part of my job.

In describing his experiences in IE, Ben sees these types of criticisms as very much an expected part of the IE landscape and dealing with them a regular part of his work. In some ways, Ben's work may be seen as paralleling that of marketers or brand managers, responsible for managing a company's reputation. In this function, IE administrators take on a similar responsibility.

Christine's experiences are similar to Ben's, which may be understandable given that they are both in larger cities than those of Amy and David, and are proximal to the urban center of the province. Christine feels that her community is predominantly accepting of the IE program in her district and welcoming towards international students:

> I think in the community, [reception] has been very positive. Homestay families speak positively about the kids. They're excited to be a part of it…I think people now know about the program. They hear about it. In terms of businesses, they see the kids, they see the economic development. So, I think…we no longer just fly below the radar and just try not to say too much or do too much because we don't want the public…we don't get the backlash. [International] students are taking spots away from our Canadian kids. We've never heard that.

Two notable observations emerge from Christine's description of the community in which her district is located: firstly, that the economic benefits of IE are well known in the community, and secondly, in a potentially related fashion, that she has experienced limited public criticism of the program.

On a related issue, Christine describes the impact that high-levels of immigration (permanent residents and refugees), and as a result a quickly diversifying population, have had upon tensions between ethnic groups within the local community. She cites an incident in the area where racist graffiti appeared in a public location. Although the

message was aimed at a local immigrant population and not at international students, it was nonetheless concerning to the local school district in relation to the safety of international students. This event highlights the potential impact of the broader political climate – a consideration from the external context – on IE, and one that IE administrators must remain attentive. Racism and discrimination are seemingly persistent in global media coverage and as the trend toward greater populism continues, impacting all areas of social life including education (Peters, 2017), IE may be drawn into these debates and concerns as illustrated by the graffiti incident in Christine's district.

Evan also speaks positively regarding reception of the IE program from his school community, although this may be attributed more to cultural affiliation as opposed to geographic location. As a generalization for his school context, Evan explains,

> I love it because the community is really supportive…we're generally a community that wants to work together. We're not an adversarial community. People really do just want to love each other [and] make this work. We've got a great cause going here.

Given that the school is an extension of the broader church community to which it belongs, Evan's use of the term "community" should be understood with reference to this prescription. In terms of situated context, the school is in a region close to the urban center of the province and, therefore, may enjoy some of the same natural advantages that Ben's and Christine's districts do. However, Evan notes that in his experience the primary attraction for international students choosing his school is a common faith rather than geographic location.

Material Context

Unlike the situated context, which administrators perceived as extremely impactful on their understandings of IE, the material context (e.g., infrastructure) appears much less influential on administrators' understandings. As outlined in the research of Ball et al. (2012), the material context encompassed school building or buildings, equipment, and other physical instruments. However, for the education administrators, the physical spaces in which IE programs are housed appear to have little impact on how they played out.

One potential reason for why material context was not more significant for the administrators may be the difference in scale for how individuals engage with the policy context. For the administrators, being situated at the district level and physically located in a district administrative office most often removed from the immediate school environment where the students study, there may be a sense of separation from the impact of material considerations such as buildings and equipment. These materials could have more impact on policy enactment with policies intended for schools and classrooms – the spaces in which Ball et al. (2012) based their initial research. For example, the size of a room or the availability of specialized equipment might be more relevant for school-based policies aimed at supporting students who require additional learning support. In the IE sector, refund policies for international students wishing to withdraw after they have fully paid their tuition fees, material context would hold little to no significance.

The administrator from the current study who could indicate relevance for the material context might be Evan, who works out of a single independent school with all of their buildings on a single campus. However, Evan did not raise any areas of importance relating to material considerations in terms of IE. Evan did explain that the IE program at his school does not operate to capacity, in terms of internally established international student limits, so physical space has never come up as a significant consideration in terms of program policy. In addition, Evan opines that students entering the program at his school are, for the vast majority, motivated to enrol because of their interest in a faith-based education. Citing a potential point of distinction from the public school district international students, Evan notes that factors such as physical attributes of the school and geographic location would rarely if ever drive the decision-making processes for international students choosing his school.

The lone reference by a district administrators to material context is by David. He notes that in his district there are a limited number of secondary schools where international students can be placed. David explains that in some cases there is a limitation established either by IE agents or by international parents' preference for only one student from the same country per school. The rationale behind this limitation is that students who have fewer friends speaking their mother tongue in the same school will be forced to speak entirely in English. This will then lead to a more rapid improvement in their English skills. For David, being in a small district with a limited number of schools, this influences how he approaches marketing and recruiting in his program.

David's experience illustrates another example of overlapping contexts for the phenomenon of IE: David is constrained by the material context, having only two sites at which to place students, which conflicts with the preferences and demands of international student agents and parents, a consideration from the external context. This constraint would also presumably arise for other education administrators located in smaller districts with a limited number of schools at which to place international students. Conversely, for Ben or Christine, this qualification would be of no relevance given the number of schools in their districts.

The public debate in Vancouver school district opposing international student enrolment with cross-boundary enrolment of domestic students (Vancouver School Board, 2012) raises an interesting complexity for the material context. Even in a district with many secondary schools at which to place international students, Vancouver – one of the most popular destinations for international students coming to B.C. – encountered the issue of space limitations. The district chose to address this opposition by seeking input from the public in the form of in-person and online feedback. However, no final report or determination was provided following the conclusion of the information gathering. It is possible that the information was used to feed into a broader district strategic plan, but currently the district strategic plan has not been made publicly available.

External Context

Within the original conceptualization of the policy analytic framework, external contexts included policy pressures from outside a specific locale (e.g., a school), as well as

relationships with institutions outside of the local site, including with government. External contexts proved prominent in my discussions with the administrators when discussing their experiences with IE programs, which is perhaps unsurprising given the international scope of these programs. The connections and networks that exist encompass multiple forms that contribute to complex spaces that administrators must navigate. These include the physical movement of individuals to and from B.C. and regular (often daily) communication between K-12 IE departments with international parents and agents, as well as with foreign governments and embassies abroad. It is also worth noting that IE administrators spend a great deal of time, for some more than 3 months per year, "on the road" travelling and ostensibly living in countries abroad, while maintaining most if not all of their responsibilities for their programs at home.

Overlapping Policy Contexts

Overlapping policy contexts are a primary finding that emerges from the experiences of the IE administrators. There are multiple overlapping policy contexts from the local, provincial, and federal levels, affecting a wide range of relevant policy areas from education to housing to immigration. On occasion, policy decisions from international organizations (e.g., the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) or from foreign governments may also impinge on the K-12 IE sector in B.C. As a measure for grasping and working through these complexities, many of the administrators describe key connections with colleagues or institutions, or in other words policy networks, which provide them with support and guidance.

One area of work that highlights the necessity for IE administrators to work across multiple external contexts simultaneously is with federal jurisdiction over student visa requirements. In the application and admission stages, administrators must work with in-country agents and often foreign embassies to ensure students have all the required documentation and valid study permits. In addition, study permits are issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), which maintain policies that can have significant consequences for district IE programs. Per the IRCC website, international students applying for a study permit must provide a letter of acceptance from a designated learning institution in Canada, proof of sufficient financial resources for support during the period of study, a record of good health, and a criminal record check (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018). For minor international students, who make up 100% of K-12 international students, they must also provide proof of a custodian while in the county. This requirement is a major consideration for K-12 IE programs and one of the primary distinctions between IE at the K-12 level and at the post-secondary level.

IRCC policies, which include study permits but also more general immigration concerns (e.g., tourist visas, permanent residency status, refugee status), are within the jurisdiction of the federal government, not the provincial government. This point highlights an interesting contradiction in that the province holds sovereign jurisdiction over the area of education, except in the case of IE where international students must hold a valid student

visa to study at a B.C. K-12 institution for more than 6 months.[11] This disjuncture illustrates how IE poses a new configuration of education, or as Ben characterizes it, "a unique beast," which does not fit traditional conceptualizations of the sector. Furthermore, the study permit requirement clearly distinguishes international students from domestic students and effectively limits their access to education, as this is dependent on fulfilling the criteria and maintaining conditions necessary to hold the study permit. If an international student is unable to receive a study permit from the IRCC, they are not able to enter Canada for the purpose of study. If they have their study permit revoked at any point during their period of study, they may become ineligible to remain enrolled in their program of study. Additionally, international students must renew their study permit annually to return the following year for study. If for any reason the student is not able to secure a study permit renewal, the student would not be able to return to Canada to continue studying.

As noted above, securing a custodian for minor international students is a necessary component of study permit application with the IRCC. However, custodianship is not strictly defined by the IRCC (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018) and, thus, this requirement plays out in different ways. In many B.C. school districts, IE administrators may hold the role of custodian for international students in their programs. In some cases, this may include international students numbering in the hundreds. In practice, this adds an additional dimension of responsibility for IE administrators given that custodianship entails a professional responsibility, for the student, but also a personal

[11] International students who are studying in Canada for a period of less than 6 months do not require a student visa (Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018).

responsibility, for the child. If the student is involved in an accident requiring medical attention or in a legal incident, the administrator is the *de facto* parent. Additionally, the custodians' role requires regular contact with parents of international students through emails or phone calls, or with agents in situations where parents may not have the English language skills to communicate effectively.

Christine speaks about the role of custodian as a deeply personal responsibility. She states, "[when] I'm the custodian…I become their mother when they're here and I'm making decisions based upon what I would do for my own child." Christine also clearly distinguishes between the responsibility of custodianship as an intricate part of her work in IE and the very different role she filled in other work with her district. In other roles as a classroom teacher and a counsellor, Christine felt a personal responsibility for her students, particularly those who were struggling either academically or personally. However, the quality of this personal responsibility was different. She was not expected to take a phone call and provide support for students on weekends or outside of school hours. While in the role of custodian, it is a 24-hour a day responsibility, even though there may not be frequent occasions upon which IE administrators have to respond to emergencies outside of school hours. This recognition highlights another area of distinction between K-12 education administrators working in IE and those working in other areas of district business.

The provincial policy context, from the Ministry of Education and other provincial ministries, is another consideration that impinges upon IE programs. Amy raises the

provincial policy context in her experiences with the areas of non-resident student status, graduation credits, and homestay expectations. In reference to the latter consideration, she points to the B.C. Ministry of Education *K-12 International Student Homestay Guidelines* (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2015). Although largely within the responsibility of the districts for administering homestay programs, living arrangements for minor international students are influenced by provincial policy from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Specifically, the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* (CCALA) limits the number of international students in a single home to two. At the local level, municipal Health Authorities may also have policies or guidelines that govern homestay arrangements and the safety of minor children in the form of building codes.

Given the international context of IE, there are also the impacts of decisions from foreign policy jurisdictions to take into account. Amy provides examples of past policy decisions from the home jurisdictions of international students. She offers the example of *Tobitate,* a policy direction introduced by the Japanese Government to double the number of Japanese students studying abroad between 2013 and 2020 (Japanese Ministry of Education, 2018). Amy explains these types of internationally emergent policies can come with little warning and have significant impact on school districts recruiting students. In some cases, these policies may be even more impactful than provincially-established policy. Ben reaffirms this observation stating:

> [t]here have been probably more influence from different countries and their polices, like Korea or Mexico and the ability to validate transcripts…[a decision] that happens overseas in the regions we visit is

> far more important than what has happened provincially [with B.C. education policy].

As clarified by both Amy and Ben, the push and pull of policies developed at a range of levels (local, provincial, international) work in a constant dynamic enmeshing to shape the ways in which IE programs unfold in the province.

Living Across Spatial and Temporal Contexts

As introduced above, IE administrators are not only impacted by policy decisions from external contexts, but they are physically located in those external contexts when they are recruiting students in different countries. "Life on the road" is a major factor in the experiences of IE administrators. They go abroad to market their programs through visits with international agents, participation in IE study abroad fairs, in-person school visits, and other locally-organized promotional events. All of the district IE administrators spend significant periods of time on the road, although larger programs with more staff capacity may split up regions of the world for which staff members with language ability or specialization in that region. In contradistinction, Evan spends little time on the road recruiting for his independent school. He notes this is not a central facet of their program, nor are there any plans to increase his travel responsibilities.

One aspect of the administrators' experience in IE that is perhaps little acknowledged, and as a result little appreciated, is the toll that life on the road exacts on the individuals. All four of the administrators describe the challenge of fulfilling expectations of recruitment on the road while simultaneously maintaining program operations at home. Amy depicts the challenges of managing these dual responsibilities explaining,

> the travel [is hard] because what happens is, I'm physically away from my desk, but I am still responsible for what's going through my computer on my desk. So [I get] very little sleep when I'm on the road because when I'm finished [working in country] during the day, in the evening I come back to my computer and try to troubleshoot what's going on [at home].

Christine provides a similar description, but adds detail regarding how her impressions of how working across time zones adds complexity to the work:

> when you're on the road, it's the day-to-day work…but it's interesting because you finish your day [in the country that you're in], then you come back and you're working on stuff that's still happening here [at home]. So I always say we're [working] threefold: we're dealing in the past, we're dealing in the present, and we're dealing in the future, always. So even though I'm in the present if I'm working here, I might have returned from a trip, so I'm now doing follow-up. And then I'm dealing with stuff here, but I'm also planning my next trip and how I'm going to recruit. So when I'm on the road, even when I'm in that present, we're dealing with everything in a different time zone. So we're constantly on, because it's always someone's workday in their time zone. And they have parents that want answers, so you're constantly answering…it's all-encompassing.

Christine's detailed description of life on the road conveys the complexity of how external contexts come to bear on her work and her experience with IE. She, like the other IE administrators, is located in and moving across spatial and temporal spaces, while being in constant connection through technology with international agents and parents abroad, and with international students and her own district and school staff, who are back at home. This experience of being in all places at once may explain her use of the term "all-encompassing" to describe the experience.

Ben also remarks upon how he feels pulled in multiple directions while on the road:

> [on the road] I go to [agent] meetings and events [e.g., international student fairs], but in between, it's all district [work] - you're calling back [to B.C.], checking in with the office, making sure things are rolling along…The other thing that you can do when you're on the road is work

> on some of the other projects that you really can't do if you're [at home]…[so] you leave [the country] to work on the things that you really want to get done because in the evenings, [when you're on the road], you're free. You end up working crazy hours. If you're looking at your hourly wage when you're over there, it's not very good.

From Ben, and from other administrators, the responsibilities of administration roles in IE are characterized as "24/7," "go, go, go," and "run off your feet." In this light, Christine opines,

> I think there's probably a 10-year window for doing international ed[ucation] and doing it well. Because I remember when [my predecessor] was ready to go and she said, 'I am burnt out. I am just exhausted.' You know, you put in the travel, you [suffer] the jetlag, you're putting your own personal [life on hold]…like, for us to try to stay active and get into routines is very difficult. So all those little things, and like I said before, the lack of relationships you have with your friends…I think some relationships [i.e., marriages] have broken up as a result of the lifestyle. You're not here. You're on the road all the time. So I think for some people it's a personal sacrifice as well.

Christine's experiences raise another consideration that is often lost in the analysis of the impacts of marketization on education: the personal toll the work takes on individuals who are stretched across these spatial and temporal zones.

The personal toll of working in this role can only be measured in the experiences and estimation of the individuals. All of the administrators participating in the study have children and spouses who are indelibly impacted by their work and travel schedule. This is a commonality with other individuals who work in jobs and fields where travel, particularly international travel, is required, but it is quite distinct from others working in education administration roles. As Ben states, IE is unlike other business areas for districts and is not well-known to others working in the education system. The effect of sharing these common experiences in some ways isolates IE administrators from

colleagues within their district settings and creates strong bonds with IE administrators from other districts. Christine provides an example of a situation where sharing the rigours of the responsibilities of life on the road strengthens relationships between her and her IE colleagues:

> You will find emails from [other IE administrators] - it's 4:00 a.m. and they're up, and they've got jetlag and they're doing their day [at home] before they even start the day overseas, so it's really interesting. [Colleagues] and I say [instead of emailing], why don't we just meet in the [hotel] lobby.

For many IE administrators, coming from backgrounds as teachers or education administrators in other areas of district business, there was no prior understanding of what would be required in the IE role. Furthermore, the lack of understanding of the rigours of the role within school districts has led to stronger connections across district boundaries between IE administrators who now hold these experiences in common.

Experiences of Policy Networks in IE

Given that IE has not been long on the K-12 education landscape, policy networks emerge as crucial to the ways in which IE administrators bridge policy contexts and negotiate the emerging spaces of their work. The administrators describe not only professional relationships in relation to policy networks, but also strong interpersonal relationships with IE colleagues from other districts and jurisdictions. As described above, these relationships are strengthened through time spent on the road, as the colleagues experience the struggles of working in a foreign environment while marketing and recruiting, and simultaneously taking care of their responsibilities at home. These challenging working conditions are not necessarily familiar to other education colleagues

within their districts, so connections with other IE administrators from other districts – would-be competitors in a marketized education climate – take on greater importance for support.

Amy describes strong reciprocal relationships with many of her IE colleagues from other districts in the province. From the point of entrance into her work in IE, she notes the crucial role of colleagues from more established programs providing advice and support. She explains that the program's director at the time, who preceded Amy in the role, had a business acquaintance in a larger Metro area district who was running an existing IE program at that time. During this period, in the late-1990s, there were few IE programs running in B.C. school districts. The exchange of information and advice between the former director and his colleague from another district was paramount in helping their program to develop. She suggests that without this type of mentorship, the program in her district would "never have gotten off the ground."

The type of collegial climate in the early days of the K-12 IE sector in the province is perhaps not surprising. K-12 IE programs have long been administered and staffed predominantly by career educators who would come from the non-competitive, largely non-entrepreneurial mainstream work of school districts. It then seems reasonable to assume they would bring the same disposition to the emerging IE sector, despite the business imperatives apparent in the work of marketing and recruiting fee-paying international students. In speaking with the administrators, it seems that for many of them, this type of collegial climate in the provincial IE sector is still evident.

After taking leadership of the IE program in her district, Amy took up a similar approach to her predecessor in terms of collaborating openly with others entering and already in the sector:

> [Another district] asked about policy on [IE] and we had program policy – that's what I had put together – then we had board policy – that's what [the former director] had done before I came in. So that policy, people would say to me from [other districts], what do you have? And we would talk on the road a lot. I would see [colleagues] on the road in Mexico and they would say, what have you put together? And I would just tell them what there was.

Again, Amy's approach seems more well-aligned with a teaching ethos, in terms of sharing information and acting in a collegial manner, than what might be expected in a market-driven environment. This approach is a point of commonality with the other administrators interviewed, all of whom also came to IE from a teaching background.

Amy's descriptions of her relationships with IE colleagues provide detail on how policy networks function in practice, not simply as mechanistic business relations subject to calculations of benefit and risk, but as relationships between individuals subject to how those individuals choose to approach the relationship. In other words, there is not necessarily a business imperative driving the network relationship. In this case, it is very much Amy's disposition that dictates how she chooses to be – that is how she chooses to "manifest herself," to use Arendt's (1998) term – within the policy network. For instance, Amy recounts a recruiting trip to Central America on which she facilitated business connections for a colleague from B.C. who was new to the market:

> I introduced [him] to a few key people at the embassy, and now he [and another B.C. colleague] have really cornered the market [there]. Their focus is recruitment. And [he] says he's now working for two school

> districts [recruiting]…I'll tell you, the student became the expert on that one.

Despite ultimately falling behind her colleague in a competitive sense, Amy maintains the belief that openness to collaboration and collegiality is crucial to developing IE on a provincial scale and to delivering the best possible opportunities to domestic students and international students.

Amy is not unique in terms of how she espouses collaboration with her colleagues in the province; Christine acknowledges a similar attitude toward her role in IE in terms of being open and collegial with her would-be competitors. She explains,

> I don't have a problem if people call me [for advice]. I'm happy to share with what I know, there's no secrets for me because it's two-fold: when I need something, I go to those people and they're happy to share with me. Because I don't know it all, they don't know it all. We're all just working our way through this as best we can, and we're really relying on each other…I still want to advance [my IE program], but I also understand that I'm only as strong as the weakest link in B.C. All it's going to take is one program to not live up to a standard, and we're all going to be painted with the same brush. And it's a team thing, the only way that I can remain strong is if the other members stay strong. And I think that's so important.

Christine, like Amy, also came from a teaching background and confesses little knowledge of business practices and little interest in participating in competition with her provincial colleagues.

In terms of building collegiality and strengthening policy networks within the provincial IE sector, Christine points to the crucial role of IPSEA for bringing administrators together. She explains the benefits from the organization as twofold: firstly, IPSEA holds regular meetings at which members are able to share and discuss ideas for best practices,

and for policy development; and secondly, perhaps to an even greater extent, IPSEA has brought the K-12 sector together and fostered connections and collegiality that carry on outside of the bounds of the organizations' business. For example, Christine describes the strong relationships that she's developed with IPSEA colleagues as follows: "your colleagues, they're [de facto] competitors, but they're really collaborative people and so you ask a question and there's always somebody who will answer you." It is, however, crucial to note that IPSEA has not always had been so collegial and that it has taken time to evolve to this point.

Amy, who has had extensive involvement with IPESA and has been a part of the IE sector for longer than the majority of administrators, explains the evolution of IPSEA stating,

> I think it's really changed. When I first started [in IE] I noticed real cliques [among the districts]…and now, we've developed that feeling [in IPSEA], in our internal sessions, just ask what you need to ask, don't hesitate because we're all in this together and we're really a second group [of support] apart from other [administrators within our own districts].

Although strongly in favour of a collegial climate, Christine and Amy do acknowledge that there has been, and for some still is, competition between select districts and select administrators in the recruitment of international students.

From her perspective, Amy opines that competition may be largely confined to the larger, urban districts, which are under more pressure to recruit significant numbers of international students and generate revenue. Thus, it is plausible that in some cases the collegiality illustrated in relationships between IE administrators is partially driven by a push to leverage these relationships as a form of professional capital to mediate the

inevitabilities of the market on their work. In other words, these relationships may not be simply idealistic in the interests of collegiality, but strategic to increase their competitive advantage over others in the sector who do not enjoy the same types of relationships – for example, independent school IE programs. There may also be consideration to building solidarity among many of the IE programs in B.C. to compete against jurisdictions in a global market.

Although IE administrators predominantly describe policy networks within the province, they also acknowledge network connections on a broader scale. For example, Christine explains,

> [within the province] it is very collaborative…some [colleagues] are willing to share their business practices. I know I've got my group that I can phone, I can phone people and just say, how do you deal with this? And we're doing that across Canada. We'll have a colleague that says I have student who just [was involved in a legal issue]. How you deal with discipline? And we share.

Ben provides a similar experience in terms of capitalizing upon national-scale policy networks:

> I don't find it hard to network and get information, it just kind of seems to come. And I'll share as well, and it just goes both ways. So, [my colleague] in Ottawa, he always shares that kind of information…then my role in CAPS-I [Canadian Association of Public Schools - International] also helps. So I hear a lot there, too.

The role that Ben refers to is an executive position within CAPS-I, a national-level association whose membership includes school districts from all provinces that are active in IE, that he assumed based upon nomination. Ben explains that the responsibilities are not overly time-consuming, but have facilitative benefits in terms of gaining information and establishing strategic connections:

> [It's] a little bit of extra work, but I think it pays off in other ways…I do think it helps this office and adds value as I'm on the edge of [market] intelligence for the sector, for me and for colleagues as well.

These policy networks are clearly a form of capital that bring benefits from a strategic perspective, while aligning with the collegial approach that Ben and the other administrators espouse.

In my discussions with David, he also acknowledges the value of IPSEA in terms of being able to establish strong relationships with colleagues that are more crucial for him when he requires advice or support. When starting out in IE, David participated in a mentorship program in which he worked with a colleague from a large urban B.C. district who had a great deal of experience in IE: "they pair new people [to the IE sector] with established ones, and you can meet regularly, talk about things, get some advice." Similar to Amy with her attitude of *pay-it-forward* – e.g., receiving advice and support when their program was in its fledgling stages, and then helping other districts when the program was more established and others were just stating out – David is now attempting to pass on what he has learned. He is mentoring a newly inaugurated IE program in a district that has a similar operating context to his – smaller and in a rural setting that does not benefit from the draw of being in or close to the Lower Mainland. David summarizes his attitude toward collaboration with his provincial colleagues stating, "as with anything, it depends on relationships, right? If you have a good relationship with someone, they're going to give you a hand [when you need it]."

David's comments are reflective of the sentiments of his fellow administrators in this study who have similar experiences in their district contexts, where international student population growth and profit generation are not the focus. In other words, they are largely shielded from market forces that might dictate the ways in which they operate their programs and approach their roles. David is able to build relationships from which he derives guidance and support that he cannot find within his own district, and reciprocally provide similar support to others without fearing the loss of competitive advantage. In a more highly competitive climate, with less sharing of information and collegial support, David's experiences in IE would have been significantly different and the policy obstacles he would have had to navigate on his own would have increased.

In his role with an independent school, Evan is not eligible for membership with IPSEA, as membership is limited to K-12 public school districts. In addition, he has no formal affiliation with an independent school IE organization. He notes that his policy networks are organized through provincial and international faith-based education organizations:

> We meet four times a year with all the people who do what I do - all the actual [independent school] international coordinators…it's more of a support session - that's more what it is - it's like, what's going on in your schools? What are some of the difficulties that you're having and how are you dealing with it? And so some of our programs, which are more experienced, they get to offer advice to programs that are less experienced…that's why it's great to have that group because we share materials, share information and you know, we're shoulders to cry on too when it comes to troubles, and things like discipline issues and so on.

In many ways, Evan's experience with his independent school policy networks is similar to that of the district administrators with the provincial IE organization. However, Evan's

network operates on a more limited scale and with far fewer institutions participating and with much less experience and expertise in the IE sector.

One important note from Evan's description of working with this group is that it moves beyond a professional policy network to also function as an emotional support network. As previously raised, the IE sector is still a relatively new and unfamiliar area of district or independent school business. In some cases, this can leave people working in IE feeling as though they are alone, particularly when dealing with an out-of-the-ordinary challenge for most district and school settings (e.g., an international student who gets into a car accident while driving illegally without a license). The potential for leaning on a colleague in another district, or on a network of colleagues through the provincial, or in Evan's case, faith-based organization, is a key support function for these administrators.

A second area of note to emerge from Evan's discussion is that he does not mention any professional collaboration or contact with public school district counterparts in his area. There are a number of nearby districts, including the district in which Evan's school is located, which have long-standing IE programs and could provide IE-related policy recommendations or support. Although too limited a sample for a broader generalization on relationships between the public and independent education spheres, a lack of communication and collaboration appears evident. The fact that Evan chose to reach out to a fellow independent school that was not geographically proximate to his school and had a number of significant differences in terms of operating context speaks to the definitive ways in which policy networks may be carved. The independent school that

Evan did contact for policy advice was led by an individual with whom Evan was familiar, given that they had had previous professional collaborations. Outside of the public/independent divide, Evan also chose not to contact independent schools from the same geographic area (i.e., within a few kilometers) that also is active in IE and has a long history of enrolling international students. His decision to establish contact with a school from another part of the province is motivated by an existing relationship, as well as their common belief system (i.e., religious base), and not by an interest in seeking the best advice or linkage to further the business interests of his IE program.

Professional Context

The professional context encompasses the organization of the educational institution, as well as the relationships between the different offices and individuals within the institution. For example, in a school board, this would entail the board and its elected members, the district administrative office with superintendent, assistant superintendent(s), secretary-treasurers, district principles, and other staff, and school-based administration and staff, such as principals, vice principals, teachers, educational assistants, and others. The key aspects of this context are in the relationships between the IE program administrators and the individuals that populate these roles. Although there may be an assumption hierarchy within these relationships, this may not always hold true in how these relationships play out. As has been well-documented, policy actors at all levels may exercise the ability to facilitate, modify, resist, or subvert a given policy or policies (Ball, 1981; Ball et al., 2012; Bates, 2013; Ozga, 2000).

All of the administrators in this study indicate that, for the most part, they have historically had positive working relationship with their boards/authorities and district/school leadership. This despite the potential challenges of fitting a market-oriented business practice within district and school operations. As a group, the administrators report few direct experiences of top-down directives for policies that impact the IE programs. This degree of autonomy for IE programs may be partially attributable to the fact that boards/authorities and the individuals who occupy leadership positions within these groups do not fully understand and do not possess the expertise to actively and confidently inform these programs. As noted, other areas of district business including administration of education programs, human resources, public and media relations, and financial (not-for-profit) management have long been part of school district operations, while IE is driven by a different set of assumptions and motivations.

Ben explains that he has been able to maintain a great deal of autonomy in his professional context given that IE is still somewhat of an unknown for many people in the school district. This despite the fact that the IE program in Ben's district is one of the longest running in the province. He notes that in his district, a larger urban district with a large international student population, the IE program has greatly benefitted from the strong support of the leadership group: "It comes from the top. [The superintendent's vision] fits with things that I wanted to do, but I've just been very fortunate that we have a superintendent that is allowing and facilitating all of this." With a different individual at the helm of his district, it is possible that Ben's professional context could be very

different. However, he has been fortunate to work with supportive superintendents and board members throughout his years with the IE program.

In terms of broader district reception of the IE program, Ben notes that he has frequently fielded questions about number of international students enrolled in the district. He notes,

> a lot of the meetings I've been going to lately have been feeling a little bit touch-and-go with the way that [IE] may be perceived based on some stuff in the media [concern with international students taking seats from domestic students]. But everyone within the school district and within some of the associated committees has been really supportive.

Ben explains that to address these concerns, he has worked closely with his district leadership to incorporate IE into the district strategic plan and bring it into alignment with the district's broader aims. Effectively, this move legitimizes the IE program and brings it under the umbrella of mainstream district business, as opposed to operating out on the margins where more questions about the program might arise. In situations where there are questions about the IE program, either in his district or for the sector more generally, Ben is able to demonstrate alignment with the strategic plan and point to the support of his district executive.

For David, whose program is still at a fairly early stage, the program has a limited profile within the district. However, the relatively modest size of the district and, correspondingly, of the district leadership team is also a factor that provides him a great deal of control over the program: "[Day-to-day], it's pretty much me who [makes decisions]. And then I just check in with the superintendent or assistant superintendent and let them know what I'm doing." In terms of policy generation, David notes that,

> …the School Board has been pretty good. We try to make sure we [the IE program] do a presentation every year. There are some [international] kids that come and they talk about the district and how great it is. We do some of that stuff every year. We try to keep the board informed…we have a pretty good board, they're pretty hands off. Some of our board members have been homestay parents, so that's helped [with support for the IE program].

The participation of school board members as homestay parents could be simply a coincidence. However, in listening to David talk about his community, a smaller rural community where "everyone knows everyone," the influence of personal relationships and, even more so, friendships may contribute to the trust expressed in David, as leader of the IE program, and in the program itself. One distinction between IE programs in rural areas versus those in urban areas that David raises is that his relationships with the board and district executive are very much personal. Conversely, he points out that dealing with school boards in larger cities can be "very political [with] people running under different [political] parties and different [agendas]."

Further emphasizing the distinctiveness of district contexts, specifically differentiating between urban and rural settings, David opines that individual administrators fit their particular settings:

> Well, I think if you look at people who are doing IE, even in B.C., it's a diverse group…I think I'm fairly successful here [in my district]. I'm not sure how successful I'd be in a different market. Like, same thing, if you put somebody else here who's very successful in their [district], I don't know if they would be able to apply all the same [knowledge and practices] or not.

By success, David is referring to the growth of international student enrolment in the district over the period that he has been the lead administrator. Although the increase is modest in terms of overall student numbers, the percentage growth has been significant,

as has been the increasing profile of the IE program and of international students in his district. Utilizing his knowledge of the local community, David has been deliberate in promoting the IE program and the presence of international students in public and in district-only (e.g., presentations to the school board members) events. Amy, who is also from a smaller, rural district, has utilized a similar strategy to promote the benefits of the IE program in her community.

Evan's position is very similar to David's with a small leadership team at the school, and a group with whom Evan has a personal as well as professional relationship. This has allowed Evan to develop and operate his school's IE program in relative autonomy as his is trusted by the leadership group. IE is not something familiar to his school leadership, so Evan's judgement as a long-standing administrator, and for all intents and purposes, the originator of the program in that context, is largely unquestioned:

> I'm sort of the boss of my own domain. And the people that I've worked for have always allowed that to happen. They're very consensus-minded people, they're very much a team - it's not we do not have a top-down administration, we have a very much a [gestures one-to-one] kind of administration…I'm kind of like the prince of my own little world here.

Evan does not work with a school board, but with a school authority as is required in the independent school context (B.C. Ministry of Education, 2018c). It is worth noting that the authority is made up of members of the same religious faith, and whose children attend Evan's school. As with the school leadership, Evan explains the working relationship with the authority is respectful and conflict-free as everyone works toward a common goal. He notes that in terms of policy development and the role of the school authority,

> some of the policy obviously comes from the board level where they make certain policies especially as it's related to the constitution…[but for the most part] it's pretty much me and I don't have to go to the board. I pretty much get that rubber stamped by the principals…and I rarely inform the business office, the business operations person because they pretty much leave it up to me.

It is interesting that Evan enjoys this level of autonomy, despite the fact that his school has a relatively modest number of international students. International student enrolment is confirmed through the signing of a contract, whether to enrol in an independent school or a school district IE program. International student tuition fees involve a significant amount of money, particularly for the families of many international students from countries that are not socioeconomically-advantaged. Despite the perception that all international students are wealthy, the investment can be momentous for some of these families. Given these considerations, the school allowing Evan to almost single-handedly control a highly-complex process that draws the school into a contractual obligation with considerable financial stakes is somewhat surprising. This may speak to a lack of understanding on the part of the school administration and his board for what IE actually entails.

Christine's context is different from that of David and Amy in that she works in a larger district and with a larger district leadership team; however, she feels a similar degree of autonomy when it comes to administering the IE program:

> People just leave me be. You know, it's one of those, okay, the program is there, it's running well, we cause them [the school board] no grief and so they don't focus on us…some districts' [IE directors] probably sit down and have more business meetings, ask what your markets are and how you're going forward. Not with me. I have clear run of it…I'm not micro-managed at all. I have full charge, so I have to think they're at least confident in what I'm doing. They just let me run with it…If anything does happen, they call me and I take care of it, and it's done.

> I'm not a thorn in their [the board's] side…So they [senior SD administration and board] don't question me.

Although Christine claims significant autonomy in administering the program in her district, she points out that there are some administrators in other districts who receive much more board and district executive direction. This is to say that, despite the administrators in the current study depicting their roles with significant autonomy, it may be overgeneralizing to cite this as ubiquitous throughout the province, or in other jurisdictions with IE programs.

Despite her strong relationships with the board and senior district management, Christine notes that not everyone within the district community has been as accepting of IE:

> [S]ome people don't accept international [education] for what it is and still always think of it financially, more so than other [areas of district business]. And changing that mindset sometimes is difficult because people want to focus on that, the finances, and for me that's down the list.

Christine's experience here is further illustrative of the polarizing view of IE that is found within and without K-12 educational contexts. Although Christine and her fellow administrators in this study profess a non-economics first perspective on IE, they work in environments where this is not the consensus. Thus, the autonomy that IE administrators are afforded may, in some ways, be a result of a distancing by district leadership from what they see as a business public school districts should not be involved in. In other words, autonomy may not simply be a product of trust or a lack of business acumen on the part of district upper management, but a purposive effort to separate core district business – i.e., the delivery of education to the public without consideration to profit motivations – from that of IE.

Christine notes that despite concerns about the economics of IE, in terms of revenue generation, the primary decision-makers (i.e., district executives) have not spoken openly of these concerns with her. Unsurprisingly, the support of her executive has had a great impact upon Christine's working conditions:

> I'm fortunate in my district that they don't focus on the finances, but I think the impression in some teachers' minds is it's all about the finances. But really it's not from our senior admin[istration]. It's not about, go get us more kids, you have to bring this amount of money in. It's never been from any of my superintendents that I've dealt with.

Christine's use of the term "fortunate" to describe what is a relatively low-pressure environment, in terms of recruitment and revenue generation, is of interest. This acknowledges her impressions of other district environments where there is much more pressure on recruitment and revenue generation. As repeatedly noted, there are clearly other districts within the province that appear to operate with greater pressure to deliver in a market-driven climate. However, none of the administrators in the current study chose to characterize their own districts in this way.

In terms of Amy's district, she describes her professional working context as predominantly collegial – in relation to the school board, district executive, and school administrators, teachers, and staff - and the IE program as, for the most part, well-received by these groups. However, like Christine, she is able to identify some instances of friction over her long career. As an example, she cites a conflict with a teacher in her district who levied strong criticism against the presence of international students in local schools characterizing it as a "cash grab." This individual would later rise to a position of prominence as leader of the local teachers' union, so his voice carried more weight in the district and, Amy worried, could potentially turn sentiments against the IE program.

Thus, Amy elected to address this issue by undertaking a comprehensive review of the IE program to identify issues, but also identify program strengths and benefits. She intended to gather data on how the program was being received by teachers, staff, and domestic students, and identify areas where they could improve the program. She describes the review as follows:

> It took us two years to do the review… and it was not easy, but at the end of it, [union reps] were involved, everybody, the board members were involved, the students were involved, the teachers were involved. It was unreal…the review has had a really positive impact.

Amy's choice to collect data on the program through the formal program review and present the findings to individuals throughout the district and to the public is of note. There are no indications (e.g., public reports or records) of other programs taking a similar step to refute criticisms or substantiate the benefits of IE.

As a result of the program review, Amy was able to garner feedback from a wide range of stakeholders in a number of formats (e.g., qualitative and quantitative data). This output was of great value for her, as she states,

> for me, it's the data. I think the only way to [combat negative opinions] is to show the data, show why they're myths. It's just somebody's negativity getting in the way…So what I do, I like the facts and the figures, so that's why we did the review.

The results of the program review were positive in that Amy was able to demonstrate the value of the program both to fellow educators and administrators, as well as to the general public. As a corollary, she explains that she was also able to earn the trust of the school board and her district executives to continue to administer the program with relative autonomy.

Amy notes that her autonomy is largely contingent on keeping the board satisfied by reporting regularly on the IE program and highlighting its benefits and positive outcomes. She intimates that frequent changes in executive leadership in her district have posed a challenge and necessitated continuous efforts to explain and re-explain the benefits of the IE program, both in economic and in cultural terms. Despite turnover in leadership positions, there have been no efforts or indications that Amy's autonomy is at risk in terms of setting policies or in terms of operating the IE program on a day-to-day basis. Again, this raises the potential that the board and district executive are motivated by trust in Amy to provide the best guidance for the program, or hesitancy given that they do not have the expertise to intervene in program operations, or that they have a preference to stay out of this business area given its potential for negative media coverage or public concern.

5.2.2 Embodied Experience

In my first meeting with each of the administrators, I invited them to speak about their personal histories and how they arrived in the positions they now find themselves. Within phenomenological inquiry, Eatough and Smith (2008) note that understanding participants' personal experiences, and not exclusively in their professional roles, can be useful for framing experiences with a given phenomenon. Little direction was provided in terms of what they should highlight or how much detail they were required to provide. I took this approach given that different individuals have different comfort levels in how much of their past they are willing to share, and in how much detail. This was true of the current group of administrators with some willing to share extensively and others

preferring to remain less detailed. However, it was striking the extent to which the administrators, on the whole, linked early life experiences to aspects of IE they currently encounter.

Understandings of Culture Through Experiences of Discrimination

Three of the administrators identified discrimination as prominent in their early life experiences, which they suggest led them to an awareness regarding cultural differences. Amy and Christine explain that their experiences with discrimination were not necessarily directed at them, but at close friends who were visible minorities. They note that witnessing discrimination on multiple occasions was shocking and disappointing in terms of negatively shaping how they saw their communities. Evan, the lone independent school representative, shared experiences as an immigrant to Canada and situations where he recalls feeling discrimination, but in what he deems a rather mild form. The administrators who raise these issues from their past suggest that these early experiences helped them to become sensitized to discrimination, and to actively oppose them when they arise. This positioning is relevant to their current work in IE where discrimination is a potential threat to international students in their programs; it is also relevant in terms of their recognition and promotion of cultural engagement and learning – positive aspects they identify as core values for and from their IE programs.

Amy describes a relationship with her closest childhood friend, Tracy, as a key relationship in her life from the past and the present. Amy explains she grew up in a rural area of Canada in a town that she characterizes as “a very white-bread community.” She

enjoyed a comfortable childhood and fit in well with the community given that both of her parents were of Caucasian, European descent – common with the majority of the local population. However, Tracy was a first-generation Asian Canadian and, as Amy recalls, was frequently the target of discrimination. Amy explains that since Tracy stood out in terms of physical appears and cultural background, she faced a great deal of discrimination. On many occasions, Amy bore witness to this discrimination first-hand. She recounts, "I witnessed some prejudice in our community that shocked me…[but] I had no problem standing up for her [Tracy]."

Amy recounts one specific encounter from their early teenage years where she felt the need to physically defend her friend:

> Some of the boys at the [local hockey] rink, they would call her a bad name…[one day] we were walking by and he bumps into my shoulder, and I was 13 or 14 at this time, he bumps into my shoulder and says [a derogatory term] to me. I turned on him and pushed him and had him in a headlock, then got him down and I was [pushing him down]. Finally, the adults come and they pull me off. [The boy] was bigger than me, but he was just a bully. And I said, you know what, he called me a [derogatory term]. I will never forget the look on the face of this adult. He says, 'oh. That's enough. [Boy], don't say that anymore. [Amy], don't hit people.'…And you know what was the biggest triumph…[the boy] never harassed either of us again. I wouldn't say he became a friend, but he was always polite.

From this confrontation, Amy felt she was able to garner an important lesson: When one sees discrimination, one has an obligation to stand up to it, if one is to contribute to change. Amy has carried this belief throughout her life and applies it to her current situation working in IE where similar types of cultural conflict still emerge given the range of stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds.

In hindsight, Amy reveals that her experience with her best friend and seeing the discrimination that she faced "suddenly started to open my eyes that people were ignorant because they didn't understand that it was about being people. It's not about where you are from [or] what nationality you are." She describes her relationship with Tracy as crucial to the realization that culture-based discrimination can be extremely hurtful and divisive for a community. Amy notes that, although challenging, the encounters with discrimination served two important ends:

> It bonded us in a way that nothing else ever could, and that's when you see beyond race, when you're standing together to make the world better…that's what it's about. And now I see it even on a bigger scale [in our school district] with our international students and our culture club…[T]hat's my passion, seeing people as people, not by the colours of their skin… none of that should matter.

Amy's connection between moments from her early life and her current role in IE is significant. She directly links experiences from her childhood to her perspective on the purposes and benefits of bringing international students and domestic students together. In doing so, Amy is able to bring her personal beliefs and experiences into being, positioning the IE program in her district as an instrument to ameliorate the types of stereotypes and prejudices that can divide groups. These intentions are explored in greater detail in the section below looking at how Amy has chosen to develop the IE program for her district and for her community.

Amy says she maintains her friendship with Tracy to this day, although they have not lived in close proximity to each other for many years. "She's still the best friend on the planet to me. She came to my birthday in the summer, drove out with her daughter and granddaughter and grandson. She's just one of those kinds of friends." The importance of

this relationship between Amy and Tracy was conveyed in another critical moment when Tracy's mother was nearing the end of her life. Amy was invited to visit for a final time:

> [When] her mom died and I went to see her, they asked the brothers [other family members] to leave, and she [the mom] just wanted me and [Tracy] in the room…and she said, 'thank you for being the friend to Tracy that she needed because you didn't see the colour of her skin or the fact that we were [culturally different]'. It was just a wonderful moment.

Amy also notes that she felt the discrimination faced by Tracy and her family in her hometown in a deeply personal way, as though she, herself, were the target.

Amy recalls having a Japanese internment camp close to the town she grew up in. She also remembers a double standard with European immigrants arriving in the community and being immediately accepted, while Asian community members and First Nations Peoples, who had long been in the area, were always considered outsiders. She remembers that Tracy's father had lived through the Japanese internment and his family had had their property confiscated, like other Japanese families at this time. Amy notes that as a child she did not understand the full extent of this episode in Canadian history as she lived through it; however, later in life when she learned more about this period, she states, "I just felt such an injustice and I felt such embarrassment as a Canadian." This final statement is significant given that Amy declares herself a proud Canadian. This is a pride that she explains is reinforced each time she travels internationally for work. When she is recruiting students in other countries and speaking with international parents and agents, she often promotes what she feels are the strong values of Canada and its people – equality, tolerance, kindness, and freedom. However, she also notes that experiences from her youth with Japanese internment and the treatment of First Nations Peoples conflict with these values.

Throughout our discussion, memories and stories about different moments with Tracy recur in Amy's description of her life journey. She recounts a story about being taught to use chopsticks. At the age of 12, she was invited to eat dinner with Tracy and her family. Being from a rural Canadian city and with both parents of European decent, Amy had never held a set of chopsticks. However, as Amy remembers, instead of being impatient or making fun of her for lacking chopstick skills, Tracy offered to teach her: "She was such a good teacher…I still get compliments to this day, 'oh, you're so good with chopsticks' because I can slice something in half." Although seemingly a small revelation, it holds relevance for Amy's current work in IE as she often travels to Japan, China, and Korea – three of the largest markets for international students in B.C. (British Columbia Council of International Education, 2016). In these countries, business dinners are a regular commitment for marketing and recruitment, and Amy's skilled use of chopsticks, the skill she learned from Tracy, still comes to bear. Amy summarizes the influence of her relationship with Tracy on her life in stating,

> I think it was the beginning of my intercultural journey…[I learned] you can have pride in who you are, and in your culture, and understand that you can also have pride in being Canadian…you don't have to throw something away to become something new.

The statement resonates for later parts of our conversation in which Amy discusses her passion for interculturalization and its place in her district's IE program.

Christine's early life experiences are in some respects similar to those of Amy, but whose current working context is distinct being a much larger district than Amy's and in a more in-demand location for international students. Christine was also witness to incidents of discrimination to close friends in her early life, which she draws upon as she navigates

her work in IE. Like Amy, she explains that these events have had an indelible impact on her, delivering lessons that resonate with her through to the present.

Christine is also Caucasian with parents of Western European descent. One area of distinction between Amy's early life and that of Christine is that Amy grew up in a smaller, predominantly homogenous town, while Christine is from a large city with multicultural diversity. In fact, this diversity in her hometown coloured much of her early life experience. Christine explains that her family lived in what was considered, within her hometown, a socioeconomically disadvantaged neighbourhood. She explains that over the years, this neighbourhood was popular with new immigrant families as well as with refugee families, which contributed to the area's cultural diversity. However, families in the area often lived through hardship with parents either working multiple jobs or struggling to find steady employment.

Being of Caucasian background, discrimination was never a fear for Christine, despite being a reality for some of Christine's friends who were not Caucasian. As one example from her elementary school experience, Christine remembers,

> one of my really good friends, she was black and she was the only one in the school at that time, and I remember her getting into a few fights over that and [supporting] her at that time, so that was interesting.

As she grew older, her friend group diversified even more:

> my group of friends were really diverse. Like this one family…was Japanese and one of my best friends was [their daughter]…another one was Ukrainian – like, the family…when you go there it was [Ukrainian language] only…and one of my friends [name], who I used to play basketball with, that was his nickname, but he was black, but even at that time people commented that I had my picture with him in the yearbook and the stereotypical things that people – and the comments that were

> made…I just couldn't understand why people would make comments like that.

Through the memories that she relates, Christine emphasizes the benefits she felt by having different cultural perspectives in her life and becoming close with people from different backgrounds. In particular, she describes her relationship with one friend to whom she became very close, in an almost "sister-like" relationship. It was through this relationship and through shared experiences with this friend that she would be faced with discrimination.

Christine's close friend was of Asian background. In addition to this friendship, Christine also grew close to her friend's family, as a whole:

> it's funny because [Suzanne's family] had four kids and I became their fifth, and they became my mom's four other children and we just did so much together. We ended up all living in the same apartment complex, and so we became friends through there. And then when we moved to our street and [Suzanne's family lived in] the low rentals across the street…[Suzanne's mom], I think she found my mom really supportive because the kids joined us [all the time]. If we went to the lake, they came to the lake. If we did things - we did a family trip - [Suzanne] joined us.

Christine's description of this period of her life and her close relationship with Suzanne, and with her family, is significant because she explains it as her closest and most intimate linkage to discrimination and racism.

The incidents of discrimination began after Christine began attending church with Suzanne's family. All members of this particular church were from the same ethnic background as Suzanne; this actually shifted Christine from a position in the majority, in

terms of her surrounding community and hometown, to the position of a minority within the church. However, Christine notes that this did not seem of relevance at the time:

> I was the first Caucasian that they allowed into the church. They gave me a [nickname from the language], and I was part of the culture. When we had festivities or activities I was performing in the dances from about eight to ten…My experience in the church and being the only Caucasian person there…I didn't see differences and so for me when people pointed that out to me, it was always shocking because I didn't notice the differences.

Significantly, she remembers that she was made to feel welcome by the members of the church, and she cannot recall being singled out or excluded at any point within the church community for being different.

Another event that she recalled with great clarity shook this feeling of belonging. It occurred some time later while she was with her church community and they engaged another church community with predominantly Caucasian members:

> I remember a distinct time, they invited the United Church to come [to our church]…when I was walking to the front there were people talking because I was doing this amongst the whole [Asian] church…[members of the other church were] whispering and making comments. And I heard them say, 'why is she here? She's different. Why is she a part of the church?'...So I came home and I remember having that discussion with my mom about how upset I was that people were talking about me as being different there. And I remember her saying, 'do you realize that you are different? You know, in their eyes, you are different.' And I said, 'no.'…I distinctly remember that. I distinctly remember that they [the members of the other church] made me feel different. Not the [Asian] community, but the [other] church… [With the Asian church] it was inclusion. I was part of the congregation. I never even felt that kids were mean to me, or asking why I was there. One time, I remember – and I don't even know if this is the right name – they used to call me, or they used to say I was a [non-English term]. I'm not sure exactly what it is but it means 'white person'…I would hear that, 'oh, there's the [non-English term]' and I knew, oh yeah, I'm the white person, but…I never felt it in malice.

Christine's recollection of this incident was a turning moment for her and, despite the years that have passed since the incident, she is able to describe in great detail how she felt. Despite being different, in terms of physical appearance and cultural background, she was made to feel welcome by her church community. In that space, for her, discrimination did not exist. There was never a question of belonging, only a feeling of inclusion. Despite discrimination that the other church members may have experienced living in a predominantly Caucasian town, Christine never felt this directed at her in frustration or retaliation as could have occurred. To this day, she recalls her time with that church community as "a sense of belonging, despite differences."

In terms of reflection, Christine opines that those experiences with the church community have influenced her sense of affiliation with different communities throughout her life. She notes,

> I think [my time in the church] was always something that made me understand and appreciate other cultures…I think it [was] a pivotal point in my life…I've always felt, I don't know, detached [from the dominant ethnic majority], and I think that's from my experience in the church and being the only Caucasian person there…I didn't see differences anymore, and so for me, when people pointed that out to me, it was always shocking because I didn't notice the differences.

In a manner similar to that of Amy, Christine credits those experiences with shaping her attitudes toward and abhorrence for discrimination. Christine explains that at other points in her life, early experiences with discrimination informed her response:

> I don't want to say, it sounds so pompous, but…when people were making fun of other people or of other groups, I found myself being drawn to intervene or to be by that person's side, rather than take the side of, say, the bully…[I am] more sensitive to that.

It may be tenuous to conclude from an analytical perspective that a series of discriminatory events in childhood might shape the dispositions of Christine and Amy. However, both of these individuals point to these experiences as foundational for who they have become and for how they see the world.

Evan's experiences are distinct from that of Amy and Christine in that he immigrated to Canada with his family when he was five. He remembers this transition with great clarity, specifically because of the fact that he spoke no English at the time of the move:

> I was just under five so I could only speak Dutch at the time…when [we] moved to Canada my dad said, 'everything's got to be in English. '…So that's what happened. I went to kindergarten and I still remember not having a clue what was going on. I had no idea. I remember a few instances where I obviously didn't understand what was going on, and did the opposite of what I was supposed to do. I have this recollection of going home, but it wasn't the end of the day and looking back and [thinking], I missed something. You know when you're five or six or whatever I was, I really had no idea, I just thought, it was just the strangest thing. I remember getting in trouble from the teacher, because I wasn't [usually] a troublemaker. My mom always said I was the guy that, she could take a nap and, basically, I would play with Lego for three hours and you wouldn't hear from me at all. So, I was actually a pretty good kid. So to get in trouble for me was like, what did I do wrong? I had no idea.

Although Evan does not specifically recall this incident as discrimination, it does capture an instance of being set apart from the other students in the class based on difference in linguistic ability, which in Evan's case was culture-based. In other words, whether he chooses to deem it discrimination or not, Evan's experience from an early age could be interpreted as mild discrimination, and perhaps unintentional. Although the mindset of the teacher on this occasion cannot be determined, certainly the social climate in terms of tolerance for linguistic and cultural difference was, for the most part, quite different in the 1960s when Evan and his family arrived in Canada. This event remains one of

significance for Evan in his memory of his early school days, and marks the beginning of an oscillating sense of belonging and exclusion that coloured his experiences throughout his childhood and school-age years.

In his youth, Evan remembers having a very strong sense of belonging with his local church – one with an ethnically homogenous membership of immigrant families from the same community. Additionally, his father was a pastor and a key figure in the community. Evan describes his childhood experience as at once comforting, given that he felt understood and accepted by the church community, and at the same time alienating, given that this close-knit ethnic community was not well-integrated into the local domestic community. He remembers this experience not as jarring or hostile, but simply as a sense of the way it was. His church community was familiar and occupied the greatest part of his life, while interactions with the local community were infrequent and always shaded with a sense of difference and distance. As he got older, Evan explains that this separation became increasingly difficult.

Evan's recalls a move across the country just before he entered junior high school to follow his father's work. He entered another faith-based school in the new town that was quite similar to his previous school in that it was ethnically homogenous and somewhat separated from the local community. Once again, although comfortable within this community, Evan remembers feeling a sense of distance from the local population. He describes his high school years as "challenging." He notes a strong feeling of community

amongst people from his school and church. However, this was in stark contrast to the surrounding neighbourhood and city:

> [the school] was very Dutch and we [the students] wanted to be really Canadian…when I was in grade 10, 11, 12, we wanted to be like everybody else, but we weren't because we were from this dumpy little school that got hammered by all the other teams [in sports]…we didn't have a gym, we had a black top with basketball hoops at both ends, but we did not have any skills whatsoever. I remember getting hammered by [a nearby public school] and other schools like 120 to 18. It was like – nobody should have ever allowed us to play those games…we were humiliated and of course when you're humiliated you react by trying to be like everybody else…and then in church, hearing people speak Dutch was like, seriously? Like, we're in Canada – come on…so we never brought our friends, it was like all these weird Dutch people who were speaking Dutch, so to me it was like. I did not want to be Dutch and I didn't want to be associated with Dutch culture.

Although he loved the relationships developed and experiences provided to him through the church community, Evan never felt connected to or accepted by the broader community. These experiences would shape his understandings of affiliation and his commitment to making others, particularly those who he saw as being positioned as "outsider," feel welcome.

All three administrators – Amy, Christine, and Evan – point to linkages between these experiences in their early lives and how they now approach their work in IE and their relationships with international students. As Bengtsson (2013) posits, an individual's experiences contribute to sedimented knowledge and ways of being and doing, and these "sedimented experiences give direction and meaning to our present experiences" (p. 51). Although from their past, the experiences described by the administrators arise in their descriptions of their understanding of and roles within IE. For Amy and Christine, encounters with racism left them with a strong aversion to all forms of discrimination,

and a willingness to defend others from these types of incidents. For Evan, a sense of exclusion and distance from the mainstream community has led him to support others, in particular international students in his school that might be feeling a sense of isolation. The impact of these early life experiences as explained by the administrators may suggest increased consideration for the concept of embodied experience within policy enactment research.

Understandings of Culture Through Experiences of Difference

The other administrators in the study, Ben and David, did not recall any specific incidents of discrimination from their early life experiences in a manner similar to their other colleagues. However, both Ben and David identified critical moments in their lives when their awareness of cultural differences became overt and shifted how they understood their worlds around them. Unlike the other three administrators, Amy, Christine, and Evan, who recount these events from their early life, for Ben and David, these moments did not occur until near the end of their university experiences and into their early professional lives.

Ben and David also share similar early life experiences in many respects that differ from those of their administrator colleagues, Amy, Christine, and Evan. Key commonalities for Ben and David include being born and raised in smaller, ethnically homogenous Canadian towns and having parents with stable, well-regarded careers that provided socioeconomic stability for their families. Both men are of the same ethnic background (Caucasian) and were part of the ethnic majority in their hometowns. Perhaps

unsurprisingly, they recall no explicit instances in which they were the target of or witness to discrimination. They both describe their early years as comfortable, growing up in towns that were good places in which to be raised. As Ben states, "[my hometown] was not metro at all, but there [were] lots of wide open spaces. We had a nice view of the whole valley and it was a great spot to grow up." As noted above, these were not the same conditions experienced by Amy, Christine, or Evan, whose early lives were characterized with much more change and uncertainty.

Ben and David also had both parents, mother and father, who worked as either teachers or in other roles in the public education system. For Ben, his father began as a teacher and later moved into administrative roles in education at the school and district levels. He notes that he never planned to follow in his father's footsteps, but that seeing the stability of a career in teaching eventually influenced his decision to this path. Ben's mother also worked for periods as an educational assistant in local schools, but there was never an imperative for her to work given his father's career success. Of note, neither of Ben's two siblings, both younger, opted for a career in education, indicating that parental influence may not be the most important factor for determining career path. In his own estimation, Ben attributes much of his career to happenstance and unplanned opportunities, rather than a specific plan: "It's kind of funny…it's just kind of the way it all worked out."

For David, both of his parents worked as teachers and this had a direct and purposive influence on his career path from high school onwards. The community in which he grew up in suffered through economic turbulence with a heavy dependence on natural resource

extraction. However, with both of his parents teaching, his family's stability was in many ways sheltered from the unpredictability of the local economy. David explains, "Socioeconomically, it was good. The pay [for teachers] wasn't what it is now, but we were definitely middle class, upper middle class [in our community]." He recalls that although his family did not suffer from economic hardship at any point, other families that he knew in the community did. David also notes that, while his father had consistent employment in local schools, his mother did not: "[I] watched my mom TOC (Teacher On-Call) for 10 years before getting a [full-time] job." He explains that his mother's experiences, coupled with the community's high unemployment rates, forced him to become career-focused from an early age. This push played out in the form of a strong motivation and determination to get onto a sure career track in university, and to add as many additional skills (e.g., post-secondary certificate and diploma programs) and experiences (e.g., student exchange, volunteer work) as possible to ensure he would always appear marketable and hireable should he ever find himself seeking work.

In the years following graduation from high school, Ben and David describe expanding their professional experience to embark upon subsequent careers in education. As part of these experiences, their engagement with other cultures would also significantly expand. Recounting his transition to university, Ben notes the university he attended was in a larger city than his hometown that was much more multicultural. During his university studies, he recalls taking a job as a cultural advisor in a summer program for international students studying at his university. He remembers this period as one of his first extended

experiences with people from other cultures and states that he learned a great deal in a short period:

> I was doing this cultural assistant thing…that was a real eye-opener for me. I'd never really had – I was as white kid from [a small town], not a lot of experience meeting people from other places – and so I did this for a summer and I met people from Brazil who I connected well with, Mexico, Japan, Korea…I was spending a lot of time with a group from Korea and they were really social and liked to go out and liked to have a few drinks and they'd always ask me [to join them].

Ben's experience with this role would turn out to be serendipitous, as it would significantly influence his post-graduation decisions.

Going from an individual with little cross-cultural experience and only a single experience abroad, Ben would capitalize upon relationships he made through his work as a cultural assistant and chart a new and unplanned life course. He explains,

> at that time [while working as a cultural assistant] I learned about all these overseas opportunities. I met this lovely older Japanese lady – she was about 60 years old and a retired teacher. She said, 'you should come to Japan – you'd do really well. You should work in public schools, have a look at [a government language teaching program]'…I decided, you know what? Let's see how this plays out, but I'm going to apply for this program, and if I don't have a job [teaching in a B.C. school district] next year, I'll go to Japan.

Ben would spend a short period of time working in a B.C. district, but without finding a permanent position in his preferred subject area. At this point, he made the decision to take the teaching job abroad and immersed himself in a new cultural experience.

Unlike Ben, with his experience teaching and living in a foreign culture, David did not come to intercultural experience and engagement in the same abrupt and immersive manner. After completing his high school studies with a friend group that was largely

culturally homogenous, he notes encountering little overt cultural difference in his post-secondary experience. The one exception to this relative homogeneity for David was with international students who lived in the same dormitory during his university years. However, his friend group during this time of his life was predominantly homogenous and of the same Caucasian, middle-class background.

The one area where cultural difference became most notable and impactful for David was during summer breaks in university when he would take part in short-term (e.g., one- to two-month) French language programs in Quebec. These experiences, which David describes as educational as well as enjoyable, would lead David to take some of his post-graduate education in Quebec to continue developing his French skills. He explains the central motivation for undertaking this additional language study was to "improve my employability," and later adds, "[in teaching] I've always been employable because of the French." Reflecting back upon David's early experiences witnessing economic hardship in his community, as well as his mother's struggle for permanent work, they illustrate the power of those lessons on his choices much later in life. This example appears supportive of Bengtsson's (2013) assertion regarding the influence of embodied experiences on an individual. This particular trait, namely the drive for personal development in areas that improve employability, is a common theme in my discussions with David and come to be impactful in his experiences with IE later in life.

David also notes that, although he did not have opportunities for international travel in his early life, he did travel extensively in North America, predominantly in the Eastern

United States and all across Canada. He points out that through these experiences, he was able to experience different cultures and develop a keen awareness of cultural difference. He provides the following example of cultural differentiation between regions of Canada:

> [Following university] when I left Quebec and then flew direct to Calgary, I could definitely see a difference. It gave me quite a different perspective. I could see why Quebec would think that they were distinct, but also realized that Nova Scotia was distinct from Quebec, Alberta was distinct from Quebec, B.C. was distinct from Quebec…you even see it when you fly from Victoria to Calgary…the culture is quite different from Alberta.

David provides some detail on what he sees as cultural difference in terms of what people prefer to eat, the way people interact in public spaces, the differences in language, and what he describes as the *feeling* of each place.

David's impressions of cultural difference are interesting in that they problematize a narrow definition of culture that simply accounts for peoples from different countries, and raise an interesting distinction between the concept of *interculturalization,* and that of *internationalization*. David describes his experiences with cultural difference, in terms of values and practices, in his travels across Canada. Internationalization encompasses interactions with other nations, as political constructs, often aligned with cultural affiliations, but not necessarily so. Interculturalization attends to differences in cultural groupings, not necessarily bound by political borders. IE is a phenomenon often associated with internationalization, given the mobility of students across international borders in pursuit of educational capital. However, there is less discussion of IE as an intercultural activity. This space of cultural intersection and potentially conflict is one that arises as prominent in the experiences of the education administrators.

In summary, the early life experiences of the administrators appear a point of distinction. For Amy, Christine, and Evan, each recount experiences of discrimination encountered in their early life that potentially colour their current experience in IE working with international students. Ben and David both came from backgrounds with greater stability and, although not necessarily classifiable as wealth, greater socioeconomic means. For these two administrators, they came to understandings of cultural difference later in their lives and through experiences they chose to participate in rather than having them imposed upon them. Although far from conclusive, the impacts of these experiences suggest there are different ways of coming to IE and understanding its potentialities. However, the ways in which the administrators experience the phenomenon are also shaped by the particular contexts in which they are positioned.

5.2.3 Panel Two Summary

The primary themes that emerged from these discussions include the following: (1) the complexity of the policy environment that IE programs operate within and the influence that infrastructural and geographical limitations have on how these programs are shaped; (2) the crucial importance of policy networks as the administrators attempt to navigate their way through what is still a relatively new and emerging area of school district business in many cases; and (3) early-life awareness of cultural differences and how this awareness is potentially impacted by discrimination and by privilege.

Administrators experience overlapping policy jurisdictions as complex and constantly evolving contexts. These contexts are challenging space for the administrators, who see

themselves as first and foremost educators in many cases without the training and experience to engage international policy contexts. As an example, administrators are required to exercise judgement in terms of enacting local policy for admissions and making the final determination as to whether a student is accepted or denied, which may overlap with the federal policy context for admitting an international student into the country and with the provincial policy context for determining ordinary residence for the purpose of funding. In this way, administrators are taking on powers that they should not necessarily have and may, in most cases, not necessarily want to assume. Yet the IE context has brought about these unique situations in which their judgement becomes final, in effect reshaping aspects of citizenships in what is a federal jurisdiction.

Another area of interest is the degree of autonomy that IE administrators feel in their roles. One potential reading of this autonomy is that there is professional acknowledgement from within district boards and executive leadership that IE administrators have a better grasp of the business of IE; as a result, the board and district executive may be, essentially, staying out of a business area in which they little experience or knowledge. However, another reading of administrator autonomy may be in the volatility of IE from both a political and economic sense. In other words, IE may be seen and addressed as a "hot potato" in the metaphorical sense with senior district officials maintaining their distance from the business of IE to avoid criticism from the public, the media, or staff within the district. A third potential reading of administrator autonomy is that the provincial policy context is largely silent regarding many aspects of IE. In effect, the local context may be taking its cues from the provincial level, and the

result is a space in which the IE administrators enjoy more freedom to administer and shape their programs.

The criticality of policy networks as both a form of professional support and as a form of personal support for the IE administrators is a somewhat surprising finding. In academic research, policy networks have been identified as crucial for how policy is developed and enacted. However, the extension of policy networks and the professional relationships that emerge within these networks into aspects of individuals' personal lives raises questions of quality as opposed to simply understanding the instrumentality of the connections. IE, as a newly emerging area of education, requires work across marketized, global contexts – contexts in which these administrators often have little experience or training in business, or in cultural adaptation, to meet these demands – serves to strengthen their relationships with fellow administrators in their networks. These relationships thus become necessary as the types of institutional knowledge and experience for the business-within-education setting are not available within their normal networks (e.g., with colleagues in their own districts and schools).

The administrators explain that the strain of life on the road, as well as dealing with the demands of caring for minor international students – a role that often requires work after regular school hours and on weekends, when fellow educators in districts and schools are not required to work – is isolating. Isolating both in the sense of being alone while they travel, far from friends and family for long periods of time in many cases; and isolating in terms of not always understanding what is required in different cultural contexts to

achieve the business aims of international student requirement. Thus, relationships within their professional policy networks become a source of emotional support and commiseration with this isolation and the unknowns that shape their work in IE.

The potential impact of early life experience upon, firstly, the choice to take up the challenge of working in IE, and secondly, how they understand this undertaking, is another area of interest. Some of the administrators relate early life experiences in which they encountered discrimination along ethnic or cultural affiliations. These negative experiences had an indelible effect upon them. The administrators explained a particular moment or event from decades earlier in their lives that they could recall in great detail, including the feelings of anger and sadness they caused. A connection was made between these early life experiences and the ways in which they see their current work in IE, as a way to increase (inter-)cultural engagement and experience, and allow young people to break down differences between them and better understand their commonalities.

For other administrators, they did not relate any early life experiences coloured by discrimination. In fact, they identified stable, largely homogenous cultural engagement (i.e., little contact with people from diverse cultures) throughout their youth. It was not until later in life, following graduation from high school and in some cases university, before they began noticing cultural difference. Moreover, the experiences were largely positive and these administrators also point to the cultural benefits of IE for students as a key motivation for the work they do.

In the following panel, I continue this discussion examining the ways in which the administrators interpret the outcomes of IE. In other words, I focus on how they see IE programs playing out and the potential cultural, political, and economic implications.

5.3 Panel Three - Outcomes

In Panel Three, I examine the experiences of the IE administrators in terms of potential and realized outcomes. In other words, I focus on how the administrators see IE programs playing out in terms of cultural, political, and economic ends. Given that IE programs are relatively new in some B.C. contexts, the ways in which the administrators relate these experiences may be in terms of what they hope to see and what they are trying to achieve, as opposed to what is already realized. As educators first and foremost, the economic outcomes of IE are acknowledged but largely subordinated in favour of potential outcomes that better align with what the administrators envision as the educational and social aims of the B.C. Education System.

Interestingly, one of the primary aims of IE programs as identified in my discussions with the administrators is for enhancement of the *cultural* benefits of IE. The administrators describe purposive attempts to enhance and manifest these benefits, which they articulate as *interculturalization*. For all of the district administrators, they claim that interculturalization is primary to their work, over and above enhancing the economic benefits of the IE program in their districts. Moreover, when they delineate the ways in which these programs benefit the district economically through purposing the IE revenues, these benefits are not framed within economistic terms, but in terms of

translating economic benefits into educational value. Both of these outcomes of IE appear to be strongly influenced by the district contexts in which they are working and the level of autonomy administrators hold in shaping how their programs unfold.

5.3.1 The Place of Culture Within IE

In speaking with the administrators, somewhat surprisingly, cultural implications of IE are identified as primary over economic considerations. In reviewing previous research, there has been little to no discussion of culture in the enactment of MOEPs. Nonetheless, the administrators that I spoke with noted a great deal of attention on enhancing cultural benefits of IE within their district, and their community, contexts.

Interculturalization as Purpose

Amy is the administrator who identifies interculturalization within her experiences of IE most prominently, and claims interculturalization as a key aim and outcome of IE. The importance of improving relations between people from different cultural backgrounds is a consistent theme that Amy describes through all phases of her life – from childhood to post-secondary experience, from her early years in the teaching profession to her current work in IE. She characterizes interculturalization as an increased understanding and tolerance of difference between peoples, regardless of their ethnicity, race, skin colour, or any other factor. She stresses that interculturalization fosters learning and enables positive engagement with other people from other cultures, which in turn becomes a vehicle to counter racism and discrimination. These issues were significant early in Amy's life and were incidents she marked as "shocking" and "life-altering." However,

she acknowledges that these early experiences, as difficult as they were to live through, inspired her passion for intercultural learning and, in her words, "started me on my intercultural journey."

Amy states in no uncertain terms that, as far as she is concerned, the primary purpose of the IE program in her district is to enhance intercultural learning for domestic and international students, as well as for educators and administrators; in other words, Amy sees benefit in the form of intercultural engagement for everyone involved in her district. In an effort to bring the values she sees within interculturalization into practice, Amy has undertaken a number of initiatives and instituted innovative new programs to meet this aim. She also takes an active role in delivering aspects of this programming herself, instead of delegating from her role in management. This level of involvement is not consistent for all administrators as their position in the districts allow for delegating much of this type of work to other staff. However, Amy states a preference for getting directly involved, explaining, "I do interculturalization education right on campus in the schools [for students, teachers, and administrators]." This education takes the form of facilitating lunchtime meet-and-greets, as well as in-class engagement activities where domestic and international students interact. It also includes professional development workshops and other forms of training for teachers and administrators.

Amy advocates for these types of activities, and indirectly justifies the need for her personal involvement, given that many people do not recognize the gaps in their understanding in intercultural engagement. She notes that for many of the domestic

students in her district, they have had limited opportunities to engage with people from other cultures given their rural location and what is largely a homogenous local population. Their experiences as B.C. students are, in Amy's estimation, far removed from the much more metropolitan and multicultural experiences of students in the Lower Mainland. However, she sees this as a positive attribute and not necessarily an impediment, given that the IE program presents opportunities for exposure to other cultures and positions international students in local schools as a cultural resource.

One of the primary drivers for Amy's decision to directly intervene and participate in promoting and delivering intercultural education in her district was in response to feedback she heard coming from domestic students:

> [In schools, I heard], oh my god, it's the Asian invasion at our school. They [i.e., international students] are noisy. They just hang out together, and they don't ever hang out with us [i.e., domestic students]…So it was an education piece. I had to go around to classrooms, play *Rafa Rafa* [a cultural simulation game]. The simulation games started to really stretch people [i.e., expand their thinking about different cultures]…which was wonderful.

Her efforts towards developing more intercultural dialogue and bringing domestic and international students together in the school setting is notable given that it does not seem to naturally align with the generally-understood, market-oriented aims of IE programs: growth and revenue generation. Amy's time spent in the schools working with these students toward improving relations would seem to fall outside of the already long list of responsibilities that the IE administrators describe. However, as she emphasizes in our discussion, if the aim of the work is interculturalization, then her time is better spent in the classroom with students working toward improved relations than on the road attempting to increase student recruitment.

An alternative perspective on Amy's efforts might be that given her district's rural location, outside of the consciousness of international students, parents, and agents when thinking about IE in B.C., or more broadly in Canada, extra care and attention to creating a more welcoming environment for international students is simply good business. Putting in the time and effort to improve the reception of international students in the classroom and in the community might lead to a better reputation for the program, through for example word-of-mouth recommendations as Evan noted with his school. This type of positive reputation among select international audiences, particularly agents and key individuals in schools abroad that send students on study abroad experiences, lead to more students choosing Amy's district in the future. Put simply, Amy's efforts at improving the local-level climate for international students through intercultural learning for domestic students, teachers, and administrators could be an effort to positively influence the marketability of the IE program. However, Amy does not voice a conscious effort to connect her intercultural work with the potential business-related benefit of improved reputation at any point.

As she describes it, Amy's intention in offering intercultural workshops it as a "transformative tool" to open new ways of thinking for domestic students. However, she does recognize the value for international students, as well: "we have to help these [international] kids connect in meaningful, purposeful ways. We can't just throw them into a pond and think they're going to [succeed]." As evidenced by her initial experiences working in IE, her compassion for international students and the difficult position they

are put in, being children far from home in a foreign culture and often without the support of family, has been an area of consistent concern for her.

Another innovative local initiative Amy has undertaken in support of interculturalization is a provincial pilot program that furthers intercultural knowledge and experiences for students in B.C. Amy has dedicated a great deal of time and attention to this program, working with the students as a teacher, counsellor, activities organizer, and administrator. Her district was one of the first in the province, and among the first in the country, to put this type of program in place. In more recent years, similar programs have proliferated in many local jurisdictions as part of the provincial pilot from the Ministry of Education. Amy has been key in developing and promoting the program to encourage other districts to join and to support them as they attempt to further intercultural learning in their districts. It is significant to note that there is no revenue-generating aspect to the intercultural program. There is no funding provided by the provincial government, and no cost to students, either domestic or international, who wish to participate at the district or independent school level. The only *currency* involved with the program to Amy's benefit may be her positioning as a forerunner in the interculturalization movement, and as a mentor to other districts or independent schools that become involved.

After her initial introduction to international students, with the single student in her class and little to no support in her district, Amy began to seek other sources of information and support outside of her district. Although she was unaware at the time, this act of looking beyond the bounds of her district for support in the IE sphere would become

commonplace for Amy and for her colleagues in other districts. Despite significant increases in knowledge and experience with IE and international students, individual districts often lack the expertise within their jurisdiction to support these students and their own administrators. Amy then took it upon herself to build her own skillset and develop a knowledge base for intercultural engagement:

> there reached a point where I was looking for something, because my own [teacher] education wasn't enough…then came out this advertisement from [a practitioner intercultural training program]. I thought, what the heck is that? And then I read about it and it was all about interculturalization for people in the industry. [I thought], I need that… I said to my superintendent, I'm going to this. I know this is probably the tip of the iceberg, and I may have to go many other times, but I have to go.

The training turned out to be a very positive experience for Amy, one she now characterizes as, "by far the best Pro D I've ever done for myself." It is also significant to note that in relation to the business requirements of IE, Amy does not describe any attempts to build upon her business skills. Some of her colleagues, such as David, do put in effort toward this aim. However, for Amy, the importance of developing greater intercultural awareness and capacity for enhancing intercultural engagement in her district has far overshadowed any interest in furthering the business of IE.

Another aspect of the IE experience that arises again in Amy's discussions of interculturalization and her attempts to further her own understandings is with collaboration and networking. Amy notes that one of the greatest benefits derived from her intercultural training was establishing a network of subject-expert contacts she could turn to for advice and support as she initiated interculturalization in her district:

> I had the extreme fortunate circumstances of meeting [like-minded colleagues]…I went back the next summer, and I was with [them]

> again…I just love [the program], I love [the people]. I still email them and say I'm in this situation, do you have an article that I can look over. We've got some research that came out that said these kids should not be speaking their own language. So I just fired off [questions] saying the courses I'm taking right now aren't dealing with [this issue]. [One of my colleagues] sent back I don't know how many links. It was outstanding.

Amy notes how having this network of like-minded individuals in support has empowered her to expand the types of intercultural initiatives she has undertaken in her district, as well as allowing her to champion interculturalization on a broader scale in the province. In many ways, networking may be most readily associated with promoting business-related benefits, for example, expanding one's connections to reach more potential customers. However, Amy's view of networking is in terms of empowerment and understanding in relation to intercultural learning, not for the benefit of expanding her IE program in numbers or value.

As her efforts to expand interculturalization in her district have increased, Amy has begun to focus as much upon teachers and administrators, as upon students. For example, similar to what she heard from some domestic students, Amy was made aware of criticisms from the local teachers' union. Specifically, individuals within the union had labelled the IE program, "just a money maker." She felt this perception was largely due to a lack of information about the program, so she set out to open discussions with teachers to shift the discourse. She explains, "I started to have the difficult conversations, and do a few [intercultural] education pieces for teachers, staff and administrators." She also looked for opportunities to expand intercultural engagement for these groups, as many had little international experience, not unlike the domestic students: "I took a few administrators with me overseas [on IE recruiting trips]…and suddenly people were

[changing].” Amy notes that intercultural learning is much more than simply engagement with other cultures; there is process of reflexivity and deep learning that must occur to find common ground. However, she also acknowledges that simple engagement may have to serve as a starting point for people in B.C. and in Canada, who live in areas that do not enjoy diversity in terms of ethnicity and culture.

Amy explains that her work is ongoing with all groups in her district. She is particularly focused on her own staff, acknowledging that administrators and staff in the IE department must be leaders for interculturalization given their responsibilities to the international students they support. Amy explains that,

> [F]or every single staff meeting, there is a Pro D element that we start our meetings with, and every time it’s something that helps them focus on the interculturalization piece. The last time, we actually looked at social styles, how that crosses cultures. We looked at visible and invisible culture, and how to help kids with that…So every [staff] meeting has that cultural piece.

Amy’s efforts to promote and deliver interculturalization within the schools in her district are far-reaching; however, she is also looking beyond the K-12 level for other areas in the community and other linkages where she can affect what she feels is positive change.

One area where this expanded vision has taken root is in Amy’s work with a local community college. She explains, “[the] college has a very, very committed staff to interculturalization and we’re doing a lot of partner work with our college…we’re going to be looking at [joint] professional development opportunities [for teachers and staff].” Additionally, Amy offers her time and expertise in intercultural learning to groups outside of the education system, K-12 or post-secondary: “I give presentations [on

interculturalization] in the community. I go out to Rotary groups. I go out to [other community organizations], any service groups, women's groups, anyone who will listen." As is evident from her work, and even more evident from conversations with her, Amy's passion and deeply-held belief in the benefits of, or more accurately *necessity for*, intercultural learning in her district and her community is a defining aspect of her work.

Amy's thinking in terms of the value of interculturalization training goes beyond simply benefitting her own position and the IE program directly. For Amy, increased interculturalization becomes *the* purpose for IE programs:

> I think without an intercultural [training] program of some sort – I think robust is better, but it takes time to develop that – but without it, there can be huge mistakes…when you see beyond race, when you're standing together to make the world better, that's what it's about. And now I see it even on a bigger scale with our international students and our Culture Club. The kids are going out and volunteering [in the community]…I see the laughter and how the friendships becomes tighter [between domestic and international students], and I think this is what interculturalization is all about.

Although she does not explicate her intentions in invoking the term "race," it is reasonable to infer that Amy speaks generally of the groupings of students within her IE program, who might be differentially aligned by home country affiliation, common linguistic background, geographic region, or whatever other commonality international students might choose to organize themselves by. The politics and affiliations of international students while they are studying in B.C. would be difficult to define from the outside, and would, I feel, require a separate study to discuss with any degree of veracity.

I would also suggest that Amy may not represent a typical IE administrator in the province given her passion for the subject of interculturalization and her conviction to make it *the* motivating principle for IE in her district. However, that said, she is not alone in recognizing the cultural implications of these programs, for domestic and international students, and in fostering time and resources to promote and advance intercultural learning for domestic students and B.C. communities. Ben and David also describe the importance of interculturalization initiatives in their respective districts.

Shifting the Discourse

An important nuance of Amy's work toward increasing intercultural awareness and engagement in her district is a purposive attempt to shift away from IE's close association with revenue generation. As referenced above, the teachers' union representative in Amy's district characterized the IE program specifically as a "cash cow." Amy has attempted to dissuade this connection by highlighting the benefits of the program in terms of intercultural engagement for domestic students. She is not alone in positioning interculturalization in this manner, as her colleagues from other districts are taking up a similar positioning for their work in IE.

Ben, as another example, also discusses the benefits of IE in his district in terms of cultural engagement and moving away from the perception of IE strictly as a money-making endeavour. He explains,

> A new area in my portfolio that I've taken on is the internationalization of the school district…that's an exciting area that we're looking at to move away from the notion that this area is all about revenue

> generation… [but for] supporting students and creating opportunities to interact with international students for local kids.

In terms of actioning intercultural initiatives in his district, Ben has joined Amy and other colleagues in the provincial-level interculturalization initiative. In addition, as head IE program administrator, Ben has been able to direct resources in terms of staff time, teaching FTEs, and classroom space to support of this initiative, along with integrating it into other areas of district programming.

Managing the largest IE program – in terms of enrolment and revenue generation - of the administrators in this study, it is perhaps unsurprising that Ben fields more questions and concerns from the public regarding the economics of IE. He explains, "[p]robably, every year, there are two to three very significant, controversial issues that come up…International [education]…can be a pretty controversial area because it's not the core business of school districts. So yeah, we had some issues." In the face of these criticisms, Ben employs a strategy to shift the discussion away from an economistic focus to one that emphasizes the cultural benefits for domestic students. He also opines that, "international programs can't be perceived to be just, we're bringing them in and churning them out. It can't be that because they'll just [fail]...They can't be just that." Alongside promoting the development of intercultural skills for B.C. students, Ben also states that having IE integrated into the district strategic plan and fostering strong relationships with district and school administrators helps to limit misunderstandings about the program.

In addition to acknowledging the move to promote interculturalization in other districts both in B.C. and across Canada, Ben notes that this concept is not entirely new. He suggests that it is a topic of interest at the K-12 and post-secondary levels, and has to-date gained traction with other branches within his district:

> [interculturalization] is very much on the tip of people's tongues. People call it different things – global citizenship, [or] developing intercultural competency is another one. But within the district, you talk about it and people say, 'yeah, that makes perfect sense. We need to be doing more of that. That sounds awesome. How do we get there? How do we build capacity to get there?' So that's what we're trying to do.

While recognizing that that the notoriety of interculturalization as a concept within IE programs aligns well with other current trends in education, Ben recognizes there is also a danger that it becomes just another buzzword lost in a wave of contemporaneity. More precisely, he identifies the precise work of expanding understanding, tolerance, acceptance, and active participation on the part of students, teachers, staff, and administrators, but suggests these concerns are not solely within the purview of IE programs and may be lost within broader political debates on a societal level.

Ben's insight into this dimension of IE programs, namely the cultural benefits that he sees as implicit and crucial to their value, signals the complex ways in which administrators understand their programs and the place of these programs within the education system and within the broader political community. Ben, like his fellow administrators interviewed in this study, is thus reluctant to promote the purely economic benefit of IE programs – an alignment which leaves the programs open to criticism given the sometimes uncomfortable fit of IE within public education. Ben is, therefore, active in

attempting to shape a new discourse for IE – one that better captures the wider array of benefits that IE programs offer.

Christine is another voice who portrays a similar perspective on the wide-ranging benefits of IE, downplaying the economic and focussing on the cultural implications for domestic students. She highlights her efforts to grow the program not in terms of overall numbers, but in terms of diversification to include international students from other countries. Her fellow administrators also describe efforts to realize greater diversification in their programs. She highlights her view of the non-economic benefits of IE integrating the cultural and political benefits into how she chooses to describe the program to those inside and outside the district:

> I'm not going to do the pie charts that show you the revenue because that's a given. We know that if we are charging fees, there's a financial benefit to that. But, for me, I rarely, rarely talk about that…for me, it's the cultural piece…how good it is for our Canadian kids because, I say, our Canadian students, they don't travel. Our world is getting smaller, they need to have that global perspective. They need to understand from different points of view…They get a perspective of the world outside of the classroom by bringing kids from all over the world into the classroom. So I think of areas like Social Studies, when they're talking about History from a German perspective, World War II, from other countries and so on; economics, [what] does it look like in Brazil right now with their economic issues? That comes into the classroom; Law class, how is it dealt with in a country as compared with another country.

With this recognition, Christine highlights one of the lesser-acknowledged benefits of IE: namely, the opportunity for B.C. students to meet their international peers, learn about where they are from and what they have experienced, and increase their ability to empathize with people in places they have not and may never get the opportunity to visit in person. In other words, IE is a vehicle through which to create a personal connection and raise students' commitment to global citizenry.

Christine also describes her efforts to promote the IE program in the local community and expand the presence of international students in volunteer activities. She sees this as expanding the scope of the impact of IE and the recognition of global interconnections for not only students, but for individuals outside of the school community. She captures the benefit of this expanded presence out into the community in terms of intercultural awareness:

> in the [local] community I was speaking with someone today about [a recent terrorist attack in Europe], and I said, 'you know what, it affects our students. We have 40 kids from [that country], so they're all concerned that they know somebody. They all have relatives [there].' And his comment to me was, 'well, that sure makes [local] citizens really aware of the world outside of [our city], and really connects them. Right?' So even for an adult to make that association, I thought, finally we're making those inroads, which I've always felt. Now it's being verbalized by people in the community…So, yeah, it makes a huge impact. We're not so insular anymore. You know, I tend to think we pay attention to more global…we're just that much more connected.

Christine's recounting of this experience in her local community references back to the concept of globalization and specifically to the perception of a shrinking world in which everyone is interconnected. In many ways, this type of encounter supports a view of IE as carrying cultural and political benefits that reach beyond the classroom to make a positive impact on the local community.

In David's district, interculturalization is also gaining a foothold in terms of awareness and enactment. However, there is less promotion of these ideas from other areas of the district; primarily, it is David alone who is championing its cause. For example, he cites a recent conversation with a district executive in which he attempted to draw attention to interculturalization as opposed to economic value:

> [the superintendent asked me] 'what's the number one goal of our program?' And I said, 'it's interculturalization. That's something you're going to hear a lot of here in the future.' Not all of our kids ever get a chance to go on vacation in Mexico and do all that stuff. Lots of our kids have never left [the town], never been on a plane. This is an opportunity for our kids, to bring the world to [our town]. And for other kids to get to know them, and [develop] a global perspective, and these are the things that we're doing. And that's why [the IE program] is important.

Within this recounting, David frames the value of IE to his district and the students within in terms of cultural engagement and learning they might not otherwise have access to. Here, the geographic considerations of David's district come into play in a manner that might appear less relevant for students living in more metropolitan areas with greater multiculturalism. David's recognition of and attempts to promote IE and its cultural benefits in his district underscore how problematic it may be to accept a narrow perspective of IE without acknowledging the range of understandings and meanings it may have in varying geographic and educational contexts.

David provides another example of the realities of his district context that emphasizes differences between regions of the province and the potential value of the non-economic benefits of IE. He explains,

> we just had kids that went to [a conference in the Lower Mainland] that had never been on a plane before…[we have] kids that have never left our region. How powerful is it for them to meet someone, become friends with someone from another country, another culture, and get another perspective? And then maybe stay connected with them through social media…widening their lens [on life] that way.

This situation brings up another benefit of IE, in terms of piquing the interests of domestic students to seek intercultural engagement through their experiences in and out of school settings. Along with bringing international students to his district, David has also worked to promote the participation of domestic students in short-term study abroad

activities. He notes that, although the opportunity for more senior high school students to go aboard may seem to have evident benefits, for many students and families in his area, international travel is not common. Thus, convincing domestic students to participate is more challenging than assumed. Connecting domestic students with international students and exposing them to people from other cultures has, in David's opinion, greatly increased the willingness of local students to take an interest in the broader world and participate in exchange activities.

With the examples from David's district, once again, the importance of context to the ways in which administrators understand and chose to implement different initiatives within the space of the IE becomes clear. For administrators who work in more multicultural districts, such as Ben, or for those who have already invested significant time into educating their staff and executive, such as Amy, the types of initiatives they choose to promote interculturalization may differ. However, for David, a slower and more nuanced, strategic approach beginning with something as seemingly small as participation in study abroad is crucial to create a foothold for IE within the district.

Another example that David provides in terms of recognizing differences in district context is illustrated when he is asked to explain what the IE program is to people from the general public who are not familiar with international students. Although he claims a personal perspective on IE that privileges cultural benefits, he notes that often he feels the need to start with the economic benefits of the program before attempting to communicate the more intricate benefits of a concept such as interculturalization:

> I tell them the financial stuff first [i.e., revenue generation and no cost to local taxpayers] because that's what they want to hear. But then they're pretty open to [ideas like] not all our kids get to travel or meet people from other cultures, [so IE can] kind of open that global mindset…They're more receptive after I say [IE] doesn't cost any money [to the district].

Despite the learning curve he identifies for local people in terms of understanding the cultural benefits of IE, David feels that they are gaining traction as the local community begins to see the benefits. He conveys plans to grow the IE program in his district, which is already relatively high-profile within the homogeneity of the local population, given that international students are finding success and the community is increasingly welcome.

Indigeneity and Interculturalization

An area of note that arose alongside discussions of interculturalization with the administrators is Indigenization. Within B.C. school policy contexts, Indigenous (Aboriginal) Education has become increasingly prominent. In alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2008) and the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015), recognition of Indigenous Peoples and their perspectives have been purposively incorporated into education policy and curriculum design in B.C. This intention is perhaps most clearly represented in the revised K-12 B.C. Curriculum, implemented between 2016 and 2018, which weaves in Indigenous Knowledges and Perspectives implicitly and explicitly. Given the high profile of this emerging policy area, which has been accompanied by the seeking of greater input from Indigenous Peoples into education administration at the provincial level and within individual districts (First

Nations Education Steering Committee, 2018), recognition of intersections with IE under the mantle of interculturalization could be anticipated.

Amy describes the overlap between IE and Indigenization noting that Aboriginal cultures were integral in how her district is imagining interculturalization. She notes that explicit efforts have been made in "connecting the [local] Aboriginal communities with our international students" for the sharing of cultural backgrounds. In some ways, Amy reveals a strategic alignment for IE acknowledging the emergence of Indigeneity in the district and provincial education policy landscapes, and suggesting that it is crucial to "connect with Aboriginal leaders [in the school and community] so that we [IE program] are not in isolation." Within this acknowledgement, Amy is reiterating the concern of IE programs existing outside the core business of the school district and identifying the value of strategic alignment between IE and Indigenization.

It is important to note that Amy's interests in promoting these alignments are not only strategic, in the sense of legitimizing IE from potential opposition in her district. In her first teaching experience in a northern B.C. school district, she describes extensive experience with Aboriginal students and the local Aboriginal community. She emphasizes that these relationships and learning about some of the challenges they faced was formative for her role as an educator: "that started my education and that became my fight, to fight for these kids." Amy later explains that in her current district, "[we have] a really active Ab(original) Ed(ucation) community…[it] is something that has always been really pivotal in this district. Really committing [to engaging and understanding

Aboriginal culture and perspectives." Her active involvement in Aboriginal education prior to heading up the IE program provided a depth of understanding and empathy that have allowed her to integrate challenges and affordances into a complimentary perspective of interculturalization.

David shares a similar perspective on the overlap between interculturalization and Indigeneity in his district and the provincial education policy contexts. Early in David's career as an educator he worked with a colleague planning and running summer camps in a local First Nations' community. Later in his career, during his graduate studies program in Education he received formal training in integrating Aboriginal knowledge into pedagogy and curriculum. David opines that, "[this training] gave me great perspective [with] a big Aboriginal focus to it. It prepared me well for teaching in B.C." Taking this previous education and experience, David explains that he explicitly attempts to highlight and capitalize upon the linkages between IE and Indigenous Education in his district: "Sometimes we try to pair international students with the Aboriginal students for activities [to share their cultural knowledge]." Like Amy, David's work in promoting interculturalization from the position of IE within his district may in some respects be recognized as complimentary with the aims of Indigeneity.

5.3.2 Economics Within IE

For many observers outside of the IE sector, including colleagues in the education system, administrators acknowledge that IE is still most readily equated with revenue generation. In some cases, it may be exclusively linked to revenue generation. However,

administrators raise the necessity of understanding not how much revenue is generated, but how that revenue is purposed within districts when translating it to educational benefits.

In speaking with administrators, perhaps one of the most surprising aspects of our discussions is the complex manner in how revenues generated from international student tuition fees are purposed and in how this purposing plays out. For the administrators in this study, the majority have access to a portion of the IE revenue to be put back into the program budget under their management. However, they once again bring up subtle differences in how IE programs unfold district-to-district, noting that some of their colleagues have access to very little of the revenue their programs generate with most of the revenue going back into general district spending.

In Ben's district, his program is well-supported with revenues being reinvested back into IE. He notes that a strong relationship with district senior management affords this benefit and is coupled with significant autonomy for how he and his staff are allowed to manage the program. Ben begins the discussion of revenue allocation by clarifying that international students receive no funding from the district:

> When they come in, they're designated international…they have an international student advisor or counsellor, but that wouldn't be much different than a domestic student. And those folks, the advisors and counsellors, are funded…with the [IE] tuition revenues that come in, so it's a separate amount

Ben points out that revenues from the program, and not taxpayer dollars, allow his district to carry one of the largest staffing groups for IE programs in the province. His staff includes a district office responsible for IE student support, homestay, and marketing and

recruiting, as well as international student support staff at each school in the district. He explains that the IE program staff in schools are primarily assigned to international students, but often function as shared resources available to the school community as a whole. For example, a school counsellor funded by the IE program may provide support for international students adjusting to school and life in B.C., but they would also be available for domestic students who are recent immigrants or refugees going through similar acculturation challenges. A similar situation would occur with Educational Assistants assigned for English language support. Ben notes that, unfortunately, these derivative benefits from the IE program are not always understood or acknowledged by individuals outside of the IE branch, whether those people are working in the district or people in the general public.

Another area that Ben highlights in terms of bringing unacknowledged benefit to the district is with respect to international students filling seats in classes and schools that might otherwise be vacant. He explains that when his district first entered into IE over two decades previously, the primary intention was to fill seats from a declining domestic student population that would allow the district to keep schools open:

> in terms of how it started, I think there were people who wanted to come over, there was declining enrollment in the district, and it suited a bunch of needs. There were other districts doing it at the time. There was revenue being generated and people were happy with that.

Ben's statement here recognizes an important consideration: namely that the origin of the IE program in his district was not motivated by revenue generation. Although he is not able to provide great detail, given that he was not present for the origin of the program, he does cite a number of considerations that were present outside of profit motivation.

In terms of additional residual benefits from international students in the current district landscape, Ben suggests that,

> at the school level, all kinds of courses are opened up and classes are offered at lower enrollment numbers because of all the international students that go there. So some schools with larger percentages of international students would have a difficult time offering all these courses [without the international student population].

In particular, the one area where these additional course options are perhaps most significant is with advanced mathematics and science classes. Although it perpetuates a stereotype of students from particular ethnic backgrounds, Ben suggests that having high-achieving academics-oriented international students at some schools without a history of offering Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses now allow them to do so, with the majority of students in the class being international. However, the domestic students in the class would not otherwise have this opportunity without the international students given that schools are unable to open a class and provide an FTE teacher for a limited number of students. This derivative benefit of international students in B.C. schools is little acknowledged, more often inciting the opposite reaction in terms of criticisms of international students preventing domestic students from accessing certain programs.

In addition to the funding that is reinvested in the IE program, Ben explains that a significant amount also goes to the district to be used in support of other educational programs in the district:

> The other piece about the way that [IE revenue dispersal] happens in my district is a big chunk of the money goes back to the district, and the district uses that to fund all kinds of things…So, yeah, I mean, I feel good about the way the fees that come in support the district and schools.

He raises an interesting point since discussions of IE revenue naturally seem to take on an economistic frame, but within his understanding, the revenues translate not into dollars and cents, but into educational value. This value benefits both international and domestic students in the form of additional counselling or language support services, opening seats in specialized classes, and contributing to other district programs. Although he addresses the issue of potential inequality between domestic and international students, explaining that the tuition fees more than cover the services provided to the international students, Ben does raise the issue of potential inequality between school districts (Fallon & Poole, 2014).

In Christine's district, revenue distribution for the IE program is similar to that described by Ben. She is also given autonomy over how her internal program spending is allocated: "So [the district executive and board] don't question me [on IE program spending]. There's a piece that I'm allowed to put back into the program." Although the current arrangement regarding revenues is acceptable to Christine, she is adamant that her district continues to reinvest the revenue from international student tuition fees in the IE program, unlike in other districts where her colleagues face greater pressure to deliver increasing revenues with a decreasing program budget. She uses the following colourful descriptor that summarizes her feeling toward the revenue arrangement: "don't just be a *digger*, don't just keep on coming in and taking, like a big claw, you know, just dig it out and take it. Don't be that. Let me put back into the program." Given her student-first orientation, Christine's concern is that any funding cuts to her program will reduce her ability to provide the types of supports that international students require for success.

In terms of benefit to the district as a whole, Christine notes that the IE revenues "allow us to create extra classes [accessible to all students], hire an additional, probably right now, 12 teachers…[and create] work within our own program to hire educational people, and our secretaries." Like Ben, she also recognizes the benefits of having international students in classes, particularly in specialized programs, to ensure the classes will have enough enrolment to justify a teacher FTE:

> at the school level, it has also allowed us to create courses, like an ELD [English Language Development] course; [so] where a [domestic] student may have difficulty in an English 10, this allows them to join in with international students that works at a pace for their own literacy [development].

Like Ben, Christine performs a similar calculation considering IE revenues in terms of educational value for staffing, support, and additional classes that benefit domestic students as well as international students.

As another facet of the IE funding allocation in her district, Christine is responsible for administering funding directly to schools to support students at the local level. Christine's branch of the district office provides some support services directly, but having dedicated counsellors in every school provides an additional level of support that she feels is critical for success. She speaks from a position of experience in this regard having begun her work in IE with the district as a school-based counsellor – a position she greatly enjoyed and still misses given the daily interaction with international students that her current position does not often allow. Christine explains,

> [w]hen they take the students, we provide a stipend to the school, and that allows them to use a budget for many, many different things that from their own budget accounts [i.e., provincial education transfer funding] that they would not be able to use. So that could be anything from buying extra supplies, for example, like a brand new stove for the

> Cooking class that they just don't have in the budget. It could be a class set of calculators. It could be new cameras for the school. So there are some big-ticket items that this [money] allows them to use for that…and it benefits not only international students, but it benefits Canadian students. So for example that new stove, all the kids that take that Home Ec[onomics] course, it benefits them. Those calculators, it helps students that can't afford to buy their own calculators.

Christine also dedicates some of the IE program funding to expenses that might be considered extraneous, or at least falling outside of the category of educational support. However, from her perspective, these activities are integral to helping international students adjust to study and life while living abroad:

> So one of the things we did was the app [i.e., a mobile device orientation application with information for international students]. We throw some of that money toward activities…we had a Christmas dinner [as a cultural activity for international students]…we organized a spaghetti dinner. The [homestay] families came, but they paid nothing. We put it on. We paid for that. We bought prizes, and we had a little [draw] to bring them together and show appreciation. And [the district] don't question me, like, oh, you're spending money on that? [I feel] you need to put back into the program to grow it.

These activities – activities that as Christine notes may seem extraneous to the primary work of offering an educational program – can be a crucial aspect of success for international students in terms of supporting them through the challenges of acculturation for studying and living in B.C.

From an economistic perspective, IE at the post-secondary level is often discussed in the same breath with the K-12 level. However, the needs of the students, who at the K-12 level are still minors and often unaccompanied by their parents, can be significantly different. With her previous experience as an international student counsellor, and likely in no small part to her lifelong commitment to education, Christine recognizes the value of supporting international students through the acculturation process, regardless of the

economic considerations. In other words, through holding the dinner events for students and homestay families, Christine is working toward building a sense of community that will, ideally, help international students adjust to life (not only study) abroad.

One final example in terms of derivative benefits of IE comes from my discussions with David. Like Christine and Ben, he identifies the benefit of expanded class availability for domestic students that becomes much more important given the rural district context and the relatively small domestic student population that often does not have access to specialized programs:

> we run more programs because we have the international kids…it's an extra section of Physics or an extra section of Chemistry. Pre-calculus is able to run. Those subjects are able to open multiple sections instead of just one because we do have those international kids.

He notes that over the past few years, the ability and flexibility afforded by the IE program to hire additional teachers or provide additional FTE blocks has also been well-received by teachers and school administrators familiar with the constraints of working in a smaller district. David specifically cites recent equipment upgrades to the Automotive Shop and the Robotics Lab as having been drawn from IE revenues. Again, these types of considerations may be of little concern to larger districts where there is great flexibility to offer more core programming and more specialized programming based upon having a much larger population of students, and the associated funding affordances that brings. However, for a smaller rural district, the difference can be significant.

5.3.3 Articulations of the political in IE

The most overt political consideration that emerges from the administrators' experiences in IE is the potential immigration pathway for international students who come to B.C. for study. Administrators also describe encountering controversy in public meetings, in the media, and within their districts. However, this issue appears largely constrained to situations in which parents of domestic students felt their child had been displaced by an international student (i.e., *stealing a seat*). On a daily basis, administrators note that situations such as these are less prevalent than criticisms with an economic focus (i.e., revenue generation in public school districts).

The recognition of IE as a pathway to immigration is not a revelation, given that it figures prominently in the *B.C. International Education Strategy* (2012) and *Canada's International Education Strategy* (2014). The pursuit of skilled immigrants ready to contribute to the province and the country has been a consistent message not lost on IE administrators. However, the administrators in this study are responsible for the K-12 level and not the post-secondary level. In post-secondary studies, students are closer and more likely to be considering immigration, whereas for K-12 students, it is still a long-term goal. Of note, the instances in which former international students graduate from Grade 12 in B.C., go on to post-secondary study, and then remain in the province, are presented by the administrators as success stories. The administrators show a clear sense of pride and, often, personal connection to these students.

Immigration Pathways

When asked about what he feels are his greatest successes from his more than 10 years experience in IE, Ben cites former international students staying in B.C. to live and work near the top of his list. In the course of our discussion, the question of how many former international students have immigrated or received permanent residency is one to which he reacts extremely positively:

> I probably have 10, 15, 20 stories I could dig up, and it's great. I've been doing it 10 years and I walk around the city and I bump into students, and they're still here…it's funny, it's more often female students, and sometimes they've just decided to stay and sometimes they've met a significant other.

Ben speaks of two types of pathways for international students who successfully graduate from Grade 12 in his district, and then stay beyond: one path leading to post-secondary study in the province, but then electing to leave B.C. after post-secondary completion; and the second path leading to longer-term immigration for students who are able to find employment after completing their post-secondary studies, or in some cases, international students who marry and stay in the province.

Listening to Ben relate these stories, it is clear that there are a variety of aspirations held by international students coming to B.C. There is also a wide range of international students that belies the stereotype of all students coming from wealthy foreign families and using their financial means to buy a seat in a B.C. school. Ben provides one particularly suitable illustration to contradict this stereotype:

> The one I always like to talk about is our very first student from Hanoi. And she is connected to one of these agents that I have a lot of time for. Anyway, I did a seminar at a hotel in Hanoi and this particular agent came to the seminar thinking it was a Canadian seminar briefing…She just misread the information and it's some random guy from a school

> district, me. I do my talk on [my district] and the B.C. system, and she says, oh, that sounds really good. I only work in the UK [United Kingdom], but that sounds really good. [She] meets with me after and says, 'would you like to have lunch with me and my friend. Her daughter may come to [your district]. I have no idea about Canada, but something seems right about this.' The mother comes and we have some spring rolls, and she's like, 'yeah, this sounds great. I trust you.' We go for dinner that night as well and I meet the student and she's just a wonderful student from a foreign language school in Hanoi, which is a very good school. And three months later, she's in [this district] studying. A year and a half later, she graduates from one of our high school and gets into [a Canadian post-secondary institution] on Honours, and finishes in four years. And now she's working in [a major Canadian city]. And her parents, because they love [this town], they love the country, they brought their son over, he studied in [Canada]. And now they've moved. They've all moved over and they were in [another part of Canada] and now they're in [a major Canadian city]. And mom, I think she's kind of a property manger. Dad is a piano teacher. Really interesting family, really good family. And that's the kind of thing that I say, 'that's great.' That' s a win for Canada, right? For B.C, [and other areas of the country], too."

The potential for attainment of full citizenship through K-12 study is clearly within scope for the ways in which Ben envisions IE. Given the strong relationships he has been able to establish with international students and, in some cases, their families, Ben is an advocate of this path for some students. The implications for citizenship afforded through IE programs is not raised as a concern.

Amy takes a similar position, acknowledging that immigration is occasionally a consideration for some international students when choosing to study in her district. However, she notes this is usually not students' primary motivation. Amy's district is located in a more rural area of the province and, thus, her IE program draws a specific type of international student who is attracted to this context. According to a report released by BCCIE, in 2013/14, over 90% of international students in B.C. K-12 schools

were concentrated in the Lower Mainland region (British Columbia Council of International Education, 2016). Additionally, Amy's district does not boast highly-ranked high schools that attract international students who are focused on post-secondary entrance. Many of the students who choose her district are interested in the experience of being in Canada, improving their English language skills by living in a community where they feel they will have to speak English regularly, and enjoying outdoor activities that the region provides. Few of these students are set on moving along an immigration pathway.

In summarizing her experiences with international students studying in her district and then choosing to remain in the area either for post-secondary study or otherwise, Amy relates,

> I wouldn't say it [i.e., immigration] is common. But some [international students] are starting to leave, go to a major urban center, immigrate there and then what they do is they come back for holidays to [the area] to visit their friends. I bump into them quite frequently. But in terms of stay here, go to post-secondary and stay after, that's less common, but it happens.

Once again, the context within which Amy works must be considered as it is a rural area of the province with only one modestly-sized post-secondary institution. This institution provides fairly limited course and career path options, certainly when compared with larger post-secondary institutions in the urban center of the province. It is, therefore, not surprising that international students graduating from the local district would move away for post-secondary study. This consideration may also be a constraint on Amy's recruiting potential as international students and their parents may see the K-12 to post-

secondary pathway in her area as less viable than a larger city with more post-secondary institutions and more program choices.

Although Amy admits that she has not seen a great deal of immigration to her local area in her experiences with IE, she nonetheless sees growing potential for more international students in her district to identify this aim. Amy takes on a province-wide, and in some cases nation-wide, lens when she considers the topic of immigration. Well-aware of the political impacts, she view immigration as a whole in a positive light:

> When I first started that [i.e., immigration by international students in her district] never happened. And now it is definitely happening…I think immigration is going to grow here…more and more. I really feel that the Chinese have an incredible entrepreneurial spirit and they are masters at it. So, what we're seeing is [immigrants] coming here and starting businesses. It's really only going to help this area, and the B.C. economy. I see it as a very, very positive thing. We see that with the Koreans that have come over and that have stayed. They love it. They love the fact that they believe…Canada has integrity. Yes, there is corruption everywhere, but when you deal with government, you don't have to slip something under the table to get something done that you want to do. That's a big attraction. Many of our students…not many, but I would say 25% at least will say at some point, I don't think I can go back. I don't want to live that life.

Amy expresses a sense of pride as she describes the benefits of a life in B.C. and more broadly in Canada. This is an interesting perspective as, in some ways, it may be seen as a generalization of cultural values: in other words, all people coming to Canada are looking for the same values and potentialities that they are not able to find in their home countries. However, Amy's years of experience in IE have led her to encounters with countless international students and parents that cite these very values as the reason for which they are looking at Canada for study.

Another aspect of how Amy sees benefit from IE specifically in relation to the political community is in the benefit of interculturalization. She advocates for intercultural learning and understanding as a pillar of social cohesion provincially, nationally, and globally:

> I think no matter what you do when you start extending beyond your district, you have to look at what is happening provincially. And when you have any politician who is silent on, let's say, bringing in Syrian refugees or is badmouthing another province or whatever, that hurts all of us…There's just so many things that happen provincially, and used to happen federally – we can't just think as a province [in terms of intercultural learning and understanding]. If our Prime Minister doesn't embrace diversity that little pockets of us will be exempt from that overall view of Canada…So I really think that any politician – I don't care if they are Conservative or Liberal – but if they are somebody who really embodies all of the important intercultural skills that we as citizens feel are important, or that we feel other citizens should be adopting…just the way [the current PM] has embraced the Syrian refugees, it has sparked our refugee community in [this area]. They've tried to stay active, but [not with much success]. It has sparked it and brought on new people and many of them are [school] district [employees] because our district wants to be part of doing it, because it's right. So I don't think you can ever get that far away from politics in education, because politics does control, even in a small community like [this]. What's going on federally and provincially affects what's going on locally.

She notes that cultural issues span political and geographic contexts from the local to the national and she includes within her understanding of interculturalization issues such as First Nations' Reconciliation, the Syrian refugee migration, and international students coming to B.C. as part of IE programs. For her, interculturalization is an instrument of hope that can unite peoples and places, unquestionably with overt political implications intertwined with cultural implications. And for Amy, her IE program is helping to achieve that politico-cultural aim through small and large measures in her district.

Christine acknowledges the pathway from the K-12 level to the post-secondary level of study as a strong attraction for international students. She is able to fondly recount many examples of international students that have graduated from high school in her district and utilized their Dogwood Diploma – an alternative descriptor for the B.C. Graduation Certificate - to go onto success in post-secondary study in B.C. and in other parts of the country. Christine maintains contact with some of her former students, and fondly recounts opportunities she has had to reconnect with them in person when she is abroad recruiting. Through these international connections, Christine's experiences of IE become very much about personal relationships she is able to develop, the lives that she connects with, as opposed to simply revenues and opportunities.

Christine provides specific examples of former international students who she has remained in touch with, even after their graduation from the district:

> One of my Japanese students here [pointing to a photo], he created this [a photo collage] for me. And then, this guy, he's priceless. Like, when I go back to Japan, I always meet up with him. He's married now…[Another student] she went on to [the local university]. She was one of my first ones I had [at my former school], and I remember having her in my Psychology class. I put her in that because she couldn't speak English, but she was lovely. But she stayed and went to [the local university], and she married a Canadian, and she's now in Japan right now because they had a baby girl, so they've gone back for when she's little. But when she starts back to school, they're coming back to Canada. So they wanted to give her that Japanese background, and then they're moving here. We had a Chinese girl marry a Canadian student. I think they live [locally]. So there are still a few in the area. I'm trying to think…most of them tend to go to the bigger universities. They used to go to the States when they first arrived. Not anymore, now they're staying in Canada. Yeah, I can think of one of our Korean boys is at McGill, and he's doing really well there. Only a couple have stayed in [the immediate area]."

In relating her experiences, Christine touches on the notion of a stronger affinity beyond individual personal relationships to a more general sense of connection with other

countries, cities, or communities from where international students come from. Christine emphasizes that the strength of these bonds is often most evident in times of crisis:

> [E]ach country is different, learning about every culture and how you deal with them is different. It's amazing and to me the world is so much smaller – when you hear about the earthquake in New Zealand. It's like, I have friends there. Or, this just happened in China, I wonder if our students are okay. [Another example from] Japan, all those things, when those natural disasters happen, your mind goes to I have friends there, whereas I think for other people it's like, oh, that's really too bad that that happened there. They're so disassociated from them, whereas we're in the thick of it, always thinking about the world, globally, the whole world. I never was interested in American politics, but now it's like so amazing because it will impact us hugely. The world is smaller for me, definitely much smaller. And even when I travelled because, at that point, I was still a tourist. And now, some of these countries are…they're not a second home, but I have an investment in those countries. So it's interesting to watch and sometimes heartbreaking to hear, you know, in Brazil just how economically challenged they are and how difficult it is and how can we support them during this time as business partners.

This notion of "shrinking the world" that Christine raises echoes descriptions of the broader phenomenon of globalization.

Globalization is attributed with connecting the world through economic, political, and cultural systems. However, how individuals deal with these effects on a day-to-day basis at the micro level is less clear. Christine provides the example of connections made through IE that allow her and others in her community to relate to far-off locations in a more personal and connected manner. In some senses, IE may be explained as an effect of globalization. Through an alternative lens, IE may be positioned as a way of coping with globalization, of understanding concepts and effects that are immaterial, for the most part, and impersonal to individuals. In an abstract sense, IE may be discussed in relation to intercultural contact and cultural learning, but in terms of individual experience, it is about human contact and personal relationships.

Christine clearly recognizes the linkages between IE and post-secondary study, on some occasions transitioning through to immigration. For many B.C. school districts and independent schools, the post-secondary and potential immigration pathway can be a key aspect of their marketing and recruitment pitch. However, this is not universal and depends heavily on which country they are in:

> Most of your Asian countries, they may ask you [about immigration potential]. So, Vietnam will ask you. China, but I haven't been back there for a long time, so I don't really hear those comments…Who else always asks? And it always got frustrating. So, Korea, Vietnam, it was frustrating going to those fairs because it was never about selling your program. You always ended up answering a lot more immigration questions. Yeah, those are the two that I remember. Sometimes from Brazil, but not very much, though.

In her description of international students and parents seeking post-secondary pathways through K-12 graduation in B.C., Christine touches upon concerns with IE as a loophole for access to citizenly rights:

> Korea, absolutely [sees K-12 as a pathway], because parents…that was the loophole that the Ministry had, was that if you come to Canada and you take ESL [English as a Second Language], your kids get free education. And so they were finding the loophole, right. And they were getting their kids to get a free education. So they were looking at that as a way of immigrating, definitely.

The "loophole" that Christine refers to is regarding funding transfers from the provincial government to school districts for resident students. International students whose parents hold a valid study permit, through acceptance and subsequently attendance at a recognized B.C. post-secondary institution, may enrol their children as resident students in school districts and independent schools. If students are accepted as "ordinarily

resident"[12] by the local school board or independent school authority, they are eligible for provincial funding, explaining Christine's use the term "free education."

Although she describes the potential for international students whose parents are studying in B.C. as a loophole, Christine identifies no concern with fee-paying international students in public school districts. Like Ben and Amy, Christine sees international student revenues as a benefit to districts and to B.C. resident students. Within this distinction between fee-paying international students and those deemed ordinarily resident and eligible for funding, Christine seems unaware of her role in this process: in effect, she, like her colleagues in other districts, is positioned as a "gatekeeper" for immigration. In her role as an IE administrator, she is responsible for identifying prospective international students, encouraging and supporting them to apply for study in B.C., and approving their applications for admission. In other words, the fate of an international student wishing to enter a K-12 international education program with long-term aspirations for immigration to Canada rests with Christine, Amy, Ben, and others sitting in administrative roles with these programs.

In terms of political implications from IE programs, Evan comments on post-secondary study opportunities and institutional preference by international students and their families:

[12] Ordinary residence is part of a funding policy set by the Ministry of Education for the purpose of determining a student's funding eligibility. The policy provides a number of guidelines by which this determination can be made, including visa status, ownership of property in the local area, a provincial driver's license, and a number of other considerations. However, this policy is applied at the discretion of the school board or independent school authority in the local area against the assessment of whether or not the student's parent(s) has a 'settled purpose' in the community.

> They [international students] want to continue to post-secondary in Canada, in some cases to the U.S. [United States], but more and more kids seem – and this is a shift -more and more kids seem quite happy to study in Canada. It used to be, oh, everybody wants to go to the best universities in the States. It was always in the States. And I think more and more Canadian universities are being successful in convincing kids that they are equal to the task. So a lot of kids want to go to the big guys in Canada, specifically, UBC [University of British Columbia], U of T [University of Toronto] and McGill…But I'm also finding - and I think this is in some cases because reality sets in and there are a lot of kids that will not get accepted by UBC because they just don't have those kind of marks – more and more Camosun [College], Royal Roads [University], smaller universities are okay. And that used to be really shameful for a lot of the international parents because everybody wants to be able to say, my son got accepted to Yale or Harvard.…And more and more we have kids that are okay to be at Camosun. And that's a switch.

Evan highlights this shift in institutional preference, from a bias by international students and families almost exclusively toward top-ranking post-secondary institutions to more readily accepting other potential pathways most notably through local colleges. This pathway is little understood in the international market for K-12 education, but presents a potentially significant route that may see more international students taking advantage of this option moving forward.

Interestingly, Evan attributes this broader acceptance of more Canadian post-secondary institutions by international parents to the active work of the IE sector in B.C. He explains that he and other colleagues in IE have long-lobbied international parents and agents to better understand the Canadian post-secondary system and the alternatives that are available in terms of career paths:

> I think that's partly because we're educating them [international parents] that way, and we're saying you don't have to go to McGill to accomplish what you want. And you don't have to become an engineer for that matter. You can do other things that are equally meaningful in life and they don't have to be this huge prestigious job that your parents are kind of gunning for.

With this admission, Evan is positioning himself, and other IE administrators, once again as gatekeepers who are figuratively ushering international students and their parents to additional immigration pathways that they may not be aware of. However, his experiences are not of acting as immigration promoters, but as educators who are acting in the best interests of the students to help them achieve their educational and life goals.

Intersecting Political Jurisdictions

Another aspect of IE that administrators raise is the incidence of intersecting political scales. In other words, I am referring to situations and concerns that span across municipal, provincial, federal, or international jurisdictions. The issues faced by the IE administrators in navigating these spaces become more challenging given that they are outside the scope of work for educators who are trained and experienced in delivering locally-focussed educational programs.

Perhaps the most prevalent and important concern for IE in terms of intersecting jurisdictions is in the area of study permit approvals for international students. Evan describes his experience with international student study permits as an overlap of federal, provincial, and local guidelines. He provides the same example of determining funding eligibility, in relation to the status of "ordinarily resident" that Christine referenced. Evan notes that the Federal government sets the criteria necessary for individuals from other countries to receive a study permit and determines if these criteria are met. Provincial and municipal jurisdictions do not have a role in this process. However, it is a provincial

concern given that international parents holding a valid study permit may, by provincial education operating grant policy, be entitled to education funding.

These spaces of federal and provincial policy jurisdictions then intersect with local school board or independent school authority, as these bodies are responsible for interpreting and applying the provincial policy. Each board and authority are responsible for having a local process by which the provincial funding policy is applied. This means that, in some cases, even if the international parent holds a valid study permit, as issued by the IRCC, they still may not qualify for provincial funding. The local board or authority may include criteria in the determination of "ordinarily resident" that goes beyond the parent holding a study permit. Evan notes that, in his experience, there has been contestation in cases where this policy is interpreted by the school authority and the determination of "ordinarily resident" is denied, thus requiring the student to pay international student tuition fees. However, the intersection of the policy jurisdictions creates these spaces where determinations are not clear and are subject to interpretation in enactment.

Interestingly, Evan provides insight into how determination of ordinary residence for international students is made at his school. He explains,

> I have to say [to international parents] that no matter what your status is, no matter where you're from, if you're coming from overseas, for the [full school] year you are an international student. No exceptions… if you're coming from overseas, this is the tuition that you pay until the second year and then we'll renegotiate…[the decision for this policy] is pretty much me, and I don't have to go to the board. I pretty much get that rubber stamped by the principals – principal in this case because it would be mostly the high school principal. And I really inform the business office, the business operations person because they pretty much leave it up to me.

Evan's ability to establish the school-based interpretation of this policy illustrates the influence that a single individual can have on the policy enactment process. Despite the overarching policy jurisdictions of the Federal and Provincial governments in this case, the local-level policy actor, Evan, is ultimately the decision-maker. Although this may not be consistent across district and independent school contexts, particularly for larger administrative bodies that have more complex policy processes, smaller districts and independent schools may offer similar environments. As captured above, both Amy and David, working in smaller district contexts, claim a great deal of autonomy over how IE policy is developed and enacted.

In addition to the example of determining ordinary residence, Evan provides a more general perspective on IE programs and how policy is enacted. He notes,

> every program all over the province, all the districts, all the independent schools, there are little adjustments you have to make. You know, there are little issues that come up, there are complaints, there are you know problems with homes – there's so many considerations within these programs, they're so complex. People look at it and think of it as almost unidimensional – oh, it's international students…but it's not [that easy with] all these aspects [to consider].

Evan's description is poignant in that he directly refutes broad homogenizations of IE programs as being uniform and draws attention to the importance of context for each district and independent school. Education policies, particularly at the provincial or federal level, are of course intended to create similar guidelines or standards for these different scales. However, Evan references the issues and concerns that arise at the local level and may lead to differences in how policy enactment unfolds in these settings.

5.3.4 Panel Three Summary

A central theme from the administrators' experiences with actioning IE is a focus on expanding the cultural engagement benefits for domestic and international students. All four of the administrators suggest that much of their planning and work is going into delivering cultural benefits, such as increased intercultural learning and engagement for domestic students, and a more culturally aware and accepting environment for international students. Amy is the primary example for this aim as she has positioned interculturalization as the primary purpose of her international program, both in terms of benefitting the district and schools, as well as the broader communities across which the district spans. The other district administrators describe similar intentions, but have not implemented programming and activities to the extent that Amy has in her district. Nonetheless, the cultural aspects of IE programs are foregrounded by all administrators to far outweigh the economic benefits that have been well-outlined.

In describing the economic implications of their programs, the district administrators describe an understanding that translates IE revenues directly into educational terms. In other words, for these administrators, IE does not simply deliver revenue, but instead it delivers tangibles such as improved educational programming with the hiring of additional teachers, counsellors, or education assistants, and the provision of equipment that schools would otherwise not have access to. It is important to note that the administrators highlight the fact that domestic students directly benefit from the additional instruction and support in the schools, not only the international students. Moreover, there is the benefit of having international students fill empty seats in cases of

under-enrolment in some districts or schools, and justify the opening of additional classes that domestic students would not otherwise be able to access. Although viewed as an indirect benefit of IE, the availability of additional classes for B.C. students in some areas of the province, but not in others, raises the issue of inequity between districts (Fallon and Poole, 2014).

The benefits and outcomes from how IE programs unfold in specific initiatives and practices are often seen by the administrators in non-monetary terms. In other words, the economic realities of IE as a sector that brings in significant amounts of revenue through international student tuition fees is not necessarily a determining factor in how the administrators articulate their experiences in IE. As acknowledged, the administrators may be positioning IE in this manner to better align with their sensibilities as educators. As Ben states, "we're not selling cars." However, it may also be that Ben does not want to imagine himself as, or be seen by other as, "selling cars." In either case, the cultural implications of IE are presented by the administrators in a light that had not previously received much attention in education research, and may signal an area that is in need of further study.

In terms of political implications understood by the administrators, there is strong awareness of the potential immigration pathway that IE presents. It is worth noting that immigration is not often direct from the K-12 level, being mediated by post-secondary studies, for the majority of international students who opt for this path. Thus, the administrators are somewhat removed from this direct connection, with many

international students who study at the K-12 level never intending to follow the immigration route.

5.4 Triptych as a Whole

In this chapter, the administrators' experiences with understandings, contexts, and outcomes of IE programs have been presented as three panels of a triptych. Taking up a different perspective to view the triptych as a whole, these three frames are intended to inform one another in a reciprocal manner and provide a more holistic view of the phenomenon. In this section, I draw connections between these considerations of understandings, contexts, and actions. My aim is to identify areas of overlap and intersection where these factors complement and, in some cases, contradict to shape how IE programs unfold and are experienced by the administrators.

5.4.1 The Constitution of Hybrid Spaces From IE

The economic implications of IE programs draw much of the attention, as noted, both in terms of criticism of these programs from within the professional context and as an important consideration for the marketing and recruiting work of the IE administrators. The criticisms of these programs, emerging centrally from within school districts from administrators or teachers and from the media and general public, contest the for-profit motivations of selling seats to non-resident international students – a consideration many feel is outside the mandate and purpose of public education – and, in some cases, concern for displacement of domestic students as a result of international students taking up seats in public schools. While the majority of administrators in the study downplay the

importance of revenue-generation as a motivation for their work and as the primary aim of their programs, it nonetheless factors into their understandings of IE programs and their actions, particularly in relation to marketing and recruiting. As Christine explicitly states, it is understood that IE operates as a "business within education."

There is an interesting contradiction between the ways in which the administrators state their understandings of IE, their own purpose within their roles as IE administrators, and the actions they carry out in undertaking these roles. For each of the administrators, they espouse what can most readily be characterized as an education-first/student-first approach to their work. As noted above, each of the administrators is trained as a classroom teacher and all started her/his career in education in the classroom. Their sensibilities as educators have carried over to their work in IE administration as the importance of educational quality and the experience of international students studying B.C. are at the forefront of how they describe their experiences.

However, all of the administrators acknowledge that they are engaged in marketing and recruiting work that fulfills the business imperatives of the IE sector, strategizing and planning to take into account the unique aspects and conditions of their district settings to identify and enrol students who, ideally, will fit their districts and be successful in their studies. There is not necessarily a contradiction at the root of this work. However, there are market realities and locally arising constraints that shape how they recruit and market. Despite the uniform characterization of low-pressure district contexts in terms of generating revenues for all of the administrators in the study, there is nonetheless work in

understanding the global, national, and provincial landscapes in terms of competition that must be considered.

The importance of policy networks that cut across these competitive spaces is another consideration that potentially complicates the business within education contradiction. With the common instance of career educators in positions as IE administrators in districts, as demonstrated by the four district participants in the current study, there is clearly a higher degree of educational knowledge and experience over business knowledge and experience. As revealed in my discussions with the administrators, there is little to no business expertise and, in some cases, little interest in developing this acumen. In this vacuum of knowledge and lack of support from within their districts, administrators rely on policy networks to share best practices, particularly among administrators from different districts within the province – administrators who should, in a marketized climate, be competitors.

It is possible that in these relationships, administrators are in fact acting in their own self-interest to gain information from competitors to improve their own situation in the marketplace. However, all of the administrators describe these relationships as collegial, for the most part, and given their lower-pressure operating contexts in terms of generating greater revenues, perhaps their comments may be taken at face value. It is important to note that this lower-pressure context is not uniform across the province, so other administrators who are participating in these policy networks may be doing so in the hopes of gaining an advantage. This potentiality is also interesting given that some

districts have begun hiring administrators with previous business experience, and in some cases experience in education settings, to manage IE programs. Although this shift to more business expertise in the sector is not widespread, with the majority of IE administrators coming from education backgrounds as teachers or from other positions in education administration, it may signal an evolving environment for IE moving forward.

David represents an exceptional case in this study given his conscious attempts to improve his business knowledge by seeking mentorship from an acquaintance working not in education, but in commercial sales. It is of note that the unique setting of David's district was influential in pushing him to establish this relationship for marketing advice on selling the region and the community in which his district is located. Thus, David's marketing materials and the presentations he makes to international students, parents, and agents may include techniques and emphasis drawn from other business sectors. Specifically, this manifests as an emphasis on particular aspects of the natural landscape that appeal to international audiences, and on the unique educational experience that international students will receive in a safe, small-town environment. Additionally, David has begun working with other smaller rural districts that are interested in entering into the IE sector, and David is providing mentorship. The potential for even more extensive isomorphic change within the sector and in the provincial IE landscape is thus possible.

The other administrators claim much less attention to the business side of their work, in some cases even claiming an aversion to the description of their role as marketing and recruiting as in Ben's case. Amy and Christine espouse a student-first perspective that

focuses on educational quality and success for international students in their districts, while crafting marketing approaches to attract students in competitive global market. Through this balance, the administrators feel they can reconcile the apparent contradictions between public education contexts and the business requirements of IE. To stand outside the contexts in which they are working and determine the extent to which they are successful in these endeavours is not the aim of this project. However, it is nonetheless of interest how the administrators navigate and attempt to come to terms with these emerging *hybrid* contexts – "hybrid" in the sense that business and public education appear to be distinct, not generally coexisting in the same space, but now coexisting in a manifestation of endogenous privatization (Ball & Youdell, 2008).

An interesting shift in the IE landscape on the public school district side is with the appearance of more IE administrators who come from a business, or more specifically marketing, background as opposed to education. As noted, all the participants in the current study are lifelong educators. However, they acknowledge that some of their colleagues in other districts do not have this background in common. As Christine notes, holding a similar conversation with one of these individuals could produce a very different set of impressions and responses. Unfortunately, none of the districts that employ IE administrators with a business background chose to participate in this study. Undeniably, the absence of these perspectives is a limitation for this work, and would represent a valuable area of study in future research.

In Evan's independent school, the contradiction of a business in an educational context seems less of a burden on his understandings and on his work. As noted, Evan claims little pressure to recruit international students and generate revenue from international student tuition fees. Additionally, the provincial policy context for independent schools is, like the School Act for public school districts, not prescriptive for how IE is to be carried out. Independent schools, like Evan's school, are able to establish their own parameters for the IE program. In this context, Evan is able to position the IE program in a manner that aligns with the broader vision of the school and, in doing so, shift the meanings of the program away from a marketized orientation. As noted in our discussions, he is aware of the broader global markets in which IE is enmeshed. However, he is grateful that these demands have little effect on his school and on his work.

5.4.2 Spaces of Autonomy and Overlapping Policy Contexts

One of the consistent themes to emerge from discussions with the administrators is the way in which overlapping policy contexts within districts create a space in which administrators enjoy relative autonomy in carrying out their roles. This autonomous affordance shapes the way that administrators understand their programs and are able to bring the programs into being through the implementation of particular policies and initiatives toward their program goals. There are a number of ways in which to understand why and how affordances of autonomy emerge for administrators in their particular district contexts and how this impacts the IE program.

As noted in the previous discussion, the provincial policy landscape for IE is relatively limited in terms of shaping the sector. There is no specific policy from the provincial ministry that speaks directly to recruitment, admissions, or other aspects of IE, outside of the International Student Graduation Policy. Notably, this policy only applies to international students who are seeking to complete the B.C. Graduation Program in Grades 10-12. Within B.C.'s *School Act*, there is no provision specifically for IE. Funding policy to establish ordinarily resident status is relevant, but also not confined to international students only as it applies to all non-resident students (e.g., students from other parts of Canada who move to B.C. for study). In other words, there may be seen to be a dearth of provincial education policy in relation to IE.

This type of hands-off approach to IE in the province may be reflected in the districts, where the IE administrators describe considerable autonomy in how they are able to administer their programs. Although districts do, in many cases, have policy regarding the admission of non-resident students to public schools for a tuition fee provided no domestic students are displaced, local board policy is also minimal. As specifically noted by Amy and David, as well as by Evan in his independent school setting, the majority of IE policy has been created by their hand, often in an *ad hoc* manner as issues arise. Receiving board or school authority for approval of any new policies has been little more than a formality as the administrators are trusted for expertise in this area. Additionally, IE has not often seen detailed long-range planning as with other areas of district business. In other words, IE has flown for the most part off the radar. This relative vacuum in the policy sphere from the district level appears to have been filled, at least in some part, by

sharing within policy networks of district IE administrators connected across the province.

Taking Amy's context as an example of how overlapping policy spaces and local district conditions afford administrator autonomy, she has been able to exert considerable control over how her program is shaped. In Amy's case, she has been able to establish increased interculturalization as primary aim seeking to bring international students into the district for mutual benefit: namely, for international students to gain the experience of a B.C. education, but just as importantly to expose domestic students to different cultural perspectives and ideas. Amy has also worked to expand the benefits of cultural engagement and increased cultural understanding to school and district staff, teachers, and administrators, as well as to the local community. Motivated partially by experiences with discrimination from her early life and a resulting drive to help people from different cultural backgrounds avoid conflict, Amy sought out opportunities for developing her own skills and knowledge with interculturalization. The serendipity of ending up in a district with little pressure on program growth and revenue generation, mainly as a result of geographic location and the disposition of the local board, has allowed Amy to drive forward her agenda for the IE program as an instrument for realizing increased intercultural awareness and understanding.

Looking more closely at potential explanations for why the board in her district has taken a relatively relaxed position regarding the program, a number of possibilities emerge. Firstly, as mentioned above, it may simply be that Amy has earned trust as a skilled

administrator in establishing and shaping the IE program, affording the board a level of comfort in allowing her to derive maximum benefit from the program whether in terms of economic, cultural, or educational benefit. Alternatively, it may be that being from a smaller, rural area, the board and the district executive lack the collective expertise to provide Amy more direction. Specifically, there may be a dearth of business expertise and international experience to exert more influence over the program. Thirdly, it may be possible that, given the potentially negative reaction from the local community or from individuals within the district (e.g., teachers, staff, administrators), IE is sufficiently risky that the board and district executive prefer to remain at a distance to manage the risk of more direct association and control. In a worst-case scenario, if the program were to come under scrutiny or excessive criticism, the board would be in a position to minimize its exposure (i.e., avoid direct implication) and cut the program with relative objectivity. Given the close association of IE with revenue generation and the somewhat unnatural fit with public education, this third option may simply be understood as self-preservation.

Amy is not alone in enjoying autonomy in administering the IE program in her district, or in taking up interculturalization as an overriding aim. The positioning of IE at the edges of core school district business and a lack of local-level understanding for how these programs operate and what potential, outside of simply generating revenues, they may hold, add to the ambiguous spaces in which IE exists. The administrators are then afforded latitude in how they choose to shape their programs, taking into consideration the impacts of dominant factors from their local contexts, such as a declining or increasing domestic enrolment, and from national or even international contexts, such as

fluctuations in the Canadian dollar or foreign currencies impacting competitiveness with other English-speaking IE jurisdictions, or changes in demand with particular international student groups. Within this complex space, administrators suggest that although revenue generation has been, to date, the most prevalent aspect of IE in the public consciousness and in public debate, they are searching for ways to realize the potential cultural benefits over and above the economic.

It is notable that Evan does not identify the same concern for interculturalization within his independent school context. It is possible that the fit of IE within independent school contexts may raise less controversy, given that all students in independent schools have tuition fees charged for education. It may also be possible that, given the faith-based context of Evan's school, the need to explore other facets of IE is less of an imperative. In other words, the understanding of IE as an economic undertaking has been to date the most prominent aspect of IE in the public education settings of the other four administrators. However, in Evan's independent school, the alignment of IE with the religious beliefs of the student, international or domestic, and the student's family may outweigh any economic concerns.

5.4.3 IE as Pathway to Opportunity

Political implications of IE programs are evident in the ways in which administrators describe their understandings and experiences. The potential for international students to view IE programs as pathways to post-secondary study and ultimately immigration is a reality. However, this expectation is neither uniform, nor universally desired by all

international students. Once again, the failing of overgeneralization comes to bear without recognizing that the international student population is not homogenous; in fact, the differences between international students' intentions and aims with studying in B.C. can differ from student to student, and most certainly from population to population. The specific contexts in which administrators are located, the audiences to whom their programs are marketed, and the students that eventually arrive in their districts, whether by design or by happenstance, are all factors that shape how the political implications of IE emerge.

For administrators such as Ben and Christine, both located in districts closer to the metro center of the province and with larger international student populations in comparison to their fellow administrators, Amy and David, the potential of immigration is a topic of discussion that arises frequently with some constituencies of international students and their parents in the process of recruitment. As Christine notes, she is often asked about the potential of immigration for international students coming to study in B.C., although predominantly from parents and agents in a small number of source countries. Ben deals with a similar line of questioning, also from the same small group of countries, and relates a number of success stories from strong students who entered the IE program in his district, completed their studies and moved onto post-secondary, and ultimately ended up staying in the area on a long-term basis. Again, the geographic location of the districts, and the related potential for finding employment given the larger population and proximity to the metro center are cited as a great draw for these students and their families. Amy and David cite fewer discussions in which immigration arises.

It is notable that Amy acknowledges a recent trend in which a wider range of students are expressing an interest in studying in her district with an eye on staying either in the province or in the country for post-secondary studies. This may in some ways be linked to a broader global trend where post-secondary institutions in larger cities are becoming saturated with international students (Xu, 2017). Increased competition among international students for positions in select B.C. post-secondary institutions may then be pushing some students to look for other post-secondary options outside major centers that still offer the potential for post-graduation work and immigration. A significant limitation for both Amy and David is that their areas of the province have no local university, only community colleges. Although there is some progression from Amy's district IE program to the college, students with an interest in the post-secondary route have traditionally been forced to move to metro centers, either in B.C., Alberta, or Ontario. In a limited set of examples, Amy explains that international students do not often come back to her district for long-term settlement. David's situation is similar, despite the relative success of the IE program: there is limited translation into post-secondary study in the local area, and few international students look to stay long-term for work or settlement.

The ways in which these smaller, rural districts are perceived by international students and parents, i.e., less in terms of pathways to post-secondary and potential immigration, in turn affects how the administrators choose to promote their IE programs. Amy and David are well-aware of these constraints, but approach them as positives. They address these preconceptions by emphasizing the unique aspects of their districts in their

marketing and strategically putting their time and effort into recruitment in source countries and relationships with agents who are able to connect them with international students interested in their districts. In other words, they create a niche for themselves that some students may still find attractive although they lack what larger districts are able to sell.

These examples illustrate how market demand influences the ways in which administrators might see their own districts, particularly in comparison to other districts, and perhaps more importantly on how they understand their own roles in IE. External contexts also come to bear on IE programs in the province with the ways in which a collective market might come to view a given country, province, region, or city. As an example, what has been dubbed the "Trump effect" is cited as a boon to the Canadian IE sector with agents and parents guiding international students away from educational experiences that may be coloured by discrimination against foreign students (Choudaha, 2018; Lewington, 2018). Once again, the connections between distant contexts come to bear on the IE sector in B.C. and on individual districts despite being geographically far-removed and having, on the surface, little to nothing in common. In this way, IE is affected by global trends in politics, economics, and culture in ways that other areas of the K-12 public education system are not.

Evan's experiences with international students interested in moving from K-12 to post-secondary studies differ from IE administrators in the public education sphere. He identifies a history of international students who attended his school with the aim of

gaining acceptance to larger universities with strong global reputations, such as the University of British Columbia, the University of Toronto or McGill University in Canada, or Ivy League schools in the U.S. However, he notes that in the past couple of years, a few international students attending his school have become more receptive to the potential of entering a local community college. Once again, this may be a similar effect to what Amy identified with international students feeling the squeeze of B.C. post-secondary institutions in major centers nearing capacity for the number of international students they accept. Moving forward, this trend toward greater international student interest in attending post-secondary institutions at the college level rather than exclusively at the university level, as has been the historical pattern, may be one worth monitoring as the political implications of IE potentially become more pronounced in other areas of the province.

In the following chapter, I continue the discussion of the study findings reflecting upon the research questions that have guided this study. I also provide some thoughts on implications from the study and suggestions for future research. I complete the study by revisiting some of the limitations and then providing concluding thoughts.

Chapter Six: Discussion and Conclusions

Primary findings from this study include the emergence of hybrid policy spaces from MOEPs and the struggles of the district administrators to understand and negotiate these spaces. In the previous chapter, I presented the findings in relation to International Education (IE) programs in B.C. school district contexts, which I positioned as case in point of MOEP enactment. In this chapter, I discuss the results of these findings in terms of emerging global education policy contexts and how these administrators, previously bounded by the district jurisdiction, are experiencing these policy spaces. I then examine how this phenomenon and the outcomes identified by the administrators raise questions regarding the future of public education in the B.C. context.

I open the chapter by restating the aims of the study and the research design. My discussion of the findings are framed through the metaphor of the triptych examining administrators' understandings of MOEPs, spaces of enactment, and outcomes of MOEPs. Central to this discussion are the hybrid spaces of business within education in which these administrators move and how they understand who they are becoming and what they are to do. I also look at implications and potential future directions for research that may continue to develop our understanding of MOEPs, including the utility of the phenomenological approach in education policy research. I close the chapter by acknowledging limitations of the study and offering some final thoughts on how this study impacted me as researcher and as a policy actor.

6.1 Restating the Research Design

The research problem for this study was understanding how education policy actors experience MOEPs. Although the phenomenon of MOEPs has received attention in education research, little existing research examines MOEPs from the perspective of policy actors at the local (e.g., school district) level exploring how they experience and understand these policies. The literature review revealed that much of the existing research focused on the effects of marketization upon policy actors and a potential shift in their orientation toward more market-oriented outcomes. However, administrators described the negotiation of hybrid spaces, comprised of business imperatives within a public education environment, as much more complex and challenging than simply a marketized climate. The work of understanding these emergent, alien contexts and their attempts to acquire the types of skills and relations (i.e., professional capital) to succeed in these spaces characterized their experiences.

I adopted a phenomenological research design to explore the experiences of the district-level policy actors. Although acknowledging that phenomenology is not often employed in education policy research, I felt it was an appropriate approach for this particular problem to get at policy actors' experiences and unpack the ways in which they live these policies. In addition, I utilized the metaphor of the triptych to conceptualize the different contexts that shape the ways in which enactment of MOEPs plays out. Specifically, the triptych is effective in relaying the spatial and temporal aspects of context that characterize phenomena. A secondary benefit of the triptych is to convey the experience of the phenomenon through multiple panels that can be read as simultaneously

independent and integrated. My aim with the triptych was to make the outcomes of phenomenological inquiry more accessible to readers.

The lead research questions were as follows:

1) How do district-level education administrators understand MOEPs?
2) How do district-level education administrators experience MOEP enactment in school district contexts?
3) What outcomes do district-level education administrators see from MOEPs in school district contexts?

6.2 Discussion

This section is organized along the triptych's three subsections: understandings of MOEPs, spaces of enactment, and outcomes of MOEPs. These subsections illustrate facets of the phenomenon in terms of understanding the phenomenon, reading contexts in which MOEPs unfold, processes of policy enactment, and outcomes of these policies as they play out.

MOEPs in public education contexts force the marriage of worlds that in many ways are not complementary. Policy actors caught in these evolving hybrid spaces struggle to adapt what they know and what they understand about education to the imperatives of the business world. These processes are turbulent as policy actors are forced to gather new knowledge and develop new skills to achieve their aims – aims which may remain grounded in prioritizing educational outcomes despite market-imposed imperatives.

6.2.1 Understandings of MOEPs

What emerges from administrators' understandings of MOEPs is clearly a public education landscape that is evolving. The imposition of market forces, afforded by MOEPs, creates a hybrid climate in which marketing and entrepreneurship, supply, demand, and increased competition between public school jurisdictions plays out on a global scale. These spaces are governed by overlapping policy contexts from the local, provincial, federal, and international scales that bring into play competing political, economic, and cultural interests.

Administrators do not specifically describe the spaces in which MOEPs are unfolding as hybrid. I have adopted the notion of *hybridity* recognizing it as the combination of two (or more) distinct, and potentially competing, elements (Kraidy, 2005) captured within the administrators' experiences. Hybridity is exemplified in the experiences of a business within an education context, but also in terms of how elements of the global policy context impinge upon the experience of the local (i.e., the school district). I would argue that hybridity is also useful, as an analytical concept, in terms of contesting a linear view of MOEPs as economic phenomena to acknowledge, in addition, political and cultural aspects, as well.

There is precedence with hybridity as a concept in education research. For example, Balarin (2014) employs hybridity to capture shifting organizational landscapes in public education systems in England and Peru. She notes examples of the commodification of education in these countries and the recasting of public education as a public/private

hybrid. Kraidy (2005), on the other hand, notes that hybridization is “a risky notion” given that it often lacks specificity for how the distinct elements come together and how these elements might be reconciled. In employing the concept, I have attempted to speak to these tensions and depict how they play out in the experiences of the administrators. Defining these policy spaces as “hybrid”, global contexts is not intended to render them opaque, but to draw attention to these contrasts and interrogate how they are experienced and understood.

As an example of how these tensions between competing elements within a phenomenon are engaged, the administrators described how they attempt to reconcile a marketized climate within an education context. Massey (2005) is a social geographer whose work is useful in conceptualizing this effect. Massey contends that space should not simply be seen as air between locations, but instead be understood as constituted by social relations imbued with political and economic interests. She suggests that space is not a backdrop against which social life unfolds, but an active influence on how events unfold.

For the construction of evolving hybrid spaces, Massey’s work is relevant for questioning the shifting boundaries of educational contexts, given the new parameters of the MOEP climate, and how new forms of governance may come to bear on what may be viewed as a local practice. School districts may appear, and for some be experienced, as bounded political jurisdictions within the broader provincial policy space. However, as MOEPs bring the global market into public education spaces, economic, political, and cultural considerations not previously part of this landscape become relevant for the

administrators. Thus, what emerges is a reconstituted space for education with new and still evolving forms of governance.

Hybrid, Global Policy Contexts

In B.C, the majority of policy governing IE programs has been established at the district level. The provincial government has taken a limited role in terms of governing this space. Thus, the administrators experience relative autonomy in their work establishing policy at the district level for their individual programs. Autonomy within their districts is also common where there is little expertise from other staff or administrators in the districts with navigating the emergent hybrid space of a business within public education. Translated into working conditions, the administrators are largely left to establish their own business practices and determine how to work within these emergent spaces. However, the imperatives of the global market and overlapping policy contexts create what is a new, constantly evolving governance structure.

Karlsen (2000), in a study on education governance strategies in Norway and British Columbia, invokes the notion of "decentralized centralization". Karlsen explains that decentralization generally connotes a shift in power or responsibility away from the center to the periphery. However, he notes that in some cases, it may simply be the delegation of tasks to the periphery to carry out policies that remain centrally established. Thus, although there is the appearance of decentralization, authority remains with the centre. Karlsen also notes that the phenomenon of decentralized centralization may occur in cases where the center is not able to maintain control. He does not elaborate upon this

depiction but possibilities could include challenges in terms of capacity for maintaining centralized control, or perhaps regulation in another form (e.g., the market).

The lack of central, provincial-level policy governing MOEPs in B.C. appears to reflect some of the processes and hybrid dynamics referred to by Karlsen (2000). The observation that it would be challenging to centrally govern this space, particularly considering the external policy contexts that are also in play, could explain administrators' experience of autonomy. In other words, given the dispersion of governance over the local, provincial, national, and international policy contexts, administrators feel less direct control from the provincial level and interpret this as autonomy. However, there are nonetheless policy parameters, not to mention the role of the market, in shaping this space.

Within this space there are very clear expectations of processes and outcomes. Administrators are expected to recruit international fee-paying students to their districts and how successful they are in executing on this expectation is largely governed by external factors. Some examples of external factors, but certainly not an exhaustive list, include global supply and demand, changes in local, national, and regional economies, or policy changes in the areas of immigration, support for study abroad, or credential recognition. In other words, despite claiming autonomy in their districts to establish local policy and guidelines, the global space of IE is not without coding. As Massey (2005) notes, conceptualizations of space should account for simultaneity in that there may be effects occurring from disparate places and being experienced by individuals in those

places at once. Individuals in a particular location, such as educators within a school district, may interpret the local as bounded. However, for the IE administrators, their experiences within the MOEP climate suggest educational spaces are being reconstituted in ways that have previously not been understood.

Professional Capital and Shifting Identity

A correlate of this experience for the administrators is that the emerging hybrid space raises questions for administrators in terms of how they see themselves and how they understand their roles. Previously, the administrators held strong identities as educators with the core purpose of delivering a strong educational program in clear boundaries of the classroom, the school, and the district. However, these policy spaces are being redrawn with less clear boundaries and a business-within-education requires different types of knowledge, skills, and experience. These impacts attributed to marketization reflect what Ball and Youdell (2008) characterize as processes of "endogenous privatization". Ball and Youdell note that endogenous privatization fosters changes in attitude toward individuals and their roles, as well as how they are "judged" within their professional context. This depiction is seemingly applicable for the emerging business-within-education climate as the administrators face a disjuncture between the skills and knowledge they bring as educators and the new skills and knowledge that are now required. The result is a crisis of professional identity.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2012), in their work positing a new path forward for education change and innovation, provide the concept of "professional capital" in education

settings. They state that, “professional capital refers to assets among teachers and in teaching that are developed, invested, accumulated, and circulated in order to produce a high yield or return in the quality of teaching and student learning” (p. 49). For these researchers, professional capital includes a range of forms including human, social, moral, symbolic, and decisional capital. In their analysis of the Finnish education system and a potential explanation for the efficacy of their teachers, Hargreaves and Shirley suggest that educators who hold capital in these various forms are able to find success.

For the administrators in B.C. districts, the emergence of a business-within-education and global policy contexts necessitates the need for different types of professional capital. For the most part, the administrators held similar background in terms of their educational and professional training (e.g., teaching practicums), as well as their professional experience within the public education system. This background provided the type of professional capital to be successful. Moving into roles as district administrators in other areas of district business (e.g., Human Resources, Finance, Curriculum), it is possible that they would have experienced a lesser gap between the knowledge and skills they had acquired and the requirements of the new business area. However, the MOEP climate has proven much more challenging.

The administrators unwaveringly identify themselves as educators. They emphasize a focus on the educational success of the international students in their programs. They also accept responsibility for a caretaker role for these students that extends beyond the classroom and the school. Considering these students are minors living in a foreign

country often without parental or other family support accompanying them, it is perhaps not surprising that the administrators take up this responsibility. Despite this persistent focus on the educational dimension of IE, the business requirements of the role and the effects of the global market require responsibilities for marketing and recruitment. Administrators acknowledge that coming to terms with these new responsibilities – responsibilities with which they had no prior experience – poses challenges in terms of maintaining their identities as educators.

The requirement for these new forms of capital, which may not be immediately or readily evident to the administrators given their lack of familiarity with the new climate, may serve to destabilize understandings of who they are in the new environment. As long-time educators, their positions were well-understand and comfortable in terms of knowing what was expected and required. However, the shift to IE is, as one of the participant administrator's describes, was "a whole new world." In this whole new world, different positionings are taken up by the administrators perhaps in an effort to hold onto the identities that they are familiar with. For example, another of the administrator's argues forcefully, "I don't consider myself a salesman…I don't do that." While another of the administrators, the one participant from the independent school world, chooses to avoid the effects of the marketized climate by holding steadfast to the foundation of his and his school community's shared faith. He notes that IE has never been about getting more students or about the money associated with their recruitment. It has always been about aligning the IE program with their shared beliefs. In each case, it may be that some of the

administrators are looking for something to hold onto, to ground themselves in the face of these new demands.

Alternatively, other administrators describe processes in which they must go out and actively build their knowledge of and skills in this new environment. In other words, they are seeking new forms of professional capital to allow themselves to be successful. Within this process, there is necessarily an understanding that the knowledge and skills they bring as long-time educators are no longer sufficient to achieve the same level of success that they previously enjoyed. This tension may be at least in part the feeling of breaking lo0se from a previously solid identity as educators and shifting toward what they are becoming.

It is notable that the work of education researchers such as Ball (2012) and Lubienski (2005) points to the influence of marketization shifting the orientation of education policy actors to more business-like thinking. In some ways, this rings true in that the administrators must acquire new skills related to business functions, specifically marketing and recruiting. However, it does not change the ways in which these individuals identify themselves: as educators first and foremost.

In the following section, I discuss spaces of policy enactment. I bring the administrators from this position of requiring new forms of professional capital and struggling to establish their identity, while simultaneously entering the hybrid space of overlapping

policy contexts and market pressures coming to bear on their work for their school districts.

6.2.2 Spaces of MOEP Enactment

A key aspect of translating understandings of MOEPs into policy enactment is how policy actors read contexts. This work is integrated in the development of professional capital, in terms of building knowledge of and experience with new contexts. The second part of this section delves into another aspect of professional capital development in terms of developing policy networks to draw expertise and navigate these new contexts.

New Readings of Policy Contexts

The work of reading contexts is important to the policy enactment process in that how individuals understand the contexts they are entering into affects their decision-making processes. Standing (2007), a researcher in the field of nursing, links the reading of contexts to clinical decision-making. She utilizes phenomenological inquiry to unpack how nurse practitioners read contexts to determine a particular course of action in a particular situation. Standing argues that as the practitioner understands her/his role as a nurse – an understanding that may vary from individual to individual – it shapes their decisions in practice. Standing's work helps to connect the process of identity formation (i.e., understanding what the role is) to action, or enactment, within professional contexts. The education administrators now find themselves within evolving contexts that they experience not as isolated, politically-bounded school districts, but permeable spaces now influenced by national and global policy contexts.

In experiencing this new climate, the administrators point to a myriad of, what "new" policy influences that were not previously a part of the public school district policy context. The school district is of course the boundary within which the administrators have the greatest familiarity, experiences, and understandings. Local school politics are often largely constrained within these boundaries, and within the provincial policy context given that education is a provincial jurisdiction within Canada. However, the emergence of the MOEP hybrid space has shifted the ways in which the administrators experience these contexts. This shift raises questions as to how "local" may be understood, given that the administrators now experience these boundaries as permeable and frequently influenced by policy decisions in external policy contexts.

School districts, even within the phenomenon of MOEPs, are still very much conceptualized within a local politically- and geographically-defined space. In his examination of IE program leadership in B.C., Davis (2017) highlights the primacy of the district context on how education administrators understand and enact policy in these programs. His findings suggest that, despite the impingement of external policy contexts, the district context remains paramount. Davis notes that the political and geographic context of the districts largely determines the ways in which the program and the administrators' roles play out. His findings are supported by the administrators in the current study, who also discuss the importance of the district context. Two areas of specific identification by the administrators include perceptions of autonomy and

engagement with other dominant policy directions in the district setting (e.g., Indigenous Education).

In terms of autonomy, all of the administrators, including the independent school administrator, identified autonomy as a key characteristic of their experiences working in IE. However, there was clear indication that this is not the case for some of their colleagues who work in much more constrained district contexts, despite being in the same province. In many ways, autonomy was identified as dependent on district senior leadership, extending in some cases to the board level, and on the IE program meeting expectations for international student enrolment. Internal district capacity was a key feature of program expectation and, notably, one that the administrators did not directly control. For example, smaller rural districts have modest targets for international student given constraints of school/community size and perhaps even more importantly available homestay capacity. In these examples, administrators reported little pressure on them to meet program expectations and greater autonomy in their roles because of limited pressures. The administrators from larger programs also indicated limited pressure on them given their programs were also meeting expectations of senior district leadership. In all of these cases, the affordance of autonomy then allowed for the administrators to focus on other program aims, such as interculturalization.

Interculturalization, identified as a prominent aim for IE administrators in some districts, represents an emerging discourse within B.C. school district settings. Interestingly, interculturalization appears to emerge separately from within IE programs, at least as

identified by the administrators, from the more dominant policy discourse of Indigenization. As noted in the Findings Chapter as part of Panel Two, administrators described efforts to align IE with Indigenization initiatives in their districts. Two of the administrators identify the aims of interculturalization and Indigenization as complimentary in some respects. Although not explicitly articulated, a focus on building knowledge of cultures and on unpacking cultural difference to get to a place of understanding would seem a common aim within both discourses. These two areas, interculturalization and Indigenization, may represent an area for further research to examine how competing policy discourses are being engaged within each district; in particular, study could focus on potential overlap and points of friction, as well as on how the political-economics of district contexts shape dominant discourse. Consideration for what the administrators identify as increasing influence from external contexts may also impact broader policy regarding Indigenous Education, particularly through the B.C. Ministry of Education, which identifies Indigenization as a key deliverable.

In defining external contexts that shape their worlds in terms of IE, the administrators describe impacts from the provincial and federal government levels, as well as from foreign policy jurisdictions. Their experiences align with descriptions of an emerging global education policy context as articulated by Robertson (2012). This global education policy context demands a re-imagination of how "local" is bounded and how it is understood as it becomes increasingly enmeshed in a highly complex global policy field. The ways in which the administrators are experiencing these emerging spaces, with influence from traditionally unrelated policy sectors such as immigration policy at both

the national level in Canada and from foreign national contexts, highlights this complexity. Reflecting back upon Robertson's assertion that new conceptual and methodological tools are now necessary to capture these emerging policy spaces, the depictions from the administrators uncovered through phenomenological inquiry resonate as illustrative.

The work of reading contexts is ongoing for the administrators as there is constant evolution in how the policy spaces overlap, integrate, and contest. Working within their district policy contexts, and often in collaboration through the provincial IE organization, the administrators develop policy in reaction to decisions in foreign jurisdictions. One example provided by a B.C. IE administrator was the decision by the Japanese National Government to significantly increase the number of Japanese students studying abroad (Japanese Ministry of Education, 2018). The administrator noted that this policy decision led to increased focus in her district in terms of focusing recruitment efforts on international students from Japan, as well as adjusting recruitment aims from other jurisdictions. The implications from this policy decision in a foreign national jurisdiction had political, economic, and cultural implications for B.C. districts in terms of impacting where marketing and recruitment resources were being deployed, which networking connections were being activated or capitalized upon, and how internal resources in B.C. district IE programs were being optimized to potentially host more international students from a specific country. This example highlights a somewhat counter-intuitive declaration by one of the administrators, namely that the provincial education policy context, which would in some cases be presumed to have greater impact given the direct

influence of the Ministry of Education over B.C. districts and independent schools, has in practice less impact on the IE sector than foreign policy jurisdictions.

Remaining current on these geographically- and conceptually-removed policy spaces is in itself highly challenging, particularly given the wide range of foreign jurisdictions from which international students are drawn. Newly emerging policy networks have thus been instrumental in how administrators understand and adapt to these spaces.

The Experience of Policy Networks

Policy networks are a form of professional capital accumulated to have success in one's professional role. Robertson (2012) has noted the key part these policy networks may play in specifically navigating global policy spaces. These networks allow policy actors to navigate ambiguities, challenges, and uncertainties becoming the medium through which information flows. Initially trained and employed as educators, their experiences have not prepared them to navigate new hybrid spaces within global contexts. The administrators thus struggle to re-establish their professional identities and understandings of the hybrid spaces to navigate within the political economy of globalization for which they lack training and experience.

The lack of professional capital extends within their own district capacity as the majority of administrators come from education backgrounds and are unlikely to have the business knowledge required for the MOEP contexts. The provincial organization for IE is one key node in the development of new policy networks for these individuals. However, one-to-

one networks are also significant. For example, one administrator noted the in-province mentoring program that allowed administrators new to the field to learn from those more experienced. Each of the administrators described their networks as being absolutely crucial for keeping pace with the evolving policy spaces in which they now find themselves.

Through these networks, the administrators note that they have all shared policies directly, as well as processes for implementing policies, with colleagues in other jurisdictions across the province. One administrator drew attention to sharing practices as foundational for the early years development of IE programs in the province. Administrators leading these programs in the early years were likely to have been drawn from other areas of district business and had a similar lack of familiarity with their next context in its fledgling form. Thus, the culture of openly sharing within policy networks would have been brought over from these other areas of district business.

An example of another area of district business with a long-standing history of policy sharing in the province is the B.C. Association of School Business Officials. This association includes secretary-treasurers, assistant secretary-treasurers, directors of finance, and other management staff in the areas of payroll, procurement, human resources, facilities, and information technology. BCASBO describes its role as "a forum to share ideas, new initiatives, and concerns…[providing] an important communication vehicle to ensure that each individual school district can learn from others" (BCASBO, 2019). Thus, this model of provincial education association may explain how

administrators in IE choose to forge their networks, despite a culture of competition that might emerge given the market-driven nature of this parent MOEP climate.

This claim of limited competition by administrators with their colleagues from other districts is seemingly counter to the nature of market-oriented activities. The origin of IE programs within a provincial education context that is largely collegial, as opposed to competitive, may provide part of the explanation. In other words, school districts are not naturally adversarial as the services they provide are to a bounded constituency. The independent school world is more illustrative of an education context in which competition may be more evident. However, another potential explanation for the lack of competition between would-be rival administrators may be in the quality of the policy networks they are establishing in this emergent field. Quality is an aspect that has not been widely addressed in Robertson's (2012) work on global policy networks or in other examples of networks in education policy research such as that of Ball (2016). The administrators experience these policy networks on a much more personal level forged out of common experiences in "life on the road" and sharing feelings of isolation and alienation as they engage in these new and unfamiliar spaces. Away from familiar contexts of work and the support of family when abroad, the bond between the individuals changes qualitatively.

This sense of alienation experienced by the administrators is twofold. Firstly, the MOEP climate itself is unfamiliar with different rules and expectations than the administrators have previously experienced. Secondly, they are physically located in alien environments

when they travel to the markets in which they recruit students. In terms of this second challenge, the separation from family and friends on frequent occasions and for extended periods can be isolating. However, relationships with other administrators from would-be rival districts reduce this isolation. As one participant administrator notes, “I see the same people all the time and I consider them friends.” These friendships are also seen as a form of support for the strain this type of work places on their family relationships when at home. A little acknowledged aspect of this work is missing out on important events such as birthdays, children’s sports, or other activities. These absences from key life events and milestones due to the demands of recruitment in IE add further explanation as to how and why the relationships within these policy networks may take on a different quality.

Adopting a phenomenological approach for this study provided insight into the more personal dimensions of these professional worlds that may not have been otherwise evident. The division between the personal and the professional is, thus, somewhat arbitrary in research and may not provide a full representation of how education policy actors experience these worlds. Similarly, the separation between local and global contexts is largely arbitrary. The political boundaries of the district or of the province may no longer be the limits of policy contexts as experienced by public education policy actors. These insights may be valuable for education policy research in terms of incorporating considerations for personal dimensions within professional identity, and for malleability in terms of how policy contexts are (presumptively) defined.

6.2.3 Outcomes of MOEPs

Interpretations from academic research have framed the outcomes of MOEPs as exacerbating inequalities between have and have-not jurisdictions (Fallon & Poole, 2014; Lubienski, 2005) and shifting the aims of public education, and of public education actors, toward market-oriented outcomes (Ball, 2012). However, the administrators have identified alternative readings on potential outcomes, highlighting cultural intentions and implications as significant – a recognition that was not prevalent in previous education policy research on MOEPs. This insight may suggest not that this aspect of MOEPs is definitively dominant, but that the phenomenon is complex and may be experienced differently by individuals bringing different perspectives and experiences to engagement with the phenomenon.

Interpretations of Interculturalization

Interculturalization is dominant in terms of how the administrators articulate outcomes of IE programs. Interculturalization is positioned as *process*, in terms of continual learning and experience for students, staff, and community members, and as *result*, in terms of naming an ideal end state. As argued by one of the administrators, "[IE] is about the interculturalization, it's about societal change." For clarification, interculturalization entails increasing individuals' understandings of how they locate themselves within a given community, how they determine affiliation (in-group) and, conversely, the other (out-group), and how they bridge gaps between these positionings. In other words, interculturalization is imagined as a form of situated global citizenship through which individuals make sense of their place in the world.

Cultural implications have not been prominent in previous discussions of MOEPs. It may be that IE programs represent specific manifestations of MOEPs in which cultural aspects are uniquely relevant. However, it is also possible that discussions of MOEPs within education policy research mirror other types of phenomena that unfold across similar scales. I am thinking here of the various dimensions of globalization. Stromquist (2002) suggests that approaches to globalization differ, "either because the[researchers] perceive the nature of the global situation in distinct ways or because they concentrate on a particular set of consequences" (p. 2). She essentializes disciplinary stances toward globalization as an illustration:

> [C]ultural analysts and anthropologists emphasize the role of cultural influences, explanations by political scientists pinpoint the growing political influence of economic actors, and analyses by economists tend to focus narrowly on material growth. (Stromquist, 2002, p. 2)

These three domains – culture, politics, and economics – represent, in some cases, competing perspectives on globalization in terms of causal determination, and may explain why cultural implications of MOEPs appear to dominate the understandings and experiences of IE administrators.

Their roles as educators remain a key aspect of the identity for each of the administrators interviewed, in how they see themselves within these marketized education policy spaces. As signified by one administrator's strong aversion to being thought of as a "car salesman" in the education context, this is not how they imagine themselves. Thus, undertaking work in IE to foster the cultural benefits and bring those benefits back to students and the school community may be in some ways redeeming. Acknowledging

and focusing on the economic benefits of IE alone, championing work that has been identified as the commodification of public education would seem a far less respectable aim. In other words, foregrounding the cultural benefits of the IE, the benefits of interculturalization may allow the administrators to better reconcile their current roles in a revenue-generating practice with their preferred positioning as public educators.

Embodying the role of cultural facilitator rather than education salesperson may align with how the administrators conceptualize the fit of a business within public education. This same process of justification also extended to the administrator from the independent school context. IE was not explained as a revenue-generating endeavour, although this aspect was briefly acknowledged. Rather, it was a focus on welcoming international students who shared the same faith and ensuring successful integration within the school community that outweighed any monetary benefit. In both the public district and independent school contexts, the cultural implications of these activities took precedence in how IE is understood.

Another aspect of this positioning is that the outcomes of interculturalization are not confined to educational spaces (i.e., schools), but extend to the community as a whole. As stated by one of the participant administrators, the change is "societal." More specifically, there is the example of international students out in the community engaging with the public and shifting the thinking of local residents in terms of engagement with global events seen on TV or read on the Internet. As it is described, these events become not something happening distantly to strangers, but something with which there is an

emotional attachment that is experienced through the students who have friends and family in those places. In terms of thinking about the effects of globalization, this example illustrates the shrinking of the world through emotional connection in ways that are not necessarily linked to economic outcomes.

The insights gleaned from the administrators in terms of interculturalization outcomes raise the issue of equity to access these experiences. Fallon and Poole (2014) note that MOEPs exacerbate inequity between districts based upon ability to participate in entrepreneurial activities. However, one wonders whether interculturalization operates as another facet of inequity given that urban school districts have much higher numbers of international students than smaller and rural school districts. This may be one possible reading of interculturalization – as a commodification of experience and personal and professional capital accumulation that could be leveraged to open opportunities to the job market for students later in life. In a document entitled *Global Competence Framework*, the OECD identifies the value of intercultural engagement and learning for success in a globalizing labour market (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2018). However, it may also be possible that inequity between urban and rural school districts plays out differently taking into account the quality of engagement between international students and domestic students and communities.

Building upon the prior discussion of policy networks and considerations of quality, the sheer number of international students in a school district may not be sufficient to understand intercultural engagement. For example, in one rural school district, the

administrator describes the international students as having near-celebrity status, with great interest from local students and residents to engage with international students. This was also identified in two of the larger school districts with administrators participating in the study, where their international students were regularly going out and engaging with community members. However, in another district the administrator noted challenges with integrating international students into schools. This phenomenon of "ghettoization" of international students in K-12 and post-secondary contexts, in which international students tend to affiliate with students from their own country and speakers of their own language, is not uncommon. Moreover, in large urban areas in B.C., the increasingly multicultural population reduces the uniqueness of international students and may thus limit their ability to achieve the status that David describes in his smaller community.

Despite the apparent orientation toward and depictions of interculturalization, another reading of this positivity is that the administrators are attempting to focus attention away from the economics of these programs. In other words, the administrators are keenly aware of how IE programs are perceived and, through their discourses on interculturalization, they seek to promote an alternative way of considering MOEP programs. Rapid growth in international student numbers in the public education system, scale of and inequity generated by international tuition revenues, and the spectre of domestic student displacement, real or imagined, are common criticisms of the programs (Findlay, 2011; Todd, 2019). By promoting a discourse on interculturalization, administrators may be attempting to foster a more positive, alternative media lens

through which to view IE programs and their roles in these programs to mitigate the dominant questions around inequities that are associated with these programs.

Still, another perspective through which to understand the administrators' embracing of interculturalization may be found in the work of Rizvi (2009, 2019), who invokes the notion of "cosmopolitanism" in pedagogy. Rizvi explains that cosmopolitanism is an approach to learning that address the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence between peoples and places in terms of politics, economics, and culture in an age of globalization. He suggests that,

> in the context of educational practice, this focus on cosmopolitan learning should involve efforts to develop in students a set of epistemic virtues. This does not mean ignoring local issues, but to understand them within the broader context of the global shifts that are reshaping the ways in which localities, and even social identities, are now becoming re-constituted. (p. 254)

Although within a much more well-articulated unpacking of epistemic and conceptual underpinnings, Rizvi's articulation of cosmopolitanism appears to share commonalities with the administrators' depictions of interculturalization. However, Rizvi (2009) also foreshadows that a "corporatist" view of cosmopolitanism is possible. In such an orientation, neoliberal underpinnings promote a celebration of "individuals who are able to take advantage of global mobility, negotiate linguistic and cultural diversity, and have the class-consciousness of the transnational elite" (Rizvi, 2009, p. 260). There is, thus, a facilitatory orientation toward commodifying and leveraging cultural exchange and adaptation. In this reading, IE administrators, despite promoting contributions to a more interculturally-sensitive global citizenry, could be inadvertently furthering neoliberal policy change within public education.

Reshaping the Political Economy

At the outset of this study, the impact of MOEPs on access to some of the benefits of citizenship was a central question. Mazawi (2013) introduced this notion with the example of B.C. offshore schools and the ways in which the provision of access to a B.C. education raised questions of citizenship in terms of affiliation and access to aspects of citizenship, namely public education. The most apparent political implication of IE programs was the potential immigration pathway beginning from the K-12 level and continuing through post-secondary study to potential workforce entry in the province. The administrators were alive to this potentiality and identified it as an intricate aspect of K-12 international education.

The linkage between IE and immigration was identified as particularly relevant to select markets. Christine provided the specific examples of Korea and Vietnam as two such markets. However, data on linkages between K-12 international education and immigration are not readily available so identifying the number of K-12 students who capitalize upon this "permanent residency pipeline" is not possible. The administrators were able to provide anecdotal examples of former K-12 students remaining in BC after completing K-12 study, and subsequently, post-secondary training in some cases, but not on a large scale. It was evident that these cases were few and far between. In fact, the few instances administrators were able to identify were those based on strong interpersonal relationships with former international students. However, these examples were not indicative of a regular pathway for international students in B.C. K-12 IE programs.

Despite acknowledging the potential of an immigration pathway through K-12 IE entry, the administrators definitively did not see themselves as immigration gatekeepers. The administrators clearly associated immigration, and more pointedly, study permit approval, with the federal government. In fact, Christine described a policy shift by the federal government regarding study permit renewals for international students that was highly problematic for district IE programs. However, powerless to affect change in terms of how these policy decisions were made, Christine explained that districts have little recourse in anything related to immigration policy. This example is illustrative of how administrators experience the immigration aspect of their expanded policy contexts, as subsumed within larger policy contexts rather than autonomous. This example illustrates the new forms of governance that are emerging to shape the hybrid, global policy context of MOEPs.

In terms of IE as a commodification of the rights to citizenship, this also fell outside of how administrators view IE. Despite suggestions in the media regarding competition between resident students and international students for seats in classrooms, the administrators suggested that in their contexts, this was not the case. One administrator explained that IE was integrated into the district strategic plan, which allowed for longer-term planning around how many international students would be accepted into the district to balance with resident student enrolment. Ultimately, integrated strategic planning, ostensibly bringing IE into the core business of the district, was intended to mitigate the potential of resident student displacement. Notably, the inclusion of IE in the district

strategic plan did not include acknowledgment of international tuition revenues being brought into core funding. The intention of integrated strategic planning, in the words of the administrator, was to mitigate potential issues with resident student displacement and to control IE program expansion or reduction in alignment with the resident student population.

The playing out of the commodification of public education in the experiences of the administrators appears less explicit than in analysis from education research. For example, the charge that resident students might lose opportunities in favour of international students given the higher revenues that international students represent for districts (i.e., international student tuition fees being almost twice the block funding allocation for resident students) was not signalled as a concern by the administrators. In fact, the presence of international students was cited as a measure to mitigate falling resident student enrolment in some districts, and a method by which to open up more programming opportunities (e.g., seats in advanced Math and Science classes) for resident students. However, it was suggested that this may not be generalizable to all B.C. school districts as their experiences were largely confined to their own districts and any opinions on how other districts go about allocating spaces in classrooms would simply be speculation.

Viewing IE as commodification of public education was not specifically recognized by the administrators, but the administrators did acknowledge marketized aspects to their work, including branding, marketing, and recruiting. However, there was little discussion

of potential contradiction between these marketized aspects and the administrators' perspectives on the aims of public education. This is perhaps not surprising given that this tension is reflected in the *BC School Act*, with the dual aims of "developing a healthy, democratic, and pluralistic society **and** a prosperous and sustainable economy" [italics added]. As Fallon and Poole (2014) note, these contradictions have not been met with public debate on a meaningful scale. It is thus reasonable that the administrators, despite occupying unique positions at the nexus of a business within public education, share a similar perspective to that of the general public who may not see a contradiction in these aims. Ross (2010) notes that marketization of public education has not gone unnoticed in the province, being met by resistance from organized unions. Thus, it may be that IE programs present a phenomenon around which broader public debates of marketization of public education and, more holistically, the aims of public education in B.C. could be raised.

In the period between the end of the interviews for this study and the completion of this dissertation, B.C. has seen a change in government. The outgoing Liberal government, which implemented a strong neoliberal agenda for education and other areas of public policy, was replaced by an NDP government, embodying a much more social democratic approach. Revisiting discussions with the administrators at this point might reveal a different acknowledgement of the impacts of the political-economic climate on IE and on education – perhaps an area for future research. Prior to this change, B.C. had been under a Liberal government for 16 years – a period longer than any of the participants in this study had worked in IE. Points of divergence, points of disruption such as this may have

revealed different experiences within local education contexts. However, limiting the scope of discussion to those experiences shared by the administrators, the broader political climate was sublimated.

Notwithstanding the observations above, the political implications of the hybrid spaces emerging from the MOEP climate do raise questions regarding how policy jurisdiction is experienced in IE. It also highlights the relatively limited role that provincial, and for the most part federal, policy-makers have played in this space to date. The myriad of overlapping policy contexts from the district-level to the global-level establishes an uncertain set of boundaries and rules for this space. As described by the administrators, these boundaries may shift unexpectedly and keeping abreast of policy shifts in foreign jurisdictions has become a necessary part of their role. But this current lack of codification of the emerging hybrid space raises the question of what will happen moving forward. Steffenhagen (2012) noted that on one occasion when greater policy intervention was considered at the provincial level, the K-12 sector had a strong reaction to maintaining their autonomy in this space. The Government of Canada (2019) currently maintains a designated learning institution program at the post-secondary level that allows for some regulation of international student programs in collaboration with provincial education ministries responsible for the post-secondary level. These examples raise questions regarding whether increased regulation from the state may shape the MOEP climate moving forward.

The opening of the district jurisdictional boundaries to these broader policy contexts is certainly an area of interest and it highlights the potential volatility in the sector to external policy changes, as well as to shifts in global economics. However, the integration of IE programs in district strategic planning and conceivably to increased policy development at the provincial and federal government levels may mitigate these effects. The permeability of district boundaries is undeniable within these spaces and the impacts upon citizenship, at this point seemingly more in theory than in practice from experience of the administrators, remain evolving areas of interest for future research.

6.3 Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

The dearth of previous research on IE programs and on education policy studies that utilize a phenomenological approach lead to a number of potential implications and recommendations for future research. The four areas I discuss include the emerging hybrid global policy contexts, utilization of a phenomenological approach to education policy research, consideration of quality in policy network analysis, and development of dynamic reduction within the phenomenological method.

6.3.1 Evolving Policy Contexts

The phenomenon of global education policy spaces is not new in education research. Dale (1999, 2000), Robertson (2012), and Verger, Novelli, and Altinyelken (2012) are examples of researchers who have explored the influence of globalization on education policy spaces in terms of how these spaces are emerging. However, much of this work has taken as a starting point the work of global- or regional-level organizations, such as

the OECD, the United Nations, the World Bank, or the European Union (EU) (Dale, 1999; Dale & Robertson, 2002; Verger et al., 2012). There are few examples of research that take a micro-level point of departure to examine how situated policy actors experience and interpret emerging global policy spaces.

The participants in this study provided insight into how the emergence of these spaces within long-standing education jurisdictions present challenges for policy actors who may not possess the necessary knowledge and skills (i.e., professional capital) to successfully navigate these spaces. The approach of beginning with the individual policy actor on the ground offering a perspective of the intersection of policy contexts from the district to the global level contributes to a more holistic understanding of how these processes unfold. Robertson (2012) suggests that policy actors have both "local and global horizons of action." This study has attempted to flesh out these horizons and has found that there is complexity and confusion in the ways in which these actors are engaging and negotiating with these emergent spaces. For this particular group of administrators, the global horizon is not necessarily within their aims. Although incorporating understandings of seemingly far-removed policy contexts, there are few suggestions that there is an attempt to manage beyond the boundaries of their local education jurisdictions.

Building on the work of Robertson and other education policy researchers working in this space, perhaps the next steps may be to continue building understandings of how these spaces are experienced by policy actors located in different positions – school districts, provincial ministries, federal ministries, and international bodies. The phenomenological

method may prove useful in this work to derive insights of how these contexts are lived and what unanticipated aspects of policy processes may emerge as significant.

The policy enactment analytic by Braun et al. (2011) was useful in providing parameters through which to begin to explore administrators understandings of a global policy context. However, as acknowledged by its authors, the analytic is posited as a starting point to be exercised and further developed by the education policy research community. Application in this study may suggest that the policy enactment analytic is somewhat restrictive in terms of how it defines the boundaries of contexts. The external policy context was crucial to experiences of how policy enactment played out, while the material context was a limited factor.

One aspect of the policy enactment analytic that proved of exceptional value was inclusion of the influence of the policy actor's background, in terms of beliefs, values, and prior experiences. Although not commonly considered in policy research, individuals' embodied experiences provided potential insight into how MOEPs were understood. A crucial emergence from this perspective is that policies are not simply rules, they are relational, and the experiences of the actors within enactment may require attention to quality, not simply the mechanics of what is happening. As Robertson (2012) has suggested, new conceptual and methodological policy research tools are required to explore global policy spaces. Given further collaborative development and application in policy studies, the policy enactment analytic may prove of value in this endeavour.

6.3.2 Phenomenology of Education Policy

With a phenomenology of education policy, I am advocating for a model of empirical research that might be added to the toolbox of education policy researchers to address the increasingly fluid landscapes over which policy processes play out. Specifically, the influence of globalization has raised new questions about how these emerging policy spaces might be researched and understood (Robertson, 2012). However, I believe that one of the central challenges in developing this approach will be to move beyond the perceived limitations of phenomenology. In many cases, the origin of phenomenology in philosophy perpetuates the presumption that the method is still too abstract and distant from central problems in social science disciplines. However, I feel this gap may be bridged by grounding inquiry in concepts and language familiar to education policy research. In this study, I have taken up a policy sociology approach (Ozga, 2000) and employed the policy enactment analytic (Braun et al., 2011) for this purpose. Although I take a different point of entry through the experiences of policy actors coming to a given policy phenomenon, the foundations of policy processes and policy networks remain integrated. I have also attempted to draw conclusions that refer back to this field of research and can be contextualized as relevant to education policy problems.

Phenomenology allows a potential accounting for unknown, uncovered aspects of phenomena. Coming to a policy phenomenon through the experience of policy actors who are living these processes provides opportunities for articulating nuances of policy processes that may not otherwise emerge. Two examples drawn from the current study include the place of embodied experiences in policy enactment and increased attention on

the quality of policy networks as opposed to only their instrumentality. The particular positioning of phenomenological inquiry for entry into a policy research problem and the latitude for the policy actors to depict the phenomenon in their own terms provided space for these aspects of the policy experience to emerge.

Another aspect of the phenomenon of MOEPs that may not have emerged with an alternative research approach was the experience of life on the road. Prior to examining the practice in greater depth, I assumed the work of recruitment was specifically tied to the generation of revenue, with the formula of more students equalling more money. However, the experience of life on the road was of isolation and loneliness, a constant negotiation to learn and better understand the rules of engagement on a business level, and on a personal level as a foreign visitor. Reliance upon administrators from other districts and the bonds that were formed out of the common struggle away to come to terms with being away from friends and family revealed a potential emotional and personal toll of this marketized education policy climate.

An additional challenge that I have discussed with the acceptance of phenomenology within education policy research is in the presentation of findings. There remains a lack of uniformity in how findings from phenomenological inquiry should be presented. The implementation of the triptych was intended to ameliorate this ambiguity and provide a centralizing metaphor within which to structure the findings.

Developing a conceptual framework from a policy sociology approach with analysis organized through the policy enactment analytic, I attempted to ground the presentation within education policy and not simply as an exercise in divining individual experiences. My intention was to capture the lived experience of policy and present the actors as individuals who bring their own beliefs, values, and experiences into policy processes. Certainly, there are alternative methods through which to achieve the same ends utilizing different conceptual frames, analytic tools, and presentation styles for education policy research. However, this project is my attempt to contribute to this discussion and perhaps encourage other researchers to further a phenomenology of education policy in future work.

6.3.3 Quality in Policy Networks

The current study suggests that further attention on the quality of policy networks may be valuable in terms of understanding how they function and the importance that they hold in policy processes. In the case of MOEPs, these networks extend beyond geopolitical and education-related boundaries (e.g., school districts) and incorporate policy actors and organizations that may not appear to have any relation to these processes. Conceptualizations of policy networks, in education research and in policy research in general, often focus upon professional relationships that are valued specifically for their utilitarian value in relation to policy enactment. However, as Mintrom and Vergari (1998) state, trust between individuals in policy networks may impinge upon how successful and how strong these networks become. This observation is supported by the ways in which

the administrators in the current study describe their experiences, with the quality of the connections between individual actors emerging as crucial.

For some of the IE administrators, the relationships struck with colleagues were significant beyond professional utility (i.e., simply "getting policy done"). The vacuum in terms of professional capital for the IE administrators in particular, but extending to school district administration staff on the whole, furthered reliance on networks outside the district context. These relationships are key in allowing the administrators to navigate the personal challenges associated with working in and across foreign cultures in the physical and geopolitical sense, as well as in the foreign climate of business within education. Life on the road is a fundamental aspect of their experiences and there is little support from other colleagues who do not work in this sector. Thus, the need for support forges a new type of policy network relationship that belies description as simply a node in a network.

The emergence of these types of relationships that are formed through professional contacts suggests that understandings of policy networks may benefit from greater examination of the quality of relationships between policy actors. I posit this potentiality not to dispute policy network research that focuses on identifying linkages, particularly at the global scale where understanding these connections can be a great challenge in and of itself (Ball, 2012). Instead, I am suggesting the need for an increased level of understanding that enriches the network concept and potentially offers explanatory power

for unpacking how and why policy processes play out in ways that may not be fully transparent.

6.3.4 Dynamic Reduction

As a key aspect of phenomenological inquiry, the researcher is acknowledged as being an intricate part of the subjectivity of the research. The imposition of the techniques of epoché and reduction to extract, to the extent possible, the biases of the researcher from the participants' experiences of the phenomenon are foundational within the approach. However, unplanned shifts within my own positioning in relation to the phenomenon throughout the course of the research have raised unexpected challenges. In attempting to turn these challenges into opportunities, I posit the beginnings of a different methodological stance to the work of bracketing out a researcher's presumptions through the utilization of *dynamic reduction*.

I refer here to my shift from academic researcher, ostensibly observing from "outside" (i.e., having no ability to influence) policy processes, to a role within government, in which I have had involvement to varying degrees with the policy processes under study. Throughout this period, in a manner somewhat similar to that of the policy actors participating in the study, I have struggled in terms of establishing a clear positioning in relation to the phenomenon of MOEPs. The idea of a dynamic reduction is thus intended to capture some of this messiness when there is a shift in understandings on the part of the researcher.

By dynamic reduction, I mean an ongoing process of reflexivity and the revisiting and interrogation of one's understandings of the phenomenon as one's positioning shifts. Although there may be few situations in which this type of shift might occur to the same extent that I have experienced, it is nonetheless a useful exercise in capitalizing upon this circumstance and potentially pushing understandings of researcher reflexivity. As noted, my shift from outside policy processes to within the policy cycle was unplanned: a matter of happenstance that could not have been foreseen at the onset of the project. However, the value of this experience has been that the more conventional approaches to researcher reflexivity are static and insufficient for capturing this particular instance.

Dynamic reflexivity might be employed in situations where the researcher's relationship to the phenomenon under study changes in a dramatic way, or perhaps in situations where the relationship between the researcher and the participant(s) changes during the course of research. Although perhaps an extreme example, but one that might help to illustrate the point, is a situation in which a researcher selects a condition such as cancer as the phenomenon under study, and in the course of the project falls victim to the condition. The researcher would move from outside of the phenomenon, as a subjective observer without the direct experience, to inside, where the experience becomes entwined with new emotions and insights that may fundamentally change the experience of that phenomenon. In a case such as this, a technique to remain alive to and in touch with shifts in understanding is necessary.

In the course of this study, I selected Hipsky's (2006) technique of the pre-conceptual map as an attempt to impose a more overt and tangible process to my phenomenological inquiry. I did so with the understanding that in the hermeneutic tradition, Heidegger (1988) claims that it is not possible to eliminate one's preconceptions regarding a phenomenon and the only path forward is to acknowledge and embrace these preconceptions. Ultimately, I feel that my experience aligns with Heidegger's observations: despite employing the pre-conceptual map, I am unsure of the extent to which this technique allowed me to separate out my preconceptions during analysis and presentation. Perhaps the greatest value I took from the pre-conceptual map was in itemizing and recording my understandings of MOEPs, thus revealing my own positioning to the reader. It is then left to the reader to determine if and how the data, that I have attempted to provide in a holistic manner, and the analysis and conclusions are fair representations of participant experiences.

As I previously discussed in the Research Design chapter (Chapter Four), application of the phenomenological method in the social sciences does not often explicate how the process of reduction looks in practice. In my review of education research that applied phenomenology, there was also little discussion of researcher bias – much less than is entailed with applying the pre-conceptual map technique. As an example, A. S. Webb (2015), conducting a phenomenological inquiry into education leadership, utilized a research journal to capture her preconceptions of the phenomenon in her study. She explains, "[the] journal provided a place to reflect on my experiences and evolving understandings as I was embedded within the [program] to bracket my

assumptions….and to trace threshold concept development" (p. 74). However, there is little subsequent discussion of what this process looked like in practice. What specific changes were made because of these reflections? How did the researcher distinguish between moments when her own preconceptions were skewing analysis and when the analysis should be consciously adjusted to account for these effects?

In concluding this project I feel that within phenomenological inquiry, setting aside assumptions in terms of performing the reduction or *epoché* is far from a straightforward or transparent process. Even in consciously attempting to capture my biases through the pre-conceptual map, it is difficult to discern how and when one should separate one's own preconceptions from the experiences of the participants. Perhaps my newness to the process is the challenge and as one develops experience with the phenomenological method, this becomes more nuanced. However, it may be that Heidegger provided the most salient advice in terms of acknowledging and laying bare one's preconceptions about a phenomenon, but stopping at the acknowledgement rather than claiming one's biases can be bracketed and in effect removed.

6.4 Limitations

The limitations I identify in relation to this project are in the following areas: firstly, with regard to the participant group and their positioning in relation to the phenomenon under study; and, secondly, with issues of reflexivity and shifting positionality on the part of the researcher.

All of the education administrators who participated have an education background, and no previous experience in the areas of marketing or business. As noted by these administrators, there are now a few IE administrators in B.C. districts without education backgrounds who come from a business background and may have differing perspectives on these programs. In other words, their embodied experiences may be distinct from the participant group and, thus, the ways in which they understand MOEPs might offer differing, perhaps even contradictory, readings of the policy climate. In the current study, I invited districts with administrators who have business backgrounds, as opposed to education backgrounds, to participate. However, there was either no response from the district superintendent, or where district permission was provided, the IE administrator declined.

Each of the administrators who participated in this study is also a long-time employee of a single district, or in one case, an independent school. Thus, these administrators have experienced MOEPs in a single context. It would be interesting to identify one, or more, administrator who has worked in more than one district to provide alternative and perhaps even contradictory insights into the phenomenon. At present there are an increasing number of administrators in the province who are acquiring experience in multiple districts. However, at the time of recruiting participants, these individuals either did not wish to participate, or did not have experience in multiple districts. It would, nonetheless, provide an enriching perspective on the experience of MOEPs and on the influence of local context to have individuals with experience in multiple districts.

Additionally, all of the participating administrators are from what are now mature or developing IE programs. There are no voices from fledgling programs (i.e., either in the start-up phase or having just launched) that might be able to speak to the experience of coming to a marketized education climate in real time. Like the individuals identified above, those with business backgrounds and those with experience in multiple district contexts, administrators from embryotic programs may offer a different perspective of the MOEP climate. These administrators would, in all likelihood, be arriving with a dearth of professional capital and be forced to develop the necessary knowledge and skills when their colleagues were ahead in the game. An interesting aspect of this perspective might be the role of mentoring between colleagues from different districts, as David mentioned from his experience first entering the IE sector.

Another area that I identify as a limitation is with regard to reduction and *epoché*. As noted above, my role and relationship with the phenomenon in question, as well as with the administrators who participated in the study, shifted significantly in the course of research. In the previous section, I posited the methodological move of dynamic reduction, which advocates an ongoing reflexivity to be aware of how the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon may evolve. During the course of this research project, this was not a process that I was able to accurately capture. In periodic diarization throughout the study, I returned to my initial assumptions as I learned more about the phenomenon and policy actors whom I interviewed. Consistent engagement with the data of their experiences also may have had an effect on my assumptions. But the question arises: how is the researcher able to distinguish between her/his presumptions, from the

start of the research, shifts in these presumptions in the course of research, and the influence of shifts in the lifepath of the researcher? In the end, I feel that a more structured approach for addressing researcher bias and potential shifts in this bias through the course of research may be necessary.

6.5 Researcher's Reflections

I look back on this project taking in what has been an unexpected and challenging path – one that I would characterize as falling through the academic looking glass into the fray of policy-making. This path is one that I could not have predicted as it was never on my horizon of possibility. I never considered a career in government and knew nothing about how I would go about entering into the type of position I now find myself in. In some ways, I think my experiences may mirror that of the research participants from the districts and independent school. These educators were trained and began their careers in classrooms before IE existed within their districts and schools. They came to their new roles - some thrust into the position as there were no other candidates in their context and others as a curiosity for an emerging area of education – lacking much of the experience necessary to navigate these new contexts. The challenges in doing so are not impossible to overcome but require a great deal of learning and perhaps a little of the sense of wonder that van Manen (2014) prescribes for coming to an understanding of a phenomenon. I understand van Manen's chosen descriptor differently now than previously, as the space that must be crossed between the complete unknown and the coming to know, in one's own terms.

My rider in this study is that, as researcher, I do not purport to understand the totality of the worlds that the administrators inhabit. I had little experience with phenomenological inquiry as a research method prior to this study, and I am amazed at the depth and quality of unexpected insights that have emerged. Rereading our discussions, new ideas and connections continually emerged that I had missed the first time through, the second time through, and so on. And maybe this is what phenomenology is intended to offer, presenting the richness of experience and how individuals make sense of their world. As I moved through the data analysis process and through the writing process, I was making sense of my own emerging world.

Sifting through the lived experiences of the administrators with this phenomenon has been fascinating. Despite the time and the effort required to translate their experiences and understandings into this study – although all of the literature on phenomenology warns of this in a frighteningly accurate manner – it remains but a snapshot. I wonder now how their feelings may have changed over the intervening three years from completion of interviews to my completion of writing. Perhaps what I write is already history as the administrators have accumulated so much more experience in the hybrid spaces of MOEP climates. In any case, I fully acknowledge that this research could not have come to fruition without their generosity and sharing, and I honour their contributions by admitting that while I have attempted to capture what I could, I do not claim to speak on their behalf.

The path of my own journey through the process of this research, alongside the ups, downs, and all-arounds of life, leaves me with as many questions as answers. I set out on the phenomenological research path not knowing what to expect, and finding more than I could have possibly expected to discover. I began sitting in a small office on the UBC campus in Vancouver thinking about MOEPs and policy processes, and now sit in a small office at the Ministry of the Education playing a role in how those processes play out. There have been suggestions that academic policy researchers and state policy makers are from "different planets" (Birnbaum, 2000); I cannot disconfirm this assertion. Like the administrators, my experience suggests that the complexity of policy contexts that come into play specifically with IE are unique from what I see in other areas of education policy-making. The parameters of global policy spaces that impact the sector are constantly evolving and continue to raise new challenges each step of the way.

Stepping back from the study and considering the findings, I think it is possible that we are in a time of transition for public education – in B.C. and in other Canadian and English-speaking policy contexts. In B.C., we have a new curriculum (2019) that aims to prepare B.C. students for life and success in a globalizing world. My 8-year old son is in classes with many students from different cultural backgrounds, some B.C. residents, and some international students. In their classes, they are taught to get along with their classmates, to learn about different cultures and traditions of indigenous peoples and peoples from different places in the world, and to try to be understanding. However, I wonder about what tools we are giving children to achieve these aims we are setting for them. I believe that IE could play a crucial role in achieving this aim.

In some respects, I think international education could have a detrimental impact on our public education system if inequity between individuals, districts, and regions is exacerbated by marketization and external influence. If the only purpose of IE is the economic benefits, then we may miss out on what could be a rich source of learning and growing as global citizens, on a global scale and in our own backyards. At the same time, I believe that IE could have an exceedingly positive impact on our public education system because the benefits to B.C. students and communities are tangible and necessary for navigating an increasingly interconnected world. The issue of equity/inequity between districts arises regarding intercultural learning as well. Bringing international students to rural communities where resident students do not have the same opportunities to engage with people from different cultures delivers benefit. However, it may require a concerted effort on the part of the districts outside of the Lower Mainland and on the part of the provincial government to support these types of opportunities.

Margaret Wolfe Hungerford was an Irish novelist who is credited with first employing the proverb "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." In this study, I have attempted to capture the experience of an emerging phenomenon through the eyes of five beholders, all of whom come to the phenomenon invested in making IE a benefit for their communities. However, each is also alive to the dual nature of IE and the challenges raised. Each of these individuals also experienced a winding lifepath to arrive at the place they now occupy, paths which have shaped how they see and understand their current worlds. Through this project, I have shared in a small part of their journey and they have

become a part of mine. I offer both here to inspire further thought, further discussion, and hopefully, further understanding of International Education, of marketization in public education, and of the peopled experience of education policy enactment.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Pre-Conceptual Map

The pre-conceptual map is divided into three main areas: *aspects of phenomenon*, *initial assumptions* and *the shift*. I determined the aspects of the phenomenon in relation to the review of literature and the conceptual framework developed for analysis. Initial assumptions were derived from my own insights into the phenomenon collected during the early stages of this project. At this time, I was a full-time doctoral student at UBC. I added the additional column of the shift, which was not included in Hipsky's (2006) original conceptualization of the map, to capture changes in my perceptions of the phenomenon that occurred after my move into a role with the provincial government and, effectively, into processes of policy-making and policy enactment.

TITLE	INITIAL ASSUMPTIONS	THE SHIFT
Market-Oriented Education Policies • **Development** • **Enactment**	• Developed as part of government platform to promote and afford marketization of public sectors (e.g., increased competition and entrepreneurialism) • No specific education policy for creation of IE programs • Diverse (i.e., not isomorphic across SDs) enactment of market-oriented policies at local level subject to local context	• Policy development at SD level for IE programs • Some collegiality among SD IE programs - mentorship, provincial organization – for similar development

International Education Programs • **Origins** • **Growth**	• Ad hoc development • Growth driven by revenue seeking • Little concern for student and teacher support	• SDs interconnected for origins, (e.g., periodic advice to formal mentoring) but unplanned in many cases • Program growth dependent on SD context and individual policy actors
Situated Context of SD • **Geographic location** • **Student population** • **Programming**	• Geography and student population of SDs varied across province • Programming tailored to attract int'l students	• SD situated context of crucial importance for program development and offerings (e.g., outdoor education program in rural SDs)
Material Context of SD • **Buildings** • **Budget** • **Staffing**	• Cosmetic attractions for students (e.g., new building) • Budget tied to recruitment/marketing • Staffing varied depending on SD	• No provincial standards, wholly locally determined for budget, staffing • Great variation in buildings and student support services from SD to SD
External Context of SD • **Provincial policy context** • **National context** • **Policy networks** • **SD to SD relationships**	• Highly influenced by provincial policy context • Minimally influenced by national context • Policy networks tied to extra-educational influences (more so than other SD program areas) • SD to SD highly competitive in push to recruit students and increase revenues	• Provincial and national networks of IE programs stronger than anticipated, but fluctuates • Ball's 'policy entrepreneurs' argument at district level is significant • Competition between SDs is within some regions, not necessarily provincial

Professional Context of SD • **Individual history** • **Educational experience** • **Professional experience** • **Personal values and beliefs** • **Leadership style**	• IE administrators selected w/business background and acumen • Possibly externally recruited (i.e., not educators) • Individual influence subordinated by revenue seeking imperatives • Recognition of sociocultural value of IE but focus on economic	• Individual's perspective on IE program and marketized education policies influenced by personal experiences/beliefs/values, often to great extent depending on SD context
Implications of Market-Oriented Education Policies • **Economic** • **Political** • **Cultural**	• Primarily economic, e.g., affording revenue generation for public education through IE • Shifting the orientation of education actors toward economistic aims (e.g., IE staff concerned with marketing, recruiting, increasing student #s) • Citizenship implications invisible to policy actors	• Economic implications are more pronounced in some SDs, primarily due to orientation of school board and/or executive • Political implications on a small scale, but not a serious issue for most SDs • Cultural values are significant for some SDs more than others, but growing across sector (particularly with tie-ins to PSIs)

Appendix B: Invitation to participate

Date
[Name of district]
[Address of district]

[Name of primary contact]

Re: Letter of Invitation for Research Participants

I am a PhD candidate from the Department of Educational Studies (EDST) at the University of British Columbia. I am conducting dissertation research that investigates how market-oriented education policy is experienced by district-level administrators, and how these policies are implemented in local-level contexts. The study is entitled: *Investigating the Translation of Market-Oriented Education Policy by District-Level Administrators in British Columbia K-12 Public Education.* Specifically, I am interested in international education programs as forms of market-oriented policy implementation. Although there has been much research on this topic, the voices and experiences of district-level administrators have been left predominantly absent. I feel that incorporating the views and understandings of district leaders, as crucially important players in education policy implementation, is of great importance.

The purpose of this letter is to invite participation of senior district staff, specifically Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and Directors of International Education, in this study. Retired senior staff are also invited to participate. Volunteers will take part in three separate interviews, scheduled at their convenience, with each interview lasting a maximum of 90 minutes. If face-to-face interviews cannot be arranged, Skype interviews are also possible to afford more flexibility. Prior to interviews, each participant will

receive a consent form explaining the details of the study. Participation will be entirely voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time without penalty. The researcher recognizes that data collected during the interview will be from a professional viewpoint. If there are any concerns regarding ethical issues, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or by e-mail at RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

Our ethics approval form from the UBC Office of Research Ethics is attached. Potential participants may contact the researcher at dcover@alumni.ubc.ca, or by phone at 604-240-7740. If you have any other questions or concerns, you may reach my supervisor, Dr. Andre Mazawi, at andre.mazawi@ubc.ca, or by phone at 604-827-5537. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Cover, Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Educational Studies
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Appendix C: Letter of consent

Title: Investigating the Translation of Market-Oriented Education Policy by District-Level Administrators in British Columbia K-12 Public Education

Researchers: Principal Investigator, Dr. Andre Mazawi (Professor). Contact information: (604) 827-5537, or Andre.Mazawi@ubc.ca. Co-investigator, Dwayne Cover (PhD Candidate). Contact information: (604) 240-7740, or dcover@alumni.ubc.ca

Invitation: You are invited to participate in a study entitled: *Investigating the Translation of Market-Oriented Education Policy by District-Level Administrators in British Columbia K-12 Public Education.* Please read this form carefully, and feel free to ask any questions you might have (email contact above). Please sign the form electronically, and send an email message to confirm with the signed form attached.

Purpose and Procedure: This project investigates how market-oriented education policy reforms are experienced by district-level administrators. Specifically, we are interested in international education programs as forms of market-oriented policy implementation. Although there has been research on this topic, the voices and experiences of district-level administrators have been left predominantly absent. We feel that incorporating the views and understandings of district leaders, as key players in education policy implementation, is of great importance.

If you agree to participate, the researchers will arrange three interview times with you, preferably no more than one week apart between interviews. Each discussion will last for a maximum of 90 minutes per meeting. The interviews can take place in person, if a convenient location and time can be reached, or alternatively, by Skype. The interviews will be audio recorded with your permission.

Study Results: The results of this study will be reported in a doctoral dissertation, publically accessible, and may be published in journal articles and books.

Potential Risks: There is minimal anticipated risk associated with participation in this study. Participants will be drawn from public school districts in British Columbia, so there is the potential that individuals could be identified by colleagues from their comments. However, pseudonyms will be used for each participant, and all precautions will be taken to protect anonymity, including aggregating data and removing geographic and demographic details that singles out a particular district. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and anonymity is assured in the presentation of results. You may withdraw from the study for any reason and at any point without penalty. There is no deception intended in this study.

Potential Benefits: The benefits of this study will be twofold: firstly, you will be providing much-needed insight into how education policy is experienced and enacted in public school districts, and more specifically on market-oriented policy, providing data that will be utilized for public presentations, as well as academic and professional

publications that may inspire reflection and discussion in the field of education administration, and with the general public. Secondly, it may offer a personal opportunity to reflect upon and inform your professional practice, and perhaps to engage with colleagues in further discussion around market-oriented trends in public K-12 education in the province and more broadly.

Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be respected. Information that discloses your identity will not be released without your consent unless required by law. You will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information will be removed from the report. All data will be password protected and kept on an external memory device under lock and key. It will not be uploaded to a central cloud location. The data will be retained by the researchers for a period of five years in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the University of British Columbia.

Transcript Review: Once the transcription is completed, it will be emailed to you with all identifiers removed. You will be given the opportunity to review the final transcript and add, delete, or clarify any information.

Questions: If you have any questions or concerns about what we are asking of you, please contact the principal investigator or co-investigator. The contact information is listed at the top of the first page of this form.

Concerns or Complaints: If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

Consent to Participate: Taking part in this study is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative repercussions.

- Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.
- Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

_____
(Printed name of Participant)

_____ Date:_____
(Signature of Participant)

_____ Date:_____
(Signature of Researcher)

Dwayne Cover
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Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Project Title: Investigating the Translation of Market-Oriented Education Policy by District-Level Administrators in British Columbia K-12 Public Education

1st Interview - Participant Background In Relation to Phenomenon

1) Can you tell me a little bit about your background? For example,
    a. where you grew up, family circumstances, and early education experiences?
    b. your educational history from past high school graduation, particularly regarding degrees obtained, your field of study, and any other certificates or qualifications?
2) How did you get started in the field of education? What positions have you held in educational institutions? Have you held any jobs outside of education?
3) What have been some of the greatest successes and biggest challenges that you have faced during your career in education?
4) What are some of the major shifts in education policy that you can recall over your career?
5) In your current role as a district administrator, what do you see as your primary responsibilities? What are some of the rewards and challenges you find in your current position?

2nd Interview – Participant Experience With the Phenomenon

1) In this interview, I'd like to revisit some of the major shifts in K-12 public education that were raised in our last conversation.

2) One specific area I would like to touch upon in our conversation today is international education, and international education programs.

   a) What do you know about the history and development of international education programs in the province, and in your district?
   b) What kinds of direct experiences have you had with your district's IE program? How has the program impacted your work?
   c) What challenges, if any, have arisen from the IE program in your district? How were these challenges addressed? What was your role?

2) Where do you see the IE program moving to in the future, for example, growth, reduction, stasis, or some kind of development? How do you think this might impact your work directly? How do you think this will impact public education in your district, and in the province?

3rd Interview – Reflection on First Two Interviews

1) Perhaps we can begin our third interview reviewing some of the main points that have emerged thus far. In your opinion, what has stood out for you from our previous discussions? What have been the most surprising or unexpected points to emerge?

2) Thinking back upon our previous discussions, do you have anything to add or amend that might be relevant or help us better understand IE programs or related changes in K-12 public education?