Interculturalism and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program in Ontario

By

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Abstract

In its Mission Statement and ideology, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) purports to foster globally-minded students who will leave secondary school to not only embrace the perspectives they will encounter, but to make the world a better place through intercultural understanding. Yet to what extent, according to teachers on the ground, is this achieved? Across two semi-structured interviews with two IBDP teachers, this research project explores the meaning of interculturalism and how the Mission Statement is enacted in within the program. Since IBDP teachers in Ontario are certified by the Ontario College of Teachers, and have some experience with the curricula of the province, comparisons are also made regarding intercultural ideology between the Ontario Secondary School Diploma and the IBDP in terms of effectiveness. Ultimately, through the combination of reviewed literature and participant experiences, it is suggested that values such as interculturalism and encompassing aspects like respect, compassion, and tolerance may not be explicitly taught to students. Rather, from the teacher’s perspective, there is no explicit framework in either the IB or OSSD for instilling these values, nor are they always instilled holistically by teachers in the IB program’s varying subjects and features (CAS, TOK).

**Key Words:** Interculturalism, International Baccalaureate, Neo-Liberalism, Values, Ideology, Practicality, Holistic Education
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Lastly, this project is for you, the reader. I hope that whomever is reading this project finds what they are looking for, and if not, finds the means to continue searching.
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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Research Context

Internationally-focused education programs are often marketed as an appealing alternative to local or nationally based alternatives. By definition, they emphasize a more global perspective entailing that modern students in an increasingly globalized world possess the capability to change or contribute to international relations and issues (Bullock, 2001; Hinrichs, 2003). This suggests the potential for knowledgeable cultural exchange among students and staff to widen perspectives and foster and respect, a process known as interculturalism (Taylor, 2013). This research project focuses on the promise of developing interculturalism in students within the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme: a two-year program taught by certified teachers for high school students aged 16 to 19 offered by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB, 2016, n.p.).

The IBO offers an international portfolio of curricula, including the Diploma Programme across 4000 schools in both the public and private sectors of over 130 countries (IB, 2016, n.p.). In Ontario, within which the focus of this research project lies, the IBDP entered the public schooling system in 1991 with over forty publically-funded schools across the province (Lineham 2013). Specifically focusing on Toronto, Ontario, the Toronto District Schoolboard offers the IBDP in six of its public high schools and claims to serve one of the most ethno-culturally diverse cities worldwide with around a quarter of students having immigrated to Toronto from over 190 countries (TDSB, 2014). Aside from providing an academically rigorous curriculum of six subject groups (Sciences, Mathematics, Arts, Individuals and Societies, etc.), the IBDP offers growth through its core requirements: a 4000-word extended essay, completion of the Theory of Knowledge Course (TOK), and volunteer Creativity, Activity, and Service
(CAS) hours outside of students’ academic studies (IB, 2016, n.p.). Through these methods of instruction, the IB, possessing consultative status with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to fashion “internationally-minded” students that are conscious of global issues (Lineham, 2013; Paris, 2003).

Regarding interculturalism, the IBO offers a universal Mission Statement in each of its programs and all subjects taught: “The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IB, 2016, n.p.) This development is emphasized program-wide through the IB Learner Profile, an application of the Mission Statement consisting of ten attributes including “Open-Mindedness” and “Reflectiveness” that can help students “become responsible members of local, national, and global communities” (IB, 2016, n.p.). In 2006, former Deputy Director General of the IBO Ian Hill argued that intercultural understanding is an essential component of international education, with which the overall management of schools implementing IB programmes are in accord (Hill, 2006).

1.1 Research Problem

As hazy as a concrete definition of ‘internationally-focused’ might be, the term interculturalism is as equally ambiguous, if even defined in classrooms at all. There are likely no systems in place to measure the Learner Profile or a student’s skill development beyond tangible grades, and universities surveyed throughout Ontario, Canada lacked the ability to specifically state the difference between the IDBP and the provincial curriculum, apart from a higher degree of academic achievement (Fitzgerald, 2015). Furthermore, Wright and Lee (2014) observed that the reconciliation between fostering intercultural understanding and “the more pragmatic objective of providing students with a vehicle for entry into high-ranking universities” is not
always the seamless package presented by the IB, from the perspective of both teachers and students interviewed in Beijing and Shanghai, China (p. 154). Echoing this observation from schools located in both Switzerland and Australia, Lineham (2013) and Paris (2003) concluded that IBDP students were generally unaware of the Mission Statement, suggesting that its contents were not always made explicit to students by their teachers.

Of the six subject groups that do offer some semblance of interculturalism, students found a greater amount of reflection concerning multiple cultural perspectives amongst their own within the humanities and more literature-focused subjects as opposed to the sciences and mathematics (Lineham, 2013; Paris, 2003; Tarc & Beatty 2012). Though there seemed to be a greater degree of intercultural reflection within the IBDP’s Theory of Knowledge class, a philosophical course designed to critically examine multiple forms of knowledge, this still suggests a contradiction in the universal reach of interculturalism across all IB subjects (Tarc & Beatty, 2012). Several IB teachers interviewed at an anonymous high school within Ontario, as well as the aforementioned Chinese study, claimed that interculturalism and the Learner Profile are compartmentalized by subject within the IBDP, favouring the humanities (Tarc & Beatty 2012; Wright and Lee, 2014). How both interculturalism and the IB Learner Profile is reconciled with the curricula IB Teachers teach across each subject is left largely to the professional judgement of that particular teacher (Lineham, 2013; Wells, 2011).

Though there is emerging academic research concerning the IBDP in Canada, there has hardly been a sparse degree of literature concerning the IB Mission Statement, Learner Profile, and the fulfilment of interculturalism within the Ontario context. Since Ontario secondary school students are one stage away from leaving their schools to enter the wide world, the IB Diploma Programme is an essential point of observation for the development of critical thinking with an
international perspective (Connor, 2008). Furthermore, a focus on public schools offering the IBDP as an alternative choice alongside the provincial curriculum would provide an insightful contrast for two reasons. First, teachers in these schools would be familiar with both types of curricula, and second, it would provide insight into Ian Hill’s (2006) claim that intercultural education happens to a lesser extent in national (or provincial) school settings. Concerning Toronto, one can also observe the potential contrast between the benefits of a school’s assumedly diverse ethno-cultural community as a contributor towards fostering interculturalism, or the efforts of the teachers themselves through the curricula they are provided with (Lineham 2014; Tarc & Beatty 2012).

Following the implication from the research that the humanities and languages were more prone as disciplinary subjects to fostering interculturalism, this research project primarily focuses on IB teachers experienced in the humanities or arts subject groups, which promise to develop a critical appreciation for the human experience both socially and culturally (IB, 2016, n.p.). As for the rationale for speaking to the teachers themselves, the IB requires future IB teachers to commit to mandatory professional development workshops involving both the Mission Statement and the IB Learner Profile as a condition for providing the IBDP to students (IB, 2016, n.p.). Due to the nature of this training, a large aspect of reconciling interculturalism with curricula is the teacher’s perspective, which can be influenced by a number of factors including “training, background, and perceived importance of the mission statement in that subject” (Lineham, 2013, p.274; see also Wells, 2011).

Globalization in the 21st century, along with an increase in technological proficiency, has also resulted in a conglomerate of cultures as physical and virtual borders have been pushed to historic lengths. As such, it is crucial for educators in charge of fostering youth to embrace
cultural diversity to reconcile knowledge and understanding about these difference with the specific curriculum they teach. If the notion of creating a global village cognizant of cultural issues that are trans-national is to be realized in youth, as the IB states in their Mission Statement, then teachers must be explicit about instilling these values, which would deepen the learning process for both themselves and their students (Lovat et al., 2010).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme teachers who teach humanities or the arts, with the IBO Mission Statement regarding interculturalism. Though the IBDP is widely known for its academic rigor and ability to offer high school students a wider variety of post-secondary school choices, the program also claims to instill a sense of cultural knowledge and respect in order to fashion students into globalized citizens capable of engaging in international issues and relations. It is in these years, before the students leave secondary school and embrace post-secondary options, that students can develop critical thinking skills regarding themselves and the world around them in conjunction with the subjects they learn (Connor, 2008).

Additionally, this study aspires to share its findings about specific practices IBDP teachers use to reconcile interculturalism and their subject’s curriculum. It is with hope that the knowledge acquired will translate to all IBDP teachers, who do not necessarily teach humanities or the arts subject groups, as an informative and supportive study for their own teaching practices. Finally, it is my desire that the results accrued through this study will support teachers beyond the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme who wish to implement interculturalism values in their own subject-specific classrooms.
1.3 Research Questions

The essential research question of this study is the following: How does a small sample of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme teachers who teach in humanities or the arts reconcile interculturalism and curricula as per the IB Mission Statement? Accompanying the central research question are several sub-questions in an attempt to bolster inquiry. These include:

- How do these teachers conceptualize international education?
- What perceived differences are there between the IBDP curriculum and the Ontario curriculum?
- How do these teachers perceive the school community contributing to interculturalism and the Mission Statement?
- To what end do available resources support teachers in their reconciliation of interculturalism and their subject curriculum?

1.4 Reflexive Positioning Statement

I graduated from the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme in 2011 in Peterborough, Ontario, and as such have a personal interest in the programme’s effectiveness beyond the scope of my own experience. During my time in the programme, I experienced a clear challenge to incorporate critical thinking into my social and cultural perspectives from incredible teachers who were passionate about the IB program’s international philosophy. That being said, Peterborough is largely homogenous in its white, Eurocentric population, with a visible minority population of 3.1% in 2015 that was clearly reflected in my high school (Stats Canada, 2012). To that end, I am interested in observing IBDP schools in Toronto, a city that houses 37.4% of the country’s immigrant population and whose visible minority population
composes over 23% of the country’s total (Stats Canada, 2012). Toronto is truly the virtual opposite to Peterborough concerning ethno-cultural diversity.

Interculturalism is personally interesting to me for two reasons. First, as a future educator with an optimistic perspective, I find that educating youth in the global cultural issues of our world is essential to developing critical minds capable of international change. Second, I am the son of two immigrants to Canada from Peru and Jamaica respectively, and as a result of my upbringing and experiences with bullying as a child, I have come to believe that cultural differences should be celebrated and shared in a space of understanding and respect. As a result, I wished to learn how IBDP teachers, as a supposed requirement for their profession, conduct their own personal ideologies within their classrooms along with the subject they teach.

1.5 Overview of the MTRP

To answer the proposed research questions, I conducted a qualitative research study concerning personal narratives using purposive sampling. I interviewed three IBDP teachers in Toronto, Ontario who teach in humanities or the arts. In Chapter Two, I review the literature involving international education and the IBDP’s effectiveness in its Mission Statement. In Chapter Three, I outline my research design. In Chapter Four, I report my research findings while also discussing their relevance in regards to the contemporary literature. Then, in Chapter Five I discuss the implications of my research findings while putting forth questions to applicable areas for future research.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Within this chapter, I review literature pertaining to the purpose of International Education, Interculturalism, and the perceived barriers for teachers who attempt to implement intercultural material in their classrooms from the curricula. To specify further, I initially review several approaches to conceptualizing the essential purpose of International Education within the context of the International Baccalaureate (IB). Next, I consider the definition of interculturalism and similar terms that are specific values meant to be instilled within secondary school students. Finally, I overview some of the perceived barriers that inhibit the reconciliation of the IB Mission Statement, specifically regarding interculturalism, with the curricula IBDP teachers use in their classrooms.

2.1 The Purpose of International Education within the IBDP

Though defining international education seems to be heavily reliant on subjectivity, Taylor (2013) and Phillips (2002) discuss a spectrum that encompasses the two distinct approaches: the ideological and practical perspective. Arguably, the IBDP falls within this position of subjective interpretation since it claims to emphasize both approaches equally in its programs worldwide. This is evident from the wording of their Mission Statement that promises “to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment” as well as “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IB, 2016, n.p.).

The ideological perspective, that international education leans more towards providing ideological or ethical values for students to critically examine the world, and is predicated on the
evolving economic, technological, scientific, demographical, and safety concerns future students will have to face in the modern world after they graduate high school; the focus should be on the transferability of skills as opposed to content (Hill, 2006; Phillips, 2002; Stewart, 2007). International education seems to promote certain worldly ethical values according to Hinrichs (2003) who compared American AP and IBDP students and found a clear difference in how students expressed an enhanced level of “international understanding”, marking clear ideological differences between the programs. Lineham (2013), found that students within the IBDP are taught to consider multiple perspectives unrestricted to an individual geography, identity, or culture. Yet despite a clear desire to fashion global citizens out of students through these institutions, the ideological view fails to account for the more pragmatic elements also offered through international schools, such as worldwide post-secondary recognition through academic excellence.

At minimum, the more practical perspective focuses on the usability of international education to the extent that it will benefit the students, the nation, and the world to a tangible degree beyond abstract values. Ilon (1997) argues that since schooling is directly linked to a student’s employment opportunities, international education must emphasize training for jobs that are “globally defined” and not limited to one’s nation, race, religion or language. Additionally, Cambridge and Thompson (2002) argue that international education can be dissected as a commodity with a particular brand-identity targeted towards customers through qualifications and widespread recognition to post-secondary options. Ideologies such as internationalism or interculturalism are merely symbolic and only increase the attractiveness of the service offered. Echoing this view are several studies conducted by Wright and Lee (2014), Lineham (2013), and Paris (2003) in China, Switzerland, and Australia respectively, suggesting
that students were, overall, more concerned with the grades they were receiving and the versatility of their diploma beyond high school. With this being said, this perspective seems problematic for institutions like the IB that align themselves with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in that education of a supposedly higher quality is a commodity exclusive to the socio-economically privileged, rather than quality education being a universal right (UNESCO).

Thus, the question centers on how effectively the programme implements its whole philosophy while maintaining its reputation as academically rigorous. Phillips (2002) proposes a “third way” alternate to the dichotomy that seems relevant in this circumstance of prioritization. He suggests that international education should focus on reconciling both perspectives since both the ideological and the practical are equally necessary for students to respond to the interconnected forces of modernisation that cause us to live reflexively, responsibly, and critically (Phillips 2002). Is it truly possible to instill both ideology and a higher degree of practical subject knowledge in students?

2.1.2 Benefits of the international label

One of the distinguishing traits of defining international education through the IBDP comes naturally through its comparison to other educational options present. As aforementioned, the IBDP is recognized for its academic rigour and ideological promotion of worldly values as of a higher quality. Even Phillip’s (2002) notion of a “third way” uniting practicality and ideology distinguishes international education as an exemplary model for non-international education systems; “a viable alternative”.

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A common perception amongst the literature suggested that the IBDP primarily caters to students hoping to attend university as higher form of post-secondary, a perception shared by the IB itself in its description of the programme (Lineham, 2013; IB, 2016; Paris, 2002; Rosefsky-Saavedra, Lavore, & Flores Ivich, 2014; Tarc & Beatty, 2012; Wells, 2011; Wright & Lee, 2014). Thus, the registrar offices of universities who accept students from a variety of educational programs would weigh international education programs and curricula against alternatives. An executive summary evaluating perceptions of the IBDP amongst 71 higher academic institutions within the United Kingdom reported that most respondents from administrative positions were enthusiastic about the wide knowledge and skills the Diploma seemed to provide over national qualifications (Jenkins, 2003). Similar studies conducted amongst institutions within Australia and New Zealand, and the United States that interviewed administrative leaders found that, overall, the IBDP improved students’ academic capabilities for success at university (Coates, Rosicka, & MacMahon-Ball, 2007; Culross and Tarver, 2011). Despite such positive praise, all three studies noted a lack of clarity regarding the specific skills and values the IBDP promotes, and that university administrators were less equipped to comment on these values (Coates, Rosicka, & MacMahon-Ball, 2007; Culross and Tarver, 2011; Jenkins, 2003).

Regarding the Canadian perspective, Fitzgerald (2015) surveyed registrar workers across Ontario and found that 95% of respondents considered the IBDP to be more challenging than the provincial curriculum, with 90% of respondents agreeing that the IBDP prepares students better for post-secondary. However, imitating the results of the previous studies, respondents were unable to specify a concrete metric for comparing the supposedly heightened development of the ideological values of the IBDP curriculum in students. Furthermore, these findings raise
concerns over whether the international ideology promoted in programmes such as the IBDP are truly exclusive to international-focused education programs.

2.2 Conceptualizing Interculturalism

Intercultural understanding, the notion of “recognizing one’s own perspective” amongst others in a way that is both critical and appreciating, is a key value of the internationally-focused and holistic education that the IBO claims to provide in their Mission Statement (IB, 2016, n.p.). As aforementioned in the previous section, the ideological values of the IBDP, including interculturalism, were difficult to define beyond the general assumption that the program promoted general worldly values. Thus, an exploration into the academic literature regarding the benefits and limitations of interculturalism as an ideological value instilled within IDBP students is warranted, as well as to what benefit values might be instilled in high school students (Lineham 2013).

2.2.1 Interculturalism and the “wider perspective”

Former Deputy Director if the IBO Ian Hill (2006) argues that interculturalism is fundamental to international education simply because an international perspective grants a wider ability for students to engage in cultures different from their own. In greater detail, interculturalism, as an ideological value, involves operating “effectively” and respectfully in a multicultural environment with knowledge about “the historical, social, political, economic, religious, and anthropological influences” that shape a culture (Hill, 206, p. 12). This knowledge is seemingly bolstered with the greater amount of cultures and countries a student is exposed to. Additionally, Wells (2011) asserts that a curriculum that draws on the knowledge of a variety of
nations, while promoting tolerance, is more likely to instill intercultural awareness in students as opposed to a nationally or regionally-focused curriculum.

Contrastingly, James (2005) argues that while international education promotes interculturalism, interculturalism is a value that can be cultivated without an international focus. Claiming that in a post 9/11 world fraught with conflicts both between nations and within them, students should be as equally aware of the conflicts within the national borders that they will inherit as they leave high school, citing examples such as ethnic cleansing in Sudan and Iraq or the equation of Islam with a culture of terror within middle-eastern countries. Furthermore, James (2005) warns not to confuse physical nations with cultures, meaning interculturalism is not a focus on broad countries but a specific focus on the cultures within them. This suggests that interculturalism within the IBDP may not be exclusive to an international focus since differing cultural lenses can certainly be found in national or regional forms of education.

Suggesting that interculturalism can be interpreted through a variety of lenses including “international-mindedness”, “Cosmopolitanism”, or “human rights education” has also been emphasized by other sources (Fullinwider, 2001; Lineham, 2013; Taylor 2013; Wells, 2011). These definitions of interculturalism as an ideology tend to fall within a mix of the self and the other; between benefiting the individual’s own human experience, and benefiting the global expanse of politics, economics, and social relations (Fullinwider, 2001; Lineham, 2013; Taylor, 2013; Wells 2011). Thus, it seems the actual word interculturalism is as subjectively interpretable as “international education”. Perhaps this vagueness explains the inability of the previously mentioned university administrators to discern its greater presence in the IBDP from non-international curricula.
2.2.2 Interculturalism and neo-liberalism

A large point of contention in the literature regarding interculturalism seemed to be an outright rejection of the IBDP’s intentions compared to its practice. Tarc (2009) outlines the perception that the IB’s values come from a history of humanism with Western-capitalist intentions. The IB claims to spread values such as interculturalism, modernizing the world through internationally “common humanity” ideology, but this modernization is really just the west masking their definition of democratic progressiveness as international (Tarc, 2009, p. 246). Though the content of the IBDP’s subject curricula may be internationally-focused, it is epistemologically western-liberal, utilizing a knowledge hierarchy that promotes understanding and concepts over memorization and facts (vanOord 2007). Additionally, Besley (2011) builds on the perspective of Cambridge (2002) in that international education is a specifically marketed commodity, with any sense of interculturalism as mere “window dressing” for courses marketed to a neoliberal political economy, becoming “little more than a form of neo-colonialism” (Besley, 2011, p. 9).

Response to this criticism seems to argue in favour of the values the IB promotes, regardless of any cultural bias. Phillips (2002) argues that despite having foundations in Europe, the humanism aspects of the IBDP are in line with the fundamental basis of the United Nations, the world’s leading authority on interculturalism in political practice. Furthermore, in an IB-sanctioned article, former Director General of the IB George Walker (2010) claimed that “east is east and west is west”, arguing that the IBDP cannot “be everything to everyone” and that there is little incentive to change due to the programme’s success worldwide (p. 8). Thus, interculturalism, a key ideological component of the IBDP’s holistic education, seems to be both
situationally and ambiguously defined despite the standardized Mission Statement across all of the IBDP’s curricula.

2.2.3 Interculturalism within Ontarian curricula

In 2009, the Ontario provincial government instituted a new policy called *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (EIE), seeking to foster school environments that value inclusivity and diversity for all individuals regarding their education (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009). The document claims to include a “section on antidiscrimination” in every curriculum document as well as encouraging teachers to “recognize the diversity of students’ backgrounds, interests, and experiences, and to incorporate a variety of viewpoints and perspectives in learning activities” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 25). Thus, though the exact term “interculturalism” is not referenced, similarities are apparent between this document and the IB Mission Statement where both the IB and Ministry of Ontario recognize the importance of multiple cultural perspectives in all subjects, beyond being simply tolerant of cultural diversity.

However, Mujawamariya, Hujaleh, and Lima-Kerckhoff (2014) noted that they the document seemed to have a greater presence within social sciences and humanities curricula. This is apparent within the EIE document itself with the creation of courses on gender studies, equity studies, and world culture, suggesting a greater emphasis of interculturalism by teachers of those courses rather than throughout all curricula. (Mujawamariya, Hujaleh, & Lima-Kerckhoff, 2014). Additionally, and regardless of the curriculum being from Ontario, the IB, or elsewhere, the focus on peace and democracy between cultures might fall under the aforementioned neo-liberalist critique wherefore these aspects are not truly representative of other cultures and are more western in ideology. The overall effectiveness of actual intercultural
approaches within the IB and the Ontario curriculum when juxtaposed is beyond the scope of this chapter review, but it should be noted that intercultural ideology is not restricted to programs offered by the IB alone.

2.2.4 Values education and intercultural ideology

On the literature concerning ideological values being instilled in students, Lovat et al. (2010) discuss values education as an effective pedagogical strategy for holistic education which is the underlying aim of the IB’s programmes (IB, 2016, n.p.). They argue that values should be considered not for their moral impact, as was once the realm of religious education, but for their holistic development which constitutes “all developmental measures, intellectual, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual” (Lovat et al., 2010, pp.726). Additionally, values education is beneficial to teachers, providing a self-efficacy boost through the explicit translation of a program’s values to students and the fostering of understanding for both parties. Essentially, their perspective, though limited in defining “values” specifically beyond a student’s well-being, cites the key role of teachers in providing values that bring positive changes and opportunities for development in students.

Regarding how intercultural values are expressed within the IBDP, Bullock (2001) in a review of literature, explores the IB Learner Profile as a characteristic guideline of how to nurture the holistic values of the IB through a social constructivist lens. Within the context of intercultural values, social constructivism emphasizes that learning can move beyond a deficit model where information is simply provided to students and towards the teacher drawing on the socio-cultural experiences of the students within their classrooms (Bullock, 2001; Mishra, 2014). Such an approach stresses the responsibility of teachers to be capable of constructing the positive values of interculturalism with their students.
One of contrasting views to the emphasis on the teacher’s role in instilling intercultural values in students is that the teacher is an unnecessary agent if the school’s environment is culturally diverse (Taylor 2013). Taylor (2013) disagrees with this assertion, suggesting that a “cocktail of cultures may be stirred at best but rarely shaken” (p. 65). There is a possibility of members of the school community simply being tolerant towards other cultures while in a worst-case scenario, intolerance, cultural imperialism, discrimination, and ethnocentrism are also possible in a shared space. Thus, similar to the social constructivist approach that emphasizes action, Taylor (2013) asserts that interculturalism socially entails the appreciation, respect, and tact that is not always inherent in people who are passively tolerant of each other in a community. What can be concluded of teaching interculturalism as an ideological value, regardless of ambiguity to its definition, is the necessity for positive social connections to be instilled in students. On the teacher’s part, this would involve reconciling these social skills with the curricula and lessons they teach.

2.3 Reconciling Interculturalism and Curriculum

As a requirement for implementing the IBDP programme in secondary schools, those schools must be authorized based on a series of criteria including the professional development staff in IB workshops that demonstrate how the IB Learner Profile “is the Mission Statement in action” (IB, 2016, n.p; Rosefsky-Saavedra, Lavore, & Flores Ivich, 2014). However, Wells (2011) claims that there is little reference in IB literature that specifies how the curriculum provided to teachers is meant to be taught while developing the ideological values desired by the organization. Thus, the extent to which this is actually achieved in practice is questionable, especially considering the sense ambiguity of both internationally-focused education and
interculturalism explored thus far. From the limited research exploring this specific topic, several barriers have been perceived and are discussed.

2.3.1 Values are easier to facilitate in arts and humanities courses

In an interview-based study involving IBDP students attending an anonymous Catholic secondary school in Ontario, Tarc & Beatty (2009) found that “international mindedness” was more prevalent in the required Theory of Knowledge course as well as courses involving the Language Acquisition and Individuals and Societies subject groups (French and History in this study). These subjects granted students more opportunities to learn about the various perspectives of the world and its cultures, more so than the Chemistry and Mathematics teachers who claimed that there were few opportunities to develop the worldly ideological values through their own subjects (Tarc & Beatty, 2009). These qualitative findings suggest that the ideological values concerning a worldly holistic education are compartmentalized by subject, rather than being implemented across the programme as advertised. However, this study focused on the subjectively defined “international-mindedness” aspect of the Mission Statement of the IBDP to which interculturalism was not a specific focus.

Additionally, a series of semi-structured interviews of teachers, students, and administrators conducted in IBDP-only schools within China and Switzerland found that languages and the humanities were more evident at expressing the IB Mission Statement (Lineham, 2013; Wright & Lee, 2014). Wright and Lee (2014) interviewed an anonymous teacher who explained that the aspects of the Learner Profile that foster interculturalism are characteristic of the program, but not necessarily emphasized in every subject; this particular teacher did not expect a Maths class to teach about caring for others. These findings seem to be at odds with the Mission Statement, suggesting that the overall effectiveness or ease of
interculturalism coming across in the classroom is dependent on the subject and hence, not universally upheld throughout the program.

### 2.3.2 Community and classroom

Another point of contention observing interculturalism in IBDP schools appeared to be whether the school’s environment had a greater effect on instilling values as opposed to the teachers and their subjects. Lineham (2013) observed that it was difficult for some students interviewed to separate the effects of the curriculum from the school environment, which as a whole upheld the values of the IB in a sense of community that the students experienced first-hand for themselves. Additionally, Lineham (2013) discusses the cultural diversity of the school community as a significant factor for the development of interculturalism, yet as aforementioned the mere presence of diversity does not always translate into the instilment of interculturalism without the influence of the teacher.

Beyond the school environment, Lineham (2013) and more specifically Wright and Lee (2014) cited the Creativity, Action, and Service (CAS) volunteer hours IBDP students are required to complete as an area where Learner Profile values have a higher degree of instilment as opposed to within the classroom. CAS provided an opportunity for students to explore new situations outside of the school, both culturally and socially. Wright and Lee (2014) observed that, due to the struggle of balancing a higher degree of subject material with teaching the ideological values of the IBO, students were generally considered to be experiencing interculturalism and the other holistic aspects of education outside of the classroom in a practical matter, as the classroom was reserved for yielding high academic results. This might be considered problematic for two reasons. First, the experiences of students with their CAS hours are entirely subjective to that individual and might not provide any opportunities for intercultural
development. Second, these results suggest a potential apathy amongst teachers who believe interculturalism should be experienced rather than taught by themselves. The latter point seems similar to the Maths or Science teachers who believed interculturalism and the Learner Profile had no place in their classes.

2.3.3 Values are not explicitly taught

Lineham (2013) and Tarc and Beatty (2009) observed that the qualities of the IB Mission Statement were not always explicitly taught in lessons. While some students could vaguely define interculturalism when asked, another student in Tarc & Beatty’s study described the entire international focus of the programme as “a joke” and that it was entirely possible for graduates to leave the programme without any form of cultural awareness or understanding (p. 365). Additionally, Wilkinson and Hayden (2010) administered questionnaires across eight IBDP schools across eight countries, finding that students were reluctant to admit they had achieved any level of intercultural understanding for they had learned that “the more they knew about each other [culturally, socially, religiously, etc.], the more they realized how little they knew about the countries, cultures, and traditions of others of that same country” (p. 90). However, there was some overall familiarity with the Mission Statement in a more general sense, beyond specific terms, within all three studies; students interviewed suggested that the programme was somewhat effective in broadcasting the Mission Statement to an unknown degree (Wilkinson and Hayden, 2010; Lineham, 2013; Tarc & Beatty, 2009).

Regarding IBDP teachers, Lee and Wright (2014) observed that there were concerns amongst teachers and administrators interviewed about “a lack of guidance from the IB” in how to practically implement the Learner Profile daily (p. 159). Ultimately, they perceived any commitment to the Mission Statement to be entirely up to the individual teacher and that the IB’s
IB teachers are automatically assumed to be capable of teaching holistically (Lee & Wright, 2014). However, a research report conducted across five IBDP-mixed schools within the United States found educators across multiple subjects held an overall familiarity with the Learner Profile and its general implementation within their classrooms (Billig et al., 2014). Yet comparative to Lee and Wright, a lack of explicit professional development practices was cited coupled with a heavy reliance on teacher preference. Additionally, the latter study cited the teachers involved being chosen to participate by the IB Coordinator of those specific schools as a weakness to the studies representativeness. That being said, there is a notable lack of research conducted concerning teacher’s perceptions of how the Learner Profile, much less interculturalism, is instilled as per the Mission Statement beyond studies sanctioned by the IB.

2.4 Conclusion

This literature review explored research relating to conceptualizing international education, interculturalism, and perceived barriers of integrating interculturalism alongside the curriculum taught in IBDP classrooms, emphasizing the polemic relationship between practical and ideological goals. While teachers play a critical role in instilling values, the literature suggests that teaching these values are highly dependent on the teacher’s own desire to do so, without any sort of metric to measure student progression. This leaves terms such as interculturalism with a wide range of definitions and subjective approaches to classroom implementation, as well as questioning whether there is any concrete ideological differences between the program and other alternative programs offered in juxtaposition. Further research is required regarding how the Mission Statement, specifically interculturalism, is actually reconciled with the IBDP curricula of varying subjects since the program claims it is universally upheld. As Wells (2011) states it seems as though students are “somehow able to imbibe,
virtually by osmosis, the Learner Profile’s qualities” (p. 184); is the same true for interculturalism?

Admittedly, there is a clear lack of the IBDP teacher voice amidst the literature, yet they seem hold the answers to the questions this review has unearthed. Through focusing on teachers’ perceptions and experiences with interculturalism and the IB Mission Statement, I hope to contribute to a growing body of literature on the effectiveness of the IBDP as well as add to the sparse amount of research comparing the program to the provincial secondary school curriculum of Ontario, Canada. This research study attempts to explore the issue of interculturalism within the IBDP and how it is conceptualized and implemented, using semi-structured interviews with IBDP educators in Ontario, Canada. It is the goal of this research project to better understand how interculturalism can be fostered and with gleamed results, how teacher practice and IB curriculum implementation can be further informed.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

Within this chapter, I explain the research methodology of this project while rationalizing the choices for each methodological decision made. First, I discuss the research approach and procedures before delving into the central components of data collection. Second, I identify the participants of the study along with the sampling criteria, procedures, and context behind their choosing. Third, I describe my analysis of the data, being cognizant of relevant ethical concerns that are subsequently considered and addressed. Then, I address both the methodological limitations of the project as well as the strengths. Finally, I conclude with a brief summary of the chapter within the context of the research purpose and questions proposed.

3.1 Research Approaches and Procedures

Through exploring the research question, this study utilized a qualitative approach with a review of relevant literature, and semi-structured interviews conducted in-person with three secondary teachers. Carter and Little (2007) define qualitative research as being concerned with understanding human actions and phenomena in certain contexts and Schwandt (1999) asserts that qualitative inquiry is essentially discovering the best account possible by refining our ordinary understanding of a lived reality. Qualitative research is “inductive, interpretive, and naturalistic”, focusing on social situations in their natural environments to reveal the personal meanings of participants’ experiences of the world. (Yilmaz, 2013, p. 312). According to Cooley (2013), the education field features complex social interactions and an infinite amount of social positions; people hold “different motives, values, and attitudes”, and these personal perspectives are valid sources of data in that they can “negotiate” a border between academic study or public
policy and their actual implementation (p. 248). In short, if one wants to gather knowledge about how people react, think, and perceive their current environment and its stressors, then basing one’s methodology on a qualitative approach is suitable.

Conversely, quantitative research empirically explains phenomena through more statistical methods and numerical analysis (Yilmaz, 2013). Quantitative inquiry is more concerned with measuring variables to determine whether a theory or hypothesis explains the particular phenomena studied. Thus, the quantitative approach maintains an objectivist epistemology where the universe can be explained as static in that there is an objective reality independent of human behaviour and that this reality can be statistically measured with deductive reasoning (Yilmaz, 2013). To learn more about said static reality, this insinuates that distance should be placed between the researcher and what is being studied to avoid tainting results. In contrast, qualitative research is epistemologically constructivist in that the goal is to explore how reality is socially constructed and how situations are given subjective meaning (Yilmaz, 2013). Through inductive reasoning, one attempts to explore or understand a phenomenon through the lived experiences of participants. As the purpose of this study explores personal perceptions of intercultural education and how the International Baccalaureate (IB) Mission Statement is upheld within an individual’s classroom, a qualitative approach seems to be more appropriate. I observe both how teachers associate social and practical meaning to the IBDP in their classrooms and the personal stressors, barriers, and achievements that translate from implementing policy.
3.2 Instruments of Data Collection

In order to reflect the constructivist nature of qualitative research, this study utilized semi-structured interviews which are key to gathering perspectives on multiple lived realities (Rabionet, 2011; Yilmaz, 2013).

According to Doody and Noonan (2013), interviews can serve to fit either quantitative or qualitative research purposes if the questions asked are either closed or open-ended respectively. One benefit of interviews are that they observe or record a participant talking, which is a natural element in people’s everyday lives (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Structured interviews, which use closed-ended questions, are unyielding in that they do not allow for any deviance from the interview script, inhibiting the potential for more subjective depth with participant responses (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010, as cited in Doody & Noonan, 2013). Although open-ended interviews can be either unstructured or semi-structured, unstructured interviews follow themes rather than adhering to specific questions whereas semi-structured interviews utilize pre-determined questions that allow flexibility in directed responses (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Of the two, unstructured interviews are at an increased risk of obtaining a higher degree of data unrelated to participant experiences (Rabionet, 2011). Thus, semi-structured interviews are the principal instrument of data collection used in this study.

Semi-structured interviews allow one to compare similar types of data across all participants in the study, while being simultaneously flexible should the conversation take unexpected, provocative turns to the benefit of the research purpose. Furthermore, Dearnly (2005) argues that semi-structured interviews are often used due to their ability to garner valid data from a constructivist perspective due to the natural progression conversations can take. On planning the interview, Doody and Noonan (2013) assert that semi-structured interviews should
allow for the expression of behaviours, opinions, stories, feelings, knowledge, and contextual information, while also encouraging elaboration through probes or prompts.

In accord with the aforementioned, I prepared a script of semi-structured questions (see Appendix B) in order to gather data on interculturalism and the IBDP program. Furthermore, I was cognizant of both the need to re-orient the discussion should the interview stray too far from the research purpose, and be willing to depart from aspects of the script if information is not forthcoming between myself and the participant. In Appendix B, I organized my interview protocol into four sections. First, I explored the participant’s background and gather contextual information regarding their current position. Second are questions concerning their experiences with the entirety of the IBDP program and beliefs regarding the IB Mission Statement. Lastly, questions were asked regarding the challenges to and supports available for implementing intercultural forms of pedagogy within either the IB or OSSD curricula. Example questions include:

- What would you say is the philosophy of the IB program and how does this philosophy differ from OSSD programs and courses?
- How familiar are you with the term “Intercultural”?
- Do you bring up or speak to world issues, findings, or forms of knowledge as relevant to your course material in your classes?
3.3 Participants and Sampling Criteria

Sampling, the means of selecting participants and applying data to larger populations, is qualitative when the unit of investigation is fundamentally relevant in background and institutional membership for the research purpose of the study (Diefenbach, 2008). Higginbottom (2004) asserts that small sample sizes are appropriate due to the in-depth nature of interviewing. This section refers to the methodological reasoning regarding the research participants.

The following criteria were applied to teacher participant:

1. Teachers will be current humanities or arts IBDP teachers with experience teaching OSSD courses.
2. Teachers are currently working in a mixed IBDP and OSSD (non-IB) secondary school.
3. Teachers will have a minimum of one year teaching experience in the IBDP and a minimum of five years with the OSSD.
4. Teachers will be working in the Greater Toronto Area.

Following the implication from the research that the humanities and languages were more prone as disciplinary subjects to fostering interculturalism, this research project primarily focuses on IB teachers involved in humanities or the arts, which promises to develop a critical appreciation for the human experience both socially and culturally (IB, 2016B, n.p.). Furthermore, a focus on public schools offering the IBDP as an alternative choice alongside the provincial curriculum would provide an insightful contrast for two reasons. First, teachers in these schools would be familiar with both types of curricula, and second, it would provide insight into Ian Hill’s (2006) claim that intercultural education happens to a lesser extent in
national (or provincial) school settings. Concerning Toronto, one can also observe the potential contrast between the benefits of a school’s assumedly diverse ethno-cultural community as a contributor towards fostering interculturalism, or the efforts of the teachers themselves through the curricula they are provided with (Lineham, 2014; Tarc & Beatty, 2012).

As for the rationale for speaking to IB teachers themselves, the IB requires future IB teachers to commit to mandatory professional development workshops involving both the Mission Statement and the IB Learner Profile as a condition for providing the IBDP to students (IB, 2016A, n.p.). Due to the nature of this training, a large aspect of reconciling interculturalism with curricula is the teacher’s perspective, which can be influenced by a number of factors including “training, background, and perceived importance of the mission statement in that subject” (Lineham, 2013, p.274; Wells, 2011).

3.3.1 Sampling procedures and recruitment

Higginbottom (2004) distinguishes between two common forms of sampling: probability and non-probability sampling, which depend on the methodological and epistemological approach of the entire study. Probability sampling aligns with empirical and quantitative research where the goal is to achieve generalisability: randomization to remove intervening factors in observing an objective truth and the application of sample findings to a larger population (Higginbottom, 2004). As this study is concerned with lived experiences and more in-depth personal data, probability sampling and generalisability are not suitable for use.

Petty, Thompson, and Stew (2012) discuss the three main methods of sampling within a qualitative framework: convenience, purposive, and theoretical sampling. Convenience sampling is the finding of participants based solely on convenience and accessibility. Theoretical sampling
depends on a developing relevance to theories that emerge where further participants are selected based on a need to reach “theoretical saturation or sufficiency” regarding the research purpose (Petty, Thompson, & Stew, 2012, p. 379). Finally, purposive sampling means to find participants who are members of the groups or institutions being researched with specific knowledge of interest to the study’s purpose and the fundamental research question posed (Higginbottom, 2004).

Within this study, I utilized a combination of convenience and purposive sampling where participants were chosen with a specific set of relevant criteria as well as out of convenience to myself, the researcher. More specifically on convenience, I used pre-existing connections among my pre-service teacher colleagues and current teachers working within the Greater Toronto Area. My resources as a pre-service teacher and overall novice within the field of education were limited, thus warranting my reliance on these methods to obtain suitable participants. Additionally, I used snowball sampling, where appropriate, to gain further leads on suitable participants from the recommendations and nominations of those interviewed (Petty, Thompson, & Stew, 2012).

3.3.2 Participant bios

Two participants, Dolores and Wyatt, were interviewed in this study, both being secondary school teachers with OSSD and IBDP experience. Dolores has been teaching for eight years with two years’ experience in the IBDP program and five in the provincial program. She is certified in Family Studies, Drama, Film, and the Social Sciences with a focus on equity and diversity studies both in-class and in extracurricular activities. Wyatt has been teaching for twenty years in Ontario with seven years’ experience in the IBDP program. He specializes in English, Business, Drama, and Film, and is involved as the CAS (Creative, Active, Service)
coordinator at his high school. Both participants have worked at the same school, and their experiences derived for the purposes of this study can be located at said school.

3.4 Data Analysis

Thomas (2006) defines the qualitative analysis of data as inductive in that the researcher is concerned with the interpretations of “concepts, themes, or a model” gleamed from raw data (p. 238). This is accomplished through understanding the context of the study and the research purpose, with which the researcher is already familiar in order to make connections from phenomena observed. Furthermore, according to Petty, Thompson, and Stew (2012), the researcher usually moves back and forth between data collection and data analysis in an overall iterative process where the transparency between the two is not always clear unless explicitly stated. Subsequently, the researcher develops a model or theory concerning the experiences or processes analyzed from their data regarding the overall study (Thomas, 2006). The inductive approach is most common among health and social science research analysis (Thomas, 2006).

In order to fashion a model or theory from inductive data analysis, one must code their findings to convey key themes and processes (Thomas, 2006). Coding initially involves the creation of categories containing words or short phrases with inherent meanings. Then, text-based data obtained from the research can be sorted into said categories, illustrating the “meanings, associations, and perspectives” of the category (Thomas, 2006, p. 240). Lastly, categories may reveal links or relationships with other categories which can be due to the presence or absence of common aspects of data (Thomas, 2006). Regardless, coding reveals these links. In my analysis, I utilized coding in order to transcribe the data into specific themes relating to the research purpose. Furthermore, I took note of any patterns among these themes.
regarding frequency as well as recognizing significant null data (what is missing) for an overall inductive approach.

3.5 Ethical Review Procedures

Though this particular study poses no highly debilitating risks, all researchers have an ethical responsibility to participants and themselves to maintain the right to safety should any jeopardizing issues arise, (Adams, 2010). As the subject of this study concerns the personal opinions of the participant’s profession, there might be the possibility of evoking strong, vulnerable emotions. Therefore, the researcher must maintain professional boundaries that are not exploitative for personal gain at all times, such as providing information concerning the study as well as the research questions ahead of time for the participants to review and pose questions (Adams, 2010). Additionally, it is crucial for the researcher to provide informed consent to the participants of the study both written and verbally, and both beforehand and during the interview process so that it is known that participants can withdraw themselves from the study at any time (Whiting, 2008). In order to maintain safety and bolster genuine, truthful responses, the researcher must select a location for interviewing that grants privacy and comfortability (Adams, 2010).

Elaborating on safety, researcher also have an ethical responsibility to maintain privacy, and confidentially for participants. As Kaiser (2009) states, participants who divulge information regarding the conditions or experiences of their employment may face negative consequences if their identities are publically revealed. As this study concerns personal experiences of educators who currently teach IBDP and OSSD courses, confidentiality was maintained throughout. Kaiser (2009) and Dearnly (2005) assert that one must practice confidentiality through data collection, cleaning, and dissemination through informed consent, removing personal identifiers in
transcriptions such as specific names or institutions and modifying them with pseudonyms. Additionally, interview data was stored on a password protected external hard-drive to which I hold sole access, and which will be erased after five years.

Overall, maintaining all of the aforementioned ethical considerations aligns with the desire to build trust, and rapport with the participants and the integrity of the entire research process which this study seeks to replicate (Kaiser, 2009). All participants were given pre-informed consent, both written and verbal. Furthermore, all participants were provided with a summary of the study, its purpose, expectations, and ethical guidelines in the consent form located in Appendix A. Participants were also be asked to concede permission to be interviewed and audio recorded in said consent form.

3.6 Methodological Limitations and Strengths

On limitations of the study, its narrow scope prevents the effectiveness of potential findings to be applied to a larger population (Gina Marie, 2004). Only teachers were interviewed, whereas students on the receiving end of practiced pedagogy certainly have perceptions and opinions on the effectiveness of interculturalism within the IBDP (Tarc & Beatty, 2009). Variables such as the particular school, school board, the geographical region, and all the socio-political complexities therein may largely influence findings if modified as independent variables to perceptions of the IBDP and interculturalism. Additionally, as Lineham (2013) discusses in his study, teachers involved other subject areas besides those found in humanities or the arts as well as the Creative Action Service and Theory of Knowledge components to the diploma program assuredly yield opinions on the effectiveness of the program. In short, as only two teachers were interviewed in one city and within a common subject group, the generalisability of
the study is greatly impacted to which no empirically sound conclusions can be made without additionally evidence in other areas.

Biases may also be problematic in tainting results or influencing the dynamic between the researcher and participants. Doody and Noonan (2013) list several disadvantages to qualitative studies regarding interviews. First, there may be a desire to create a good impression from both parties (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Second, the researcher’s own personal views or experiences may influence research question responses through body language or natural reactions (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Finally, the participants may be biased in their affiliation with their place of employment or involvement in its programs, providing an official point of view rather than a personal one (Doody & Noonan, 2013). As Conner (2008) observed, respondent involved in the IBDP have a high tendency to advocate positively for the program due to personal investment in its philosophy and benefits for students. In light of these limitations, it is important for the researcher to be reflexive in acknowledging themselves amongst their findings, since removing oneself to obtain an objective result is fundamentally at odds with a true constructivist portrayal of experiences.

On strengths, interviews are opportunities to gain insight into the daily issues of educators that may not be transparent to invested audiences such as students, parents, policymakers, and administrators. New conceptual paths can emerge from personal data, and create narratives that can provide rich information on the current state of affairs between policy and real practice (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Additionally, interviews provide a positive space for educators to reflect on their practice, evaluate personal or systemic faults and successes, and potentially foster a cathartic experience (Adams, 2010; Dearnly, 2005). Hearing from teachers
directly, as opposed to data collected from quantitative methods, adds an element of realism that is authentic and genuine (Doody & Noonan, 2013).

3.7 Conclusion

Within this chapter, I explored and defined the research methodology of this qualitative study. I began with the research approach and procedure with an inspection on the benefits of qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research. Then, I explored the instruments of data collection with semi-structured interviews contextualized as the instrument of choice amongst other options. Following this, I identified the criteria around targeted participants of the study and providing simple biographies for those chosen. Recruitment was also discussed, with purposive sampling regarding the research purpose and convenient sampling regarding the pre-existing connections participants offered chosen as suitable means for gaining participants. The methods behind analyzing interviews in a qualitative study were also explored, with coding and its connections from obtained transcriptions denoted. Next, ethical issues regarding safety and consent were emphasized and their importance to the study stated. Finally, I observed some methodological limitations of the study including its scope and biases while highlighting the strengths of its nature to allow authentic speaking experiences for participants to express unapparent issues. In the following chapter, I report on the findings of the research.
Chapter 4: Research Findings

4.0 Chapter Overview

In Chapter One, I introduced the research problem regarding the IBDP Mission Statement and how teachers teach values inherent in interculturalism with the curricula they teach. In Chapter Two, I explored relevant literature on the subject, specifically research on how international education and interculturalism is defined by both scholars and the (International Baccalaureate) IB themselves. In Chapter Three, I discussed the methodological parameters of the study with the coupling of conducted research and the analysis of two face-to-face, semi-structured interviews. In the ensuing discussion, references and connections are made to the research conducted in the Chapter Two literature review through the use of the following four themes:

1. IBDP as a progressive ideological and pedagogical outlet

2. Interculturalism is not always reflected in the IB curriculum

3. “Values” cannot be explicitly taught

4. IBDP is Primarily Academic-Driven

Each theme, structured with complimentary sub-headings, is described and defined with the appropriate terms, extrapolated and unpacked, and finally discussed in respect to the acquired literature.
4.1 IBDP Offers a Progressive Ideology and Pedagogical Outlet

This section explores the notion of interculturalism and how participants experience the IB’s Mission Statement. They insinuate that the IB affords a higher level of personal and professional prestige in comparison to alternative programs because it encourages teachers to express a progressive ideology in their pedagogy in alignment with the curricula they teach. As discussed previously, interculturalism as defined by the IB promises “to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect” (IB, 2016, n.p.). Additionally, participants distinguished between ideology and practicality (idealism versus real world application) in alignment with the research conducted in Chapter Two. First, I explore both participants’ personal evaluations regarding what interculturalism means. Next, I discuss the perceptions of professional development benefits the IBDP affords, ending with a section on the philosophical differences regarding interculturalism between the IBDP and OSSD.

4.1.1 Defining interculturalism

According to the IB, interculturalism is an ideology whose main principle is fostering respect, understanding, and peace among folks who belong to differing cultures and nations through teaching one to be both critical and appreciative of their own perspective and those of others (IB, 2016, n.p.). Both participants were asked to define interculturalism and how it aligned with their own teaching philosophy. In other words, does the IB offer, through its Mission Statement, a chance for teachers who align with said ideology to express interculturalism through their pedagogy?
Dolores defined interculturalism as “very crucial” to the program, and “the most important thing”.

We don’t just accept people or tolerate people, we accept them. We don’t just tolerate the smell of someone else’s food or the way someone chooses to raise their children or their marital habits or traditions, but we accept that. We understand why and then we accept without judging it…we get rid of the you versus us.

Wyatt also expressed interculturalism in the following way, “IB students should be students who realize that even though they have their own opinions, that other opinions can be right…so they’re able to see things from different perspectives and can intelligently agree or disagree if they don’t see eye to eye with another perspective.”

Dolores and Wyatt’s responses converge with research on the ideological approach to international education that cites interculturalism as beneficial to one’s own human experience and contributing positively to the overall global discourse of politics, economics, and social relations worldwide (Fullinwider 2001, Lineham 2013, Taylor 2013, Wells 2011). Teaching students to be understanding and critical of their own position will, in theory, ideologically craft a better world, in theory. Furthermore, both participants seemed to hold the opinion that it is not enough for students to be tolerant of another view, but instead be accepting and knowledgeable of that point of view, a point mentioned by Taylor (2013) who suggests that a “cocktail of cultures may be stirred at best but rarely shaken” (p.65). Imagining the spectrum discussed by Taylor (2013) and Phillips (2002) where the purpose of progressive international schooling in ideology or practicality are diametrically opposed, there is a clear accord with the ideology end with participant experiences. It seems that practicality as the purpose for interculturalism is not represented.
4.1.2 Professional development

While no direct question was asked regarding whether participants preferred IB over the provincial OSSD, it appears the participants perceived that IB offered more opportunities for professional growth. Both participants seemed to describe a personal passion regarding IB that aligned with their personal interests and backgrounds; a point which they emphatically expressed.

Dolores, an eight-year teacher with two years’ IBDP experience, expressed a higher degree of research opportunities for IB teachers regarding their subject matter. Dolores taught standard and higher level Psychology, noting, “other [IB] teachers did a lot of research to supplement the textbooks. And there can be multiple textbooks per course that can hit the curricular requirements”. On the overall program, Dolores commented, “you know to be able to teach in this program…I feel as though as much training and diversity that I can have under my belt I think is good for me as a teacher.” Wyatt similarly expressed positive views towards the program’s professional development benefits. On reasons why he joined the program, Wyatt said “[IBDP] sounded interesting to me…sounded like a really nice way to expand what was happening in the drama program in my school at the time.”

While no explicit studies were found on or professional development differences between the OSSD and IB programs, it can be heavily insinuated from both the participants’ as well as studies on the university preparatory aspects of the IBDP that the program demands a higher degree of in-class preparation from its teachers than the provincial curriculum (Culross & Tarver, 2011; Fitzgerald, 2015; Coates, Rosicka, and MacMahon-Ball, 2007). Furthermore, this would entail greater systemic preparation to a degree, like a high school department built to offer such opportunities for IB students seeking post-secondary options in various subjects. At the very
least, the IB program offers something *extra* for secondary school teachers to commit to on a professional level, both ideologically and practically. Yet the question still remains whether the program objectively offers something *more* in regards to practical in-class techniques, or whether those techniques and the progressive, global ideology discussed in the first section of this ‘Defining Interculturalism’ theme are much different than the Ontario curriculum.

### 4.1.3 OSSD ideological differences

Participants, from their own experiences, revealed insight onto the ideological differences between the OSSD and the IB, particularly whether the IB held a more compelling (in regards to the participants’ own progressive ideals) narrative for teachers and students in its philosophy.

Dolores asserted that “our [OSSD] curriculum, or if you went to the ministry documents…now there’s a call for Native, Aboriginal experiences written in there. There are prompts for teachers to make it interconnected with their subjects. I think that any good teacher, if they see the demographic of their class they’ll do that”. In a follow up question on intercultural differences, Dolores was asked to elaborate to which she replied, “with teachers, it’s a combination [of curriculum and teacher effort] …all boards regarding cultural sensitivity and curriculum styles and ministries want to achieve this. Especially in this ever changing world.” Wyatt agreed with Dolores, claiming that although the IB objectives were “a little bit more explicit in that respect [regarding interculturalism]”, he added “I wouldn’t say way more than what’s happening in the regular [OSSD] ministry documents…the Ontario curriculum might say you will look at different texts from a myriad or different cultures whereas in IB you are more forced to make sure you’re going to teach this world perspective and compare it to what’s happening here or there.”
Wyatt and Dolores echo an Ontario ministry policy discussed in the previous chapter, *Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (EIE) that seeks to “recognize the diversity of students’ backgrounds, interests, and experiences, and to incorporate a variety of viewpoints and perspectives in learning activities” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009, p.25). As suggested from the participants and the research, interculturalism is a positive philosophy for good change in the world and its inhabitants, and as far as ministries and curricula are concerned, these philosophies are more or less desired equally between the IBDP and the OSSD. With this in mind, we turn to how this philosophy and the values it entails are tangibly implemented in the IBDP and consider how they might specifically how they might differ from strategies found in the OSSD.

4.2 Interculturalism is Not Always Reflected in the Curriculum

From the participants’ experiences, interculturalism is not always reflected in the curriculum explicitly, and as such is not taught explicitly. This theme explores how the IB curriculum, from the subjects taught by the participants, includes aspects of interculturalism in its unit outlines, documents, or texts.

4.2.1 Prescriptive content

Due to the IBDP testing its students with program-end examinations worth a majority of the students’ final grades, participants held opinions on how pressure exists to teach to the exam, and have content prescribed for their lessons.

Dolores expressed that “at the end of the day, the exam questions are what sort of dictate what the kids are going to learn…for me that pedagogy is hard because I don’t like it being as prescribed.” At the same time, Dolores explained that IB courses could have a variety of
prescribed textbooks, and there is a degree of “flexibility” offered with materials that a teacher can use, but at the end of the day “there are certain things about the psychology course [curriculum] that are prescribed throughout every school all around the world because of what’s on the test, and we work backwards from that.” Additionally, Dolores claimed that said prescription was damaging to her ability to teach interculturally: “There’s stuff in the textbooks about depression and monks, but not enough. All the theorists are white, European men…sometimes one woman, or mention of a Japanese Psychologist here or there…the book is written from a North American perspective as if it’s the only way to do things and I think that needs to change.” Similarly, Wyatt shared that the interculturalism of the program is a “significant aspect of the curriculum” despite exams being a top priority for teachers and students. However, he expressed that teachers still maintain a considerable degree of freedom under the stress of looking at “global perspectives” in texts embedded in the curriculum from different places around the world, and that this was overall positive.

Neo-Liberalism, the notion that democratic progressiveness that we as North Americans automatically assume is the preferred ideology over other international alternatives (Tarc, 2009), was a topic explored in Chapter Two of this research project. Convergent with the research on subjectivity, utilizing international texts to foster interculturalism and diverse perspectives through the curriculum seems to depend on the teacher. While Dolores claimed the program infringed on the perspectives of other nations and cultures with a Eurocentric bias, Wyatt seemed to believe that the program was more empowering in its prescriptiveness to incorporate global perspectives. Perhaps this is due to the differences between participants’ subjects, which will be discussed in a later theme section. Regardless, this initial exploration into curricula and interculturalism suggests that there is a considerable degree of teacher self-governance with what
is brought into the classroom, revealing a separation of teacher and curriculum despite exam pressures.

4.2.2 IB professional training

Since the IB requires its teachers to attend professional training regarding the philosophical mandates of the program, specific requirements, and content knowledge, it was a key point to ask participants how they experienced this professional training (Rosefsky-Saavedra, Lavore, & Flores Ivich, 2014; IB, 2016, n.p.). Both Dolores and Wyatt expressed positive depictions of the benefits of this training, yet both admitted that content knowledge was an increased priority during sessions, presumably because of the examination weight.

Dolores mentioned she received “cool resources” from the professional IB training she attended in the States. Furthermore, she “learned about the curriculum”, and “how to start delivering” it on top of other pedagogical strategies. On priorities, Dolores claimed that content was discussed “a little bit” in the context of interculturalism and the wider Mission Statement, discussing “what it was but not what it looks like in Psychology or how we can develop it further.” On suggestions, Dolores expressed frustration in the lack of specificity when it came to implementing interculturalism in her classroom from the professional training received: “That teachers shouldn’t be teaching themselves to be culturally sensitive and aware isn’t a part of the training…we should have a lesson on how we can integrate this notion, this part of the mission statement.” Wyatt similarly expressed enthusiasm in the training, claiming “people do get properly trained and there’s lots of support around that.” Both participants diverge in their evaluation of the philosophy and how its incorporated, where Wyatt shared: “It’s a good balance of both. They start really well with the Mission Statement and the profile cause they always assume there are people just coming into IB…once the philosophy is established, I would say
around 70% of the workshop is content based and that the content is valuable for the philosophy we are trying to get across. It’s what you take away from it.”

From the research, the IB training is often described as the Mission Statement “in action”, though there is minimal research on the effectiveness of what is taught in this training in any capacity in the IBDP teachers’ profession (time, subject, etc.). Again, what is clear here is that there appears to be a degree of subjectivity in describing the training itself. Dolores and Wyatt express that the training is meant for self-improvement, and whether the PD is unsatisfying or not, whatever is gleaned from it is filtered through a teachers’ beliefs and pedagogical assumptions. Dolores was not satisfied with intercultural training for her own classroom while Wyatt seemingly was, perhaps due to personal ideology, subject differences, or another reason entirely. As was similarly expressed in the research, there is a heavy reliance on teacher interpretation of any given curriculum, which raises the question of explicitness. If teachers are responsible for interpreting the curricula how are the values of the intercultural ideology taught to students?

4.3 Values Cannot be Explicitly Taught

With this theme, I explore the notion of explicitly teaching intercultural ideology with a majority of research and participant responses of the mind that interculturalism (and presumably all ideological values) are natural occurrences where each instance may be entirely different than another in regards to these values being taught. The factors explored here are the relevance of the subject being taught, the teachers’ role in teaching values, and participants’ comments on the overall subjectivity of interculturalism and how they themselves are unsure of how another teacher might bring these values into their classrooms.
4.3.1 Intercultural values depend on subject

Though both participants taught different IB subjects, both Wyatt and Dolores had extensive experience in the liberal arts. One question posed to both participants, in alignment with a central query from the research, was whether participants believed their subjects were “better” in facilitating interculturalism or bringing it into the classroom either explicitly or implicitly through other coursework.

Dolores, with a strong background in the liberal arts and theatre with a passion and certifications for “equity, diversity, philosophy…all those kinds of courses”, criticized Psychology for its reliance on western theorists. Additionally, she believed that “Math…might be hard to do that stuff as opposed to language and arts” but describes that a friend once structured her Math questions with cultural relevancy by framing mathematical questions to feature different peoples and countries. Ultimately, Dolores admitted to not knowing much about other subjects but her own, but spoke about teaching drama in the Middle Years IB program in Kenya. “I’m not going to do Shakespeare with East African kids…I did some research and I found this play and I felt so good that I was doing an African play.” Likewise, Wyatt claimed I think it might be easier for the arts specifically and it’s a natural fit in a lot of respects…different world cultures have their own aspects of the arts and we always borrow and influence each other in so many different ways. I’m not sure about science or math and I’m sure there are those connections as well but I don’t know how easier it would be.

Thus, both Dolores and Wyatt both admit to not having a firm understanding of interculturalism or the Mission Statement in other subjects beyond their own realm of experience.
Additionally, their experiences seem to suggest that there are differences between how interculturalism may be integrated into a classroom beyond the abilities of a teacher and in relation to the methodology of the subject. In regards to Taylor’s (2009) notion of interculturalism that is reciprocal, in that not only being understanding of another culture but respectfully and critically responding from both sides, both the participants seem to believe this is easier to achieve in the arts by way of subject-content addressed. That subjects could determine the feasibility of conveying the IB’s philosophy is convergent with the research conducted by Wright and Lee (2014), Lineham (2013), and Tarc & Beatty (2009), where mathematics and sciences were categorized as more difficult to incorporate worldly progressive values but divergent in the sense that the Languages and Individuals and Societies held the most opportune methods for integrating interculturalism over arts, sciences, and mathematics (Tarc & Beatty, 2009). Some vague hierarchy appears to be at play here where the typical disposition of a subject’s methodology or rhetoric determines ideological worth in regards to the program’s mission. Mathematics for example, typically offers little pedagogical room for perspective taking or intercultural topics unrelated to the core skills all students need to learn. Regardless, subjectivity returns as a prevalent force in exploring interculturalisms’ implementation in classrooms.

4.3.2 The teacher is not the only influence

The significance of the teacher’s role in teaching the ideological values the IB advertises was a point in Taylor’s (2013) study, where teachers are a critical force in getting students to truly understand interculturalism and not settle for understanding over tolerance on a surface-level (Bullock, 2001). That being said, the IBDP offers a range of opportunities for the program’s philosophy, including the Learner Profile (a series of characteristics and values sought
for in all IB students) to be instilled in students outside the classroom, including the CAS (Creative/Action/Service) hours students must complete, and the Theory of Knowledge course.

Wyatt, the CAS coordinator at his school, says that “the IB learner profile is demonstrated in projects students work on like CAS and TOK which are both pretty central…aside from curriculum, the specific mandate…you have opportunities outside of class to do a lot of stuff, particularly in CAS and the service component…they can work on initiatives that often have a global significance.” Wyatt further describes several social justice clubs “derived from students who have been a part of the IB program”. Regarding the learner profile and interculturalism, Dolores said “I think in orientation it’s made explicit? Maybe some other teachers go over it, I personally don’t. I think a lot of it is left to the CAS.” Contrastingly, Dolores added that CAS among other extra-curriculars may not always be authentic because some students participate superficially, “not because they wanted to make a difference.”

Dolores and Wyatt’s experiences align with Lineham’s (2013) study on IB students who had difficulty distinguishing the teacher from the school community where main influencers for the ideology of the program was concerned. Despite these insights, both participants claimed that interculturalism aligned with their own personal philosophies, contradicting the notion from the research that there might be apathy in a teacher’s commitment to values in their classroom if they can be instilled elsewhere (Wright and Lee, 2014). According to Dolores and Wyatt, values “depend on the teacher” and “there’s more of an onus on yourself, on the teacher”, respectively. Perhaps adding further ambiguity to the purpose of the explicitness in interculturalism within classrooms are the varying sources outside the classroom in combination with the level of commitment of the teacher.
4.3.3 Values are taught naturally and in one’s own style

The following is a resounding response from the participants after being asked directly how interculturalism was taught in their classrooms. By taught, I am referring to the suggestive phrasing of the mission statement and advertising the IB promotes regarding their worldly ideology. Whether implicitly or explicitly, these values supposedly come across somehow.

Dolores appeared to question the point of explicitness in teaching these values with the resources available, claiming that “most teachers work their butts off and are aware of the profile indicators you look for in IB. I think for me I don’t go in and think ‘today I’m going to be open-minded’, it just happens naturally…I know what I want them to do.” Furthermore, Dolores was asked to think of a way in which the values of interculturalism might come across explicitly:

I have it in the course outline…I don’t know, I would never tell them straight up you have to learn this value because IB says you do, but maybe I’d add it in a reflection activity with assignments. Even then it’s different for every person. So, I can say that I try my best to foster intercultural understanding and respect for my students, but do I know that other teachers do it? I don’t know.

Wyatt described his practices as “naturally” lending themselves to interculturalism as well, through projects, assignments, discussions, and content taught in class. “It happens naturally. It’s just embedded in what we do and if you’re going to be successful in the course, then that usually means you’re being intercultural and demonstrating the learner profile…they just sort of happen as you are going through.” Wyatt emphasized that it would be counterproductive to teach students these values without attaching it to anything concrete in the curricula; students “learn by doing.”
Lee and Wright’s (2014) findings on daily implementation of the learner profile among other values like interculturalism may be entirely up to the teacher align with Wyatt and Dolores’ responses. Though they do not seem to find these values are “a joke” as found in Tarc & Beatty’s (2009) study of IB students on interculturalism, but a majority of the studies discussed in the second chapter claimed these values were taught effectively to an unknown degree or not taught at all (Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010; Lineham, 2013; Tarc & Beatty, 2009). Ultimately, both the research and participants reflect that subjectivity reflect subjectivity on the teacher’s part, the school’s programs, and the subject taught as a prevalent force in identifying explicit values being taught in IB classrooms.

4.4 IB is Primarily Academics-Driven

This final theme statement addresses the notion that these teachers perceive IB to be a primarily an academic program, despite worldly-ideological offerings and how the program advertises them. Since the IB exists alongside the provincial program, participants perceived a tension that created “clique” groups caused directly by the difference in academic levels and extra-curricular responsibilities IB students held. In the face of pressure to perform and academic rigour, interculturalism seems to take a back seat.

Both participants recognized the label of the ‘IB Kid’, a stereotype of an entitled student caused in large part by their “higher” academic ability and the segregation of classes between themselves and OSSD students. Dolores held strong opinions against this notion of this label: “One thing I don’t like about the IB program is the pressure on students. This this this, CAS, TOK, it’s too much…I think you need time to foster these qualities instead of them being puppets or robots who regurgitate the textbook or guides…students become clique-y with the work and the divide with OSSD.” Dolores commented with further frustration: “They’re [‘IB
Kids’] all about the grade…it’s very competitive and I don’t like that personally. The profile is not fostered by getting level 6’s and 7’s and all that bullshit.” On the other hand, Wyatt argued that students who see the program as a fast-track to university and did not embrace the values offered “don’t have the stamina to make it through…you have to be dedicated and serious and do it for the program itself over the prestige”. Despite this, Wyatt ultimately asserted that “I think the academic rigour takes precedent over anything else. They strive for the diploma…seems to be more of a focus than the intercultural aspect.”

Additionally, both Wyatt and Dolores described an added pressure from students and parents. “In the IB…” Wyatt shared, “You have to come up with a predicted grade. You need to go through theses assessments moderated by an outside moderator like marking your marking. So there’s added pressure to be as accurate as possible.” Elaborating on OSSD differences, Wyatt shared: “sometimes I compare that to a teacher that’s not teaching an IB course and the amount of hours and extra time that you’re putting in is significant.” Dolores, harkening back to her earlier critique of “prescriptiveness”, claimed there was a significant pressure to maintain a high academic standard: “It’s a reflection on us [teachers]. Parents will complain. Once a student in my class emailed the coordinator saying I was decreasing the standards of the program by giving an extension.” Despite this, Dolores asserted that coordinator and administrative support was essential and if you had those in-school, you’d “be good to go.”

Research conducted in Ontarian university registrars suggested that the IB is more challenging academically. This converges with the program’s post-secondary prep focus described by a number of studies (Lineham, 2013; Paris, 2002; Rosefsky-Saavedra, Lavore, & Flores Ivich, 2014; Tarc & Beatty, 2012; Wells, 2011; Wright and Lee, 2014). Furthermore, Dolores and Wyatt’s responses align with studies conducted in China, Switzerland,
and Australia where students were primarily concerned with their grades and the transferability of their diploma over other aspects of their IB education (Lineham, 2013; Wright and Lee, 2014; Paris, 2003). Overall, this suggests a lack of explicit focus in instilling intercultural values, when academics and specific content materials students need to learn take precedence. When combined with the subjective nature of factors such as the teacher’s beliefs, their subject, and outside-classroom influences when instilling these values.

4.5 Conclusion

An analysis of both participants’ semi-structured interview data revealed four central themes in response to the original research question of the study: how do International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme teachers who teach in humanities or the arts reconcile interculturalism and curricula as per the IB Mission Statement? First, that the IBDP offers a pedagogical and ideological outlet for teachers passionate about progressive worldly values, and more opportunities to do so in comparison to the OSSD. Second, the curriculum is not always explicit in the values IB claims to uphold program-wide, and at the very least they are open to subjective interpretation in their ideological effectiveness. Next, the discussion turned towards values taught in the classroom, with both the participants and the research suggesting that it is more effective for these values to “naturally” come across through pedagogy rather than through explicit teaching of the values themselves. Finally, the IBDP is primarily an academics-driven program, further complicating the reliance of interculturalism being more of an added-bonus than a program staple. Thus, in response to the initial research question regarding how IB teachers reconcile curricula and the Mission Statement of the program, it appears content is prioritized over the values the IB seeks to promote. Values come across subjectively, inherent in the combination of the teacher’s own ideology, pedagogy, and the content used in class.
In the next chapter, I explore the implications of these findings for both IB and OSSD teachers and recommend potential areas for further research, highlighting the possibility of increasing pedagogical practices to heighten interculturalisms’ importance in the IBDP and OSSD.
Chapter Five: Implications

5.0 Introduction

In this final chapter, I summarize my findings and provide key implications and recommendations for future endeavours in this area of research. First, I give a brief overview of key findings accrued from the previous chapter and their significance to the study. Next, I explore the implication from the study in both broad and narrow strokes. Afterwards, I discuss several recommendations for invested stakeholders such as students, teachers, and the (International Baccalaureate) IB organization itself. Lastly, I end with some concluding comments cemented in my own, personal thoughts on the overall process.

5.1 Overview of Key Findings and their Significance

Taken from the previous chapter on research findings, I categorized the data accrued into four themes. Each of these themes lay the foundation for implications and recommendations discussed in further sections.

The first theme concerns the IBDP program and who it reportedly attracts. Both interviewees, and other colleagues they described, claimed to be passionate about progressive values that instil globalism and respect for multiple perspectives in culture. Thus, the philosophy of the program provides an increased opportunity for teachers to act on said ideals in comparison to the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The second theme involves the explicitness of the program’s values, which fundamentally rely on the willingness of the teacher to execute to varying degrees of effectiveness in-classroom. Third, both the research conducted in the literature review and participants interviewed in this study suggest that the values the IB mean to convey cannot and should not be explicitly forced on students. Rather, these values come across
naturally through other teaching methods involving the teacher’s own subjective pedagogy and the subject material of the class. Lastly, the final theme concerns the perception of the program to participants (teachers). As insinuated in the literature review, the IBDP is primarily seen as academic-oriented by parents, students, and teachers, all of whom have the student’s grades and success for post-secondary in mind. Thus, the philosophy of the program is essentially an added-bonus as opposed to the driving force.

It appears to be generally assumed that values such as interculturalism “just happen”, or that the process of exploring their explicitness in classrooms is so subjective in nature that there is no point in attempting to challenge the academic-oriented status quo the program appears to have. Though it can certainly be argued that such a study needs to be much larger in scope to reach more conclusive findings on the IB as an educational system, I would argue the findings are significant in that they contribute the lack of teacher-voiced research on the fostering of interculturalism in the IBDP. These findings open more opportunities for others to broaden and discuss what is understood about how IB’s values are diffused in students, and how the program differs both practically and ideologically from the other secondary-educational frameworks IB teachers are experienced with. Though these findings are relatively small in scale, I would argue a drop of water in a bucket is still a drop that counts towards the bucket’s overall contents.
5.2 Implications

In this section, I outline the implications the findings present in two scales. First, I overview the implications on a broad scale, giving attention to the key stakeholders the study concerns that make up the educational community of an IBDP program. Secondly, I provide implications on a narrow, personal scale that concerns the current and future nature of my professional identity and practice.

5.2.1 Broad: Key stakeholders in education

Though this study did not gather student-voiced data on how the Mission Statement is upheld in the program, or how interculturalism comes into effect during their learning, there remains much to be said on how the program is perceived by students. As the literature and interviews suggest, students are more concerned with the grades (levels) they receive than ascribing to any sort of standardized globalist philosophy. This is not to say the two are mutually exclusive, which a more student-focused study might reveal, yet the implication remains that the IBDP may be catering to a specific consumer that wants to “get ahead” in post-secondary, which students then expect to be upheld above all else. After all, it is less likely a student will be accepted into a post-secondary institution of their choice on ideology, and more likely they will be accepted based on the grades they receive focus (IB, 2016, n.p.; Lineham, 2013; Paris, 2002; Rosefsky-Saavedra, Lavore, & Flores Ivich, 2014; Tarc & Beatty, 2012; Wells, 2011; Wright and Lee, 2014). Additionally, the IB student may be in direct competition with non-IB students who share the same building, leading to the IB-student stigma and stereotypes that align more with academic achievement than progressive global philosophies. Lastly, these implications may or may not extend to parents or guardians who may have a vested interest in their student’s ideological upbringing in the school/program they attend.
For IB teachers, there is the (perhaps obvious) implication that their teaching is essentially dependent on themselves and what they bring to their classrooms. This is regardless of subject, though the findings suggest that it is indeed easier for arts, humanities, and “outside-classroom” features like C.A.S. to provide a progressive-globalist perspective. Though IB is a standardized program with a standardized curriculum and standardized examinations, there is a flexibility and subjectivity to how that material is delivered to students. This depends on a variety of factors that include but are not limited to: subject area, personal philosophy, past experiences, and workload. Additionally, the findings suggest that the above may also be true for OSSD teachers, to which both participants and all teachers in public secondary-schools that offer the IBDP have experience with. Interculturalism then, while a critical element to progressive globalism, may largely depend on the prerogative of the teacher, yet supposedly does not require said teacher to be explicit to get the message across. Paired with the implications for students, this potentially creates an unchecked system where core values may not always be instilled in students by the time they reach Grade 12, at least to the degree that they can “create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect”. For teachers not in IB, and without an IB coordinator, professional workshops, or more explicit guidelines on how to foster interculturalism in students, it seems to be more difficult, but not impossible to uphold said values in-class.

On the IBO themselves, interculturalism and the fulfillment of what is implied by the Mission Statement might happen to a lesser frequency than they might expect. This is a rather generous implication to make from such a small sample size, but in combination with prior research the assumption seems to be plausible. At the very least, it is implied to be a reality in schools that house an IBDP program along with a national or provincial curriculum. That said, it
is admittedly hard to gauge whether such a reality is a “problem” that even needs to be addressed without more data from the organization’s central staff and their definition of a successful program.

5.2.2 Narrow: My professional identity and practice

On personal reflection, this study has made me more cognizant of the values I admire and plan to emulate through my teaching. Interculturalism, in my view, is incredibly important for fostering critical thinking in a world where communication barriers are becoming obsolete through internet and telecomm technologies. Therefore, I am unsettled by the implication that academics are prioritized over an ideology that fosters critical thinking and respect. It does make sense for teachers to have agency in their teaching, and the degree to which a student must be exposed to interculturalism is an unquantifiable threshold that is beyond the scope of this study to ascertain. However, in my opinion, this does not excuse an absence of engaging in such ideology over promoting grades.

As a student teacher-researcher, this study has certainly implicated that research is an ongoing, longitudinal effort that requires dedication and passion. For example, the criticism regarding the Eurocentric-progressive spin on the program was only slightly expanded upon from the data of this study, and doing so would shed more light onto how some might perceive the mission statement to be anti-intercultural at its core, if it’s delivered through a western-educational framework that promotes a sense of colonialism with its knowledge. Additionally, I have also realized that the implications on ideology and research apply to anyone, and are not exclusive to IB teachers alone. Even if I do not join the IB as a professional, there is still a capacity for me to study and research the subject alongside my teaching practice. I would love to see the ideology advertised by the IB in the OSSD program in more forms beyond content.
specific classes like World History or World Religions, because I believe it has a place in any classroom regardless of the demographic. My sentiments towards interculturalism have not changed as a result of this study. However, my understanding of how difficult it is to conceptualize the abstract, and empathize with teachers who lack the resources to explicitly teach the values the program advertises, has grown tremendously. Whether IB or OSSD, it is certainly not an easy thing to empower students to become global-minded and respectful individuals.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the suggestion that the IB Mission Statement is not always fulfilled in students by the time they graduate, despite the intent of the organization to do so. If the goal for the IB and its teachers is to bolster the degree to which these values make a lasting impression on students, then I believe the first long-term step would be to discern how feasible an explicit curriculum tailored to each subject would be. This could include more emphasis on professional training at mandatory IB workshops for teachers, and an overall discussion with input from all parties regarding the challenges and goals such aspirations would necessitate. On the teacher-level, without an infrastructure in place you cannot force an individual to teach a specific ideology, and only hope that the reason they do so is aligned with the ideology of the program. However, more can be done to link experiences from other parts of the program (C.A.S. and T.O.K., or more relatable subjects) to reduce these supposed pockets where students do not have a chance to reflect on why the material they learn matters in a globalist and intercultural way. Give students an increased opportunity to engage in the mission statement and offer their own interpretations in a constructivist way. As a feasible short-term solution, communication on the ideologies of IB teachers and how to progress the mission
statement as a cohesive unit would at the very least instigates some reflection, and at the very most instigates change.

On schools and non-IB teachers, a potentially feasible short-term solution is along the same lines of increased communication. If we ascribe to the notion that progressive, globalist ideals like interculturalism are not exclusive to the IB program, then there is the possibility for other teachers who are not involved in the IB to emulate these values as well, if they desire to do so. Such an approach may reduce the “holier-than-thou” stigma attached to IB students if the ideological bridge between them and non-IB students is reduced (perhaps between teachers as well, though I only assume there is a degree of tension between non-IB and IB teachers). On actual, practical tactics, one participant suggested implementing inquiry-based pedagogy involving the Mission Statement and Learner Profile where students piece together the relationship between those values and the subject material they work with.

Lastly, it is difficult to recommend any course of action for students themselves because the implications presented here on academic priorities and implicit teaching are entirely outside their realm of control. I can only hope that students learn to be more reflective above their personal stakes in their own learning, regardless of the stream, track, or program they are in.

5.4 Areas for Future Research

From initial research, it was suggested in the literature review that there is no plethora of research regarding the Mission Statement of the IB program in Ontario, much less the interculturalism aspect to it. Even with the program existing all over the world, there is no reason against starting a dialogue on the values the IB seeks to instill in Ontario, doubly so with the
program existing majorly within a public-school dichotomy which offers a natural comparison in effectiveness.

On methodology, the scope of this study can be increased to dramatic proportions, and arguably so if there is to be any semblance of patterns or trends. To start, a larger sample size would undoubtedly yield more results. Due to time restraints and convenience, this study was limited to only two individuals. Despite the excellent qualitative data accrued, speaking to more teachers, from more schools, and from more teachable subjects, would illustrate a larger, more sound conclusion about the state of affairs regarding the program and how its mission statement is implemented in all areas. Such methods may produce valuable evidence contrary to what was presented in this study. Additionally, the topic may also demand the input of OSSD-exclusive teachers, as well as voices from within the organization at a corporate level, and school administration. Finally, a longitudinal survey, involving the students themselves, from year one to year four may reveal just how instilled they are with the IB’s core values, and what they truly mean from their own perspectives.

5.5 Concluding Comments

In the end, I believe this research matters differently depending on the position and intentions of the reader. There is no standardized way to proceed, at least as from what was suggested in the findings, and the fundamental change will happen depending on how imperative the IB’s values are to the influencer, the teacher. Despite any sort of systemic or curricular pressure, or lack thereof, there exists that potential to advocate one’s beliefs and values to their students regardless of where they exist on the educational spectrum. Returning to my reflexive positioning statement, I truly believe that if done with conviction and passion, teachers have the power to draw on the cultural diversity of their classrooms to create a respect for differences and
a celebration of similarities, empowering youth to embrace the “worldly citizen” role the IB covets. This does not have to be an IB-exclusive ideology. Aren’t the values encompassed in interculturalism, such as trust, respect, and open-mindedness desired by all? If not, wouldn’t we want to learn why?
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Consent for Interview

Date:

Dear _______________________________,

My name is Stephen Nunez and I am a student in the Master of Teaching (MT) program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). A component of this degree program involves conducting a small-scale qualitative research study. My research will focus on teachers’ experiences within International Baccalaureate Diploma Programs and in relation to its mission statement regarding fostering interculturalism in students. I am interested in interviewing teachers who have experience in teaching courses within the Diploma Program and the Ontario Secondary School Diploma program who can speak to the presence of interculturalism in both programs. I think that your knowledge and experience will provide insights into this topic.

Your participation in this research will involve one roughly 60-75 minute interview, which will be transcribed and audio-recorded. I would be grateful if you would allow me to interview you at a place and time convenient for you, outside of school time. The contents of this interview will be used for my research project, which will include a final paper and informal presentations to my classmates. I may also present my research findings via conference presentations and/or through publication. You will be assigned a pseudonym to maintain your anonymity and I will not use your name or any other content that might identify you in my written work, oral presentations, or publications. This information will remain confidential. Any information that identifies your school or students will also be excluded.

The interview data will be stored on my password-protected computer and the only person who will have access to the research data will be my course instructor. You are free to change your mind about your participation at any time, and to withdraw even after you have consented to participate. You may also choose to decline to answer any specific question during the interview. I will destroy the audio recording after the paper has been presented and/or published, which may take up to a maximum of five years after the data has been collected. There are no known risks to participation.

Please sign this consent form, if you agree to be interviewed. The second copy is for your records. I am very grateful for your participation.

Sincerely,
Stephen Nunez  
705-868-9656  
Stephen.nunez@mail.utoronto.ca  

MT Program Contact:  

Dr. Angela Macdonald-Vemic, Assistant Professor – Teaching Stream  
angela.macdonald@utoronto.ca  
416-821-6496  

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Consent Form  

I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.  

I have read the letter provided to me by Stephen Nunez and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described. I agree to have the interview audio-recorded.  

Signature: ________________________________________  

Name: (printed) ________________________________________  

Date: ________________________________________
Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study, and for making time to be interviewed. This research study aims to learn how International Baccalaureate Diploma Program teachers experience interculturalism as a component of the IB mission statement. This interview will last approximately 60 minutes, and is comprised of approximately 19 questions. I want to remind you that you may refrain from answering any question, and you have the right to withdraw your participation from the study at any time.

As I explained in the consent letter, this interview will be audio-recorded. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Can you state your name for the recording?

Section A - Background Information

1. How long have you been working as a teacher in Ontario?
2. What subjects or courses have you taught in the OSSD?
3. How long have you been teaching within the IBDP?
4. What grades and subjects do you currently teach?
   a. What courses have you previously taught?
   b. Have you taught Higher or Standard level versions of any of these subjects?
5. In addition to teaching, what other roles do you fulfill within the school? (extracurricular activities)
   a. What purpose does the IB fulfill in your teacher career?
6. As you are aware, today we’ll be discussing the IBDP and the philosophy of the entire program. Can you speak to why you became professionally involved with the IB in the first place?
   a. What purpose does the IB fulfill in your teaching career?
7. As a current IB teacher, what do you feel are the main differences between the IB and OSSD?
   
a. Are these differences exclusive to your school community?

8. What challenges or barriers do you face as an IB teacher concerning your own pedagogy and classroom style?
   
a. Are these barriers similar or different than ones faced when you teach OSSD courses? Why?

Section B - Perspectives on the Mission Statement and Interculturalism

9. What would you say is the philosophy of the IB program?
   
a. How does this philosophy differ from OSSD programs and courses?
   
b. How does the IB program align with your own teaching philosophy?

10. How would you say this philosophy is reflected within the school community?
   
a. (If applicable) Are students aware of this philosophy?
   
b. (If applicable) Are your colleagues?
   
c. (If applicable) Are the school administration?

11. How familiar are you with the IB Mission Statement?

12. The IB often emphasizes its importance in fostering “internationally-based” education for students and the broadening of perspectives for issues, realities, and experiences on a global scale. The Mission Statement states, “The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.” How would you personally define “Intercultural understanding and respect”?
   
a. How do you think the IBO defines this?

13. How crucial is interculturalism to the IB program?
a. In your experience, would you say the IBDP fulfills the Mission Statement’s goals in relation to fostering “Intercultural understanding and respect” among your students?

14. Would you say interculturalism or “general worldliness” is easier to accomplish in IB courses than OSSD courses? Why or why not?
   a. What might interculturalism or “general worldliness” look like in an OSSD course?

Section C-Teacher Practices
15. From your experience, how would you rate most IB teachers’ familiarity with the IB Learner Profile? As described by the IBO, the “Learner Profile describes a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success. They imply a commitment to help all members of the school community learn to respect themselves, others and the world around them. Each of the IB’s programmes is committed to the development of students according to the IB learner profile.

The profile aims to develop learners who are:

- Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded
- Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced, Reflective

16. How would you say interculturalism and the Learner Profile (if applicable, or their general goals) are executed in other courses or aspects of the IB program?
   a. (If applicable) What comparisons can you make between those parts of the program and the courses you currently teach?
   b. What supports exist for upholding interculturalism or the Learner Profile in your school?
17. Does the IBDP in your school seek to explicitly foster general worldliness or interculturalism in your students in keeping with the IB Mission Statement and Learner Profile?
   a. (If yes) What does this look like in practice?
   b. (If no) Why do you think this is the case?

Section D-Conclusion
18. As a teacher candidate interested in teaching both OSSD and IB courses in future, what advice do you have for me regarding the program and its philosophy?
19. Any final thoughts or questions?