Challenges of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme: Insights for School Leaders and Policy Makers

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Abstract: Policy makers in the US and several other countries are recommending that more schools offer an International Baccalaureate (IB) programme. However, little is known about the challenges that IB programmes present for teaching and learning particularly those meeting national curriculum. In this study, we examined the challenges of the IB's Middle Years Programme (MYP), the least understood and researched of the IB programmes. Using a qualitative case study design, we conducted in-depth and semi-structured interviews with school leaders (*n*=7) and teachers (*n*=10) from three schools in Australia that previously offered the MYP. We used thematic analysis to generate the findings and the IB's Standards and Practice framework to organize the reporting of findings. Participants shared perceived challenges related to philosophical factors, organizational dilemmas and complexities with integrating the MYP with Australia's

national curriculum. Understanding the organizational and leadership challenges that schools may face when offering the MYP can help policy makers promote the necessary conditions for successful program implementation.
Keywords: Middle Years Programme; teaching; school leadership; challenges; pedagogy; curriculum

Desafíos del Middle Years Programme del Bachillerato Internacional: Información para los líderes escolares y los responsables de la formulación de políticas
Resumen: Los formuladores de políticas en los EE. UU. y varios otros países recomiendan que más escuelas ofrezcan un programa de Bachillerato Internacional (IB). Sin embargo, se sabe poco sobre los desafíos que presentan los programas del IB para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje, en particular aquellos que cumplen con el plan de estudios nacional. En este estudio, examinamos los desafíos del Middle Years Programme (MYP) del IB, el programa del IB menos comprendido e investigado. Utilizando un diseño de estudio de caso cualitativo, realizamos entrevistas en profundidad y semiestructuradas con líderes escolares (*n*=7) y profesores (*n*=10) de tres colegios de Australia que anteriormente ofrecían el PAI. Utilizamos el análisis temático para generar los hallazgos y el marco de estándares y prácticas del IB para organizar el informe de los hallazgos. Los participantes compartieron los desafíos percibidos relacionados con factores filosóficos, dilemas organizativos y complejidades de la integración del PAI con el plan de estudios nacional de Australia. Comprender los desafíos organizativos y de liderazgo que pueden afrontar los colegios al ofrecer el PAI puede ayudar a los responsables de la formulación de políticas a promover las condiciones necesarias para la implementación exitosa del programa.
Palabras-clave: Middle Years Programme; enseñando; liderazgo escolar; desafíos; pedagogía; plan de estudios

Desafios do Middle Years Programme do Bacharelado Internacional: Informações para líderes de escolas e formuladores de políticas
Resumo: Os formuladores de políticas nos EUA e em vários outros países estão recomendando que mais escolas ofereçam um programa de Bacharelado Internacional (IB). No entanto, pouco se sabe sobre os desafios que os programas de IB apresentam para o ensino e a aprendizagem, especialmente aqueles que atendem ao currículo nacional. Neste estudo, examinamos os desafios do Middle Years Programme (MYP) do IB, o menos compreendido e pesquisado dos programas do IB. Usando um projeto de estudo de caso qualitativo, conduzimos entrevistas em profundidade e semiestruturadas com líderes escolares (*n*=7) e professores (*n*=10) de três escolas na Austrália que anteriormente ofereciam o MYP. Usamos a análise temática para gerar as descobertas e a estrutura de Padrões e Práticas do IB para organizar o relato das descobertas. Os participantes compartilharam desafios percebidos relacionados a fatores filosóficos, dilemas organizacionais e complexidades com a integração do MYP com o currículo nacional da Austrália. Compreender os desafios organizacionais e de liderança que as escolas podem enfrentar ao oferecer o MYP pode ajudar os formuladores de políticas a promover as condições necessárias para a implementação bem-sucedida do programa.
Palavras-chave: Middle Years Programme; ensino; liderança escolar; desafios; pedagogia; currículo

Challenges of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme: Insights for School Leaders and Policy Makers

Policy makers in the US and several other countries are encouraging schools to adopt the International Baccalaureate (IB), a non-profit educational foundation, registered in Geneva since 1968. The IB offers a continuum of four internationally recognized, inquiry-based programmes ranging in developmental phase from the Primary Years Program (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the focus of this paper, the Diploma Program (DP) and the (CP). The MYP is the second oldest programme in the IB suite. Policy makers highly regard all IB programmes through which students develop 21st century skills (Burdic, 2012; Rizvi et al., 2014), gain a foundation for university study (Doherty, 2012), be active, engaged learners (Hayden, 2006) and understand more about global awareness (Dickson et al., 2018; Hayden & Thompson, 2001). Researchers also acknowledge IB programmes for their interdisciplinarity and academic rigor (Burris et al., 2008). Principals in Netherlands and Australia are adopting the IB programs to differentiate their schools and make it more appealing to parents to influence school choice for their children (Doherty, 2013; Yemini & Dvir, 2016).

The number of schools that offer an IB programme(s) has grown significantly worldwide (IBOa, n.d.; Kidson et al., 2018). Governmental agencies (Alexander & Choi, 2015) and many educational foundations, policymakers and national ministries of education support IB programmes. For example, the US Department of Education and the Gates Foundation have provided funding to increase the number of schools that offer an IB programme, especially in contexts that serve low-income students (Perna et al., 2015). Similarly, national governments in Ecuador (Barnett, 2013) and Japan (Yamamoto et al., 2016) are actively encouraging, supporting and funding public schools to adopt IB programme(s).

At the same time, however, a small but increasing number of schools are discontinuing IB programmes, including in the UK (Bunnell, 2015) and Australia (Dickson et al., 2020). To date, the reasons why school leaders discontinue an IB programme on behalf of their school have not been examined. Their views could be insightful, however, for schools that already offer or are considering an IB programme and beneficial for education authorities and policymakers who promote the IB.

In this paper, we aim to provide an opportunity for leaders and teachers, at schools which have discontinued the MYP, to share their perspectives of the MYP. To our knowledge, no studies have examined the challenges of teaching the MYP from the perspective of leaders and teachers from schools that have discontinued this IB programme. Therefore, it is likely that stakeholders from such schools have unique insights that may differ from the perspectives of leaders and teachers at schools that continue to offer an IB programme. Our findings may be useful for schools that are considering adopting the IB together with a district, state or national curriculum. These findings will provide them with a realistic sense of what the expectations are before implementing the MYP so that they understand the complexities of adopting the programme. We will also provide valuable insights to policymakers so that they can offer guidelines to schools and teachers regarding how to implement pedagogy and practices in a practical way within the classroom. Finally, our findings may provide insights about the conditions that are necessary for successful implementation of the MYP. For policymakers, this can be valuable information since any new curriculum implementation, including an IB programme, requires substantial human, material and financial resources. The following research question guided our qualitative study:

What are stakeholders' perspectives of the limitations, challenges and consequences of the MYP at their school?

Background

In this section, we begin by providing a conceptual framework to understand policies for educational improvement to strengthen teaching practices and staff competency. We will then provide a review of literature with respect to teachers and teaching challenges in the MYP and the challenges faced by leaders in IB schools as they relate to educational change. This section, therefore, provides us with a context to interpret the findings of this study.

Policies for Educational Improvement

Leaders and teachers have a significant role in ensuring the success of any curriculum-related educational change and their practices are influenced by their school context. Hargreaves and Shirley (2012) said that strong leadership is required for sustained change and resources and strategic planning are required to make this happen. These authors have also called for educators to be reform agents and to be supportive of each other in schools to manage changes that occurs as part of school improvement (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012). Shared leadership practices foster a collaborative team environment and empower teachers to contribute to positive change in their school, which enhances an effective professional community within the school (Nappi, 2014).

As acknowledged by the IB, effective leadership is dependent on leaders being able to profoundly understand their IB school context and culture and tailor their approach to maximise student and organizational outcomes within this context (Calnin et al., 2018). Developing a collaborative culture or learning organization encourages professionals to continue learning and advance student learning (Hargreaves & Connor, 2018; Kools et al., 2020). For example, the IB suggests that schools need to schedule time for their teachers to collaborate, within and between learning areas to allow for the development, integration and alignment of units in the curriculum (Dever & Raven, 2017).

Educators understand their students, the availability of resources and the reality of their work and these experiences empowers them to assist in the curriculum reform more positively (Kirk & MacDonald, 2001). Through collaboration and building on their knowledge (Fullan, 2005) and networking and relationship building (Fullan, 2007), teachers can be a part of positive educational change and improve outcomes in schools.

Additionally, policy makers must ensure policies are in place so that educational improvements are supported and successful (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 1992). Policy makers should also focus on collective PD as it is more powerful than approaching professional learning as individual learning (Fullan et al., 2015). Schools should also be provided incentives to develop networks of schools as part of establishing collaborative cultures where staff members can learn and guide each other for continuous improvement to create a shared sense of responsibility within and across schools (Fullan et al., 2015). To enact educational change in schools, all stakeholders, from policy makers to leaders in schools as well as teachers, have important, interdependent roles to play for successful outcomes.

The MYP

The MYP, offered to students aged 11-16 since 1994, is a flexible, inquiry-based framework that can be adopted together with any standardized district, state or national curricula. It can be implemented with other IB programmes or adopted as a stand-alone programme (Sperandio, 2010). The delivery of the MYP aims to encourage students to develop globally significant knowledge using a variety of techniques such as scaffolding, presentations and debates (Singh & Qi, 2013).

The MYP requires middle-management coordination to implement, plan the curriculum and maintain the programme at a school since the MYP is a framework, rather than a curriculum (Stobie, 2007). Schools also need to invest in significant resources to educate parents about the MYP's approach to teaching and learning since compared to other approaches, it is often more holistic, practical, student-centred, focused on the learning process and skills development and promotes in-depth learning (Lee & Hallinger, 2012).

The key factors required for a successful curriculum implementation for change at schools is through developing teachers' attitudes, knowledge and skills (Tshiredo, 2013). The IB provides teachers with professional development to encourage critical thinking and self-reflection, gives them unit planners and teaching resources, guides them through a pedagogy to enhance students' motivation for inquiry and lifelong learning, and structurally provides an onsite program coordinator (IBO b, n.d.). Despite these available IBO supports for teachers, Thompson (1992) suggests that teachers will only embrace change if they are convinced that it will be greatly beneficial for themselves and their students.

Very few researchers have examined the challenges of the MYP. We identified only eight studies that examined challenges of the MYP, only two of which have been published in peer-reviewed research journals. The national coverage of the eight studies includes the US, UK, Sweden, Spain, Australia and Turkey. We have listed the details about these studies in Table 1.

Table 1

Studies that Examined Benefits and Challenges of the MYP

Author	Year	Country	Publication type/source	Research design	Participants / data source
Ateşkan, Dulun, & Lane	2016	Turkey	Report; IBO	Qualitative	Interviews and surveys with school heads (*n*=4), MYP coordinators (*n*=6) and teachers (11 groups with an average of 5 teachers per group) from 3 schools
Perry, Ledger, & Dickson	2018	Australia	Report; IBO	Qualitative	Interviews with 6 principals, 5 MYP coordinators and 17 teachers from 5 schools, ranged from 'middle-low' to 'high'
Sizmur & Cunningham	2012	UK	Report; National Foundation for Educational Research	Mixed methods	Two phased study - compare the curriculum, assessment and philosophical underpinnings of the MYP, GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) and the IGCSE (International General Certificate of Secondary Education); Online surveys of students (*n*=309), teachers (*n*=74), parents (n=58) and MYP coordinators (*n*=6) from 6 schools; four detailed case studies/school visits - interviews with MYP coordinators,

Author	Year	Country	Publication type/source	Research design	Participants / data source
					interviews with MYP teachers (*n*=11), focus group interviews with groups of students (*n*=48) of different age groups (Year 9 and Year 11) and 10 lesson observations across a range of subject areas
Storz & Hoffman	2018	USA	Peer-reviewed journal article; *Journal of Advanced Academics*	Mixed methods	Semi-structured interviews with 3 key administrators (Director of Curriculum and Instruction, middle school principal and IB coordinator), 16 teachers and 16 students, and 31 online teacher surveys were carried out from one urban school district
Valle, Menéndez, Manso, Garrido, & Thoilliez	2017	Spain	Report; IBO	Mixed methods	Review of Spanish curriculum and MYP documents; online questionnaires administered with students (*n*=1,441); teachers (*n*=148); and parents (*n*=209); semi-structured interviews with school heads (*n*=8) and IB coordinators from three case-study schools (*n*=3); focus groups with IB coordinators (*n*=8), groups of teachers, students and families from 8 schools
Visser	2010	Worldwide	Peer-reviewed journal article; *Journal of Research in International Education*	Qualitative	Interviews with a school manager and a MYP coordinator each from 2 Dutch schools; Questionnaires were completed by administrators, coordinators and humanities teachers affiliated to mostly public MYP schools in Australia, Canada and the USA
Williams	2013	Sweden	Report; IBO	Qualitative	Questionnaires with 2 MYP coordinators, parents and teachers; Review of IB evaluation reports, mission statements and school development plans from 2 schools
Wolanin & Wade	2012	USA	Report; IBO	Mixed methods	Survey of 298 teachers and interviews with 15 randomly selected MYP teachers from 5 schools

Challenges for Teachers and Teaching

Teachers face several challenges with the MYP. In general, teachers felt there was a lack of differentiated PDs to suit individual school contexts, they faced challenges with inquiry- versus content-based teaching, and had issues with designing MYP criterion-referenced grading assessments to fit the national grading format.

Many educators experienced operational challenges when teaching the MYP. Teachers often experienced a higher workload when teaching the MYP (Perry et al., 2018; Sizmur & Cunningham, 2013; Wolanin & Wade, 2012). In Storz and Hoffman's study (2018), teachers wanted more differentiated PD options so that they could understand how the MYP could be taught based on their individual school context. Teachers also found the MYP jargon confusing and were challenged by having to be more conceptual- and inquiry-focused, rather than content-focused (Ateşkan et al., 2016; Perry et al., 2018; Williams, 2013).

Teachers also reported that they experienced challenges when adopting the MYP alongside a national curriculum and creating assessments at schools with two frameworks. In Sizmur and Cunningham's study (2013), many teachers found it challenging to run the UK national curriculum alongside the MYP and this was found in an Australian-based study as well (Perry et al., 2018). Additionally, teachers found it difficult to incorporate the MYP criterion-referenced scales with various national curriculum's grading formats: the Dutch's statistical-average grading system versus the MYP's 1 to 7 grading format (Visser, 2010), integrating the MYP with the Australian's alphabetical grading system (Perry et al., 2018), the Spanish's 1 to 10 grading system to the MYP (Valle et al., 2017) and the grade conversion from the Swedish educational system to the MYP (Williams, 2013).

Leadership in IB Schools and Educational Change

Due to the complexity and global scope of IB programmes, a particular leadership model or paradigm to guide leaders at IB schools is not possible or desirable (Calnin et al., 2018). Additionally, how an IB school is lead is influenced by the principal's leadership characteristics and the context of his/her school (Kidson, 2019). Another reason why it is challenging to identify leadership models is because much of the research on leadership in IB schools is based on international, Asia Pacific context, hence, some of the findings may not be applicable in an Australian school context. Nevertheless, there is research that discusses leadership and its influence on IB schools, which we will explore in this section.

Teachers in Storz and Hoffman's (2018) study felt that the support from their principal and IB Coordinator were crucial in successfully adopting the MYP, since their administrative team consistently encouraged, provided resources and gave guidance to their staff members. Despite many other district-related changes and initiatives occurring at the same time when this school was implementing the MYP, the principal's commitment to the changes occurring with taking on the MYP motivated and gave his staff confidence with taking on the MYP (Storz & Hoffman, 2018). However, it is also important to have a consistent and stable leadership team so that program implementation and changes occurring in the school is effective and successful (Williams, 2013). Therefore, even though there may be no one leadership model for IB schools to follow, it appears to be essential for teachers and schools to have good support from their administrative team to cope with the changes brought on by adopting the MYP.

Additionally, when adopting a new curriculum framework, teachers may face many challenges related to pedagogy, assessment format, the framework's aims and directions, lack of instructional materials, insufficient clarity about the new curriculum changes and teachers' having limited skills and/or knowledge about the new programme (Bennie & Newstead, 1999). The IB has

an extensive set of requirements in term of its philosophy and pedagogy and schools find it challenging to put all of these into practice (Walker & Lee, 2018).

As the MYP is focused on broad topics, teachers want their leaders to provide them guidance to ensure a coherent philosophical and pedagogical approach, as this will provide them the knowledge of how to include inquiry-based teaching and learning in their subject area (Lee et al., 2012). For example, in IB schools, teachers may face challenges to implement an inquiry-based teaching style due to lack of experience, exposure, training, resources and by having a mindset that inquiry-based learning only works for some students (Twigg, 2010). Since the MYP is a framework that needs to be aligned with a curriculum, all staff members tend to have more responsibilities and workload in this integration (Walker et al., 2014) and this is distributed among various leaders, staff members and committees within the school.

There are also issues with implementing IB programmes and making curriculum changes in school, especially when aligning the national education standards with the IB's programme and philosophy (Halls et al., 2009). For example, extensive paperwork/documentation and a heavy workload from the integration of a state curriculum and IB units created challenges for teachers and leaders (Pushpanadham, 2013). When the IB Coordinators and leadership team collaborate with their teachers throughout the implementation of the IB programme, it becomes easier for parents and teachers to embrace the change in the curriculum and pedagogy (Twigg, 2010). Therefore, when adopting the MYP, Walters (2007) suggested modifying the school's teaching and curriculum planning, professional development (PD) practices and delivery of instruction.

While one challenge is to ensure coherence and consistency between the IB programme and the school curriculum, leaders are also challenged to ensure that staff are motivated to participate proactively (Lee et al., 2012). Walters (2007, p. 38) also suggested the need for continuous PD and time for teachers to work collaboratively 'at each level, across levels, across disciplines, and in the areas of interaction.' The conclusions uncovered in these studies indicate that schools have an important responsibility in providing teachers with a high level of support when implementing and maintaining IB programmes.

Methodology

Research Design

We used an exploratory qualitative research design (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) and an inductive approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), which is appropriate and useful when conducting research about a topic that has not been extensively studied. This means that we did not seek to test a hypothesis, nor were we guided by a specific theoretical perspective or framework. Rather, we used open-ended questions (Creswell, 2012) to gather comprehensive data and to give participants the opportunity to express their perspectives about the MYP and its benefits and challenges for teaching.

Data Collection

We collected data from schools that had recently discontinued the MYP. We invited all five schools in Australia that had discontinued the MYP in the last five years to participate in our study. Three schools accepted our invitation to participate. These three schools varied by school sector and socioeconomic profile, as per Table 2. Rather than generalizing the findings, this technique allowed us to gain new insights and in-depth understanding from the data (Patton, 2002). This helped us to develop a theoretical understanding to uncover the reasons why these schools discontinue the MYP.

We carried out individual, face-to-face interviews at School 2 (S2) and School 3 (S3). Each interview lasted from 30 to 80 minutes. To accommodate staff's work schedule at School 1 (S1) we

conducted four out of five interviews via email, with the remaining interview conducted over the telephone. We used two sets of interview questionnaires, as shown in Appendix A and B, and the questions were slightly different for the teachers and school leadership team. The questionnaires consisted of three sections: (1) Background information to gather participants teaching/leadership and MYP training; (2) Impact of MYP on teaching and learning at their school; (3) Experiences with the MYP and why they chose to discontinue the programme. We used these broad questions to provide participants the opportunity to share their opinion and experiences with this IB programme.

Ethics

We were granted ethics approval by the university and the associated Australian Department of Education to carry out this study. Pseudonyms are used to protect participants' anonymity, and the names and locations of the participating schools are also withheld as required by our ethics clearance.

Participants and School Contexts

We gathered the data about the socioeconomic profile of all schools in Australia from the federal government on its *MySchool* website (myschool.edu.au) via two measures: 1) the percentage of students from different socioeconomic quartiles as measured by parent occupation and education; and 2) the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA), which provides a parameter of the socio-educational backgrounds of students at schools (ACARA, 2015). ICSEA is scaled so that the national mean is 1000 and range from approximately 800 (representing severe disadvantage) to 1200 or higher (representing very high advantage).

As shown in Table 2, S1 is a high-fee private school with a very privileged social composition; S2 is a moderate-fee private school with an average social composition; and S3 is a public school with a relatively disadvantaged social composition. The schools also had varying years of experience with the MYP, ranging from seven years at S1, two years at S2, and three years at S3.

Table 2

Background of Participating Schools

School	Sector	Fees charged (in Australian $)	School ICSEA score	% Students from lowest SES quartile	% Students from highest SES quartile	Overall socio-economic comp. (SES)	No. of participants involved	No. of years running the MYP
S1	Private	$19,604	1144	1	68	High	5	7
S2	Private	$6,954	1063	9	32	Middle	7	2
S3	Public	$475	926	50	5	Low	5	3

Source: MySchool website (myschool.edu.au), 2017

From these schools, 17 participants with varying MYP teaching experiences took part in our study – four principals and/or deputies, three former MYP Coordinators, and 10 teachers. We did not provide schools with any specific selection criteria for the participants. Pseudonyms for participants and schools are used to protect anonymity.

Data Coding and Analysis

We used a qualitative analysis software program, NVIVO, to code and analyze the interview data. Following a grounded theory approach and using constant comparative methods (Charmez, 2003), we coded the data for keywords, themes and concepts (Creswell, 2012). We compared participants' responses to each question to identify similarities and differences across the data set (Charmez, 2003). We also carried out a cross-case analysis to examine whether the findings varied by school sector and/or socioeconomic composition. We used the MYP's Standards and Practices to organize our findings. These are a set of philosophical, organizational and curriculum requirements established by the IB to guide and support schools to successfully implement the MYP (IBOc, n.d.).

Limitations and Generalizability

Our findings may not be reflective of the general MYP and/or non-MYP school population, since only three Australian schools participated in the study. However, participants' perspectives are unique and worth analysing since we were seeking analytical generalizability (Yin, 2009) to generate theoretical insights and hypotheses. Lastly, since we could only carry out email interviews with most of the S1 participants due to time constraints, we found it was a challenge to gather more in-depth responses. We felt we would have been able to gather more in-depth reflections from our participants in a face-to-face interview.

Findings

Overall, we found that teachers experienced various challenges and limitations whilst teaching the MYP. We used the MYP's Standards and Practices to structure the interview responses in this section, provide a thematic guideline for this discussion (Ledger, 2017) and to address policy and practices that underpin the focus of this paper. The Standards and Practices highlight the connectivity between philosophy, organization and curriculum. They are premised on the belief that philosophy and policy drives how schools organize their resources to operationalize and implement curriculum in order to achieve learning outcomes.

Philosophy

MYP Elements Were Forced and Artificial

Many staff at the three schools felt that various MYP components such as Approaches to Learning (ATL) and Learner Profile (LP) were embraced artificially. When focusing on ATLs, Sandy (S2) shared that they:

> had this as part of the unit planners and we would look at maybe two or three ATLs
> that we thought was suitable for that topic: Did the students really relate back to it?
> No. It felt like a paper-pushing exercise. Yes, we filled the paperwork and we did
> what you told us to but nobody was passionate about why were we doing it. (Sandy,
> S2)

Valerie (S2) added that some staff members in various learning areas at S2 left out some elements of the MYP in their learning area such as the ATL as they felt it 'was just an unnecessary add-on…it didn't always happen.' She also added that the LP did not develop successfully at their school:

> You obviously need more time to get the students used to the Learner Profile and
> what the aim of MYP was in that context. I've seen it in another school where MYP
> has been ingrained in it. Students are great at being able to identify the qualities that

they're possessing. The qualities that they've gained as a result. Yes, obviously it's a huge part of it but it didn't develop effectively at (S2). (Valerie, S2)

At S1, staff members felt that the ATLs were not used much at their school:
> The ATLs got little airplay as they were also somewhat forced. To nominate an ATL and an associated skill from the 'cluster' seemed unnecessary since we were covering these kinds of skills regardless. (Matt, S1)

> The added layers required to be MYP compliant often meant teachers were taken away from teaching the core knowledge essential to develop a deeper understanding of the subject area. (Max, S1)

> I'd defy any school to incorporate ATL well. Essentially you have two options; either implicitly – in which case you really don't need the ATL framework to help you, or explicitly – which is either (1) Grounded in the discipline in which it is taught, so also negates the need for an ATL framework, or (2) Generic: there's enough doubt as to whether 'generic' learner skills have any usefulness at all. (Nate, S1)

Another staff member, Pete (S1) felt that the ATLs created another issue:
> Suddenly students start to get into their preferred learning style (and) teachers (had) to individualize for each student's learning style which is quite frankly impractical in my opinion...besides I'm not sure that it's good educationally that people just work with their own learning styles. I think they need to broaden the learning styles. (Pete, S1)

At S3, Deb felt that her understanding of the LP was very little and the only way she used it was to have 'up in the room and sometimes you point to it and go, "Okay, this is it"' and was 'discussed at the start and end of the year.... it wasn't really brought up throughout the rest of the time.' The MYP's Community and Service (CAS), was also challenging for S3 according to Dolly as it 'never happened consistently across all year levels across all subjects.'

Additionally, Adam (S2) felt that at their school, the MYP was 'more about the accountability of getting more set up for when the IB would come out and visit us for the authorization process.' He added that instead of 'Well let's do a year of getting some minor shifts in our programs then we'll work on getting authorization… it was more about authorization first, so it was like cart before the horse' (Adam, S2). Overall, even though each school's duration with the MYP and each teacher's MYP experience differed, a common theme among teachers is that they found the various MYP elements challenging as highlighted above. Teachers confessed there was a lot of negativity in taking on the MYP, which created challenges as described below.

Teachers Resisting Change

Another commonly shared challenge among the teachers from all three schools were staff members' resistance towards change. For example, Paul (S1) mentioned, 'people didn't embrace the opportunity…there wasn't a great infusion…there wasn't certainly on my part… we're pretty busy with all the expectations placed on us so that's pretty heavy stuff.'

At S2 and S3, teachers admitted that many of their teachers were unhappy with taking on the MYP and this was a challenge at their schools. At S2, Valerie felt that at her school:

> People just associated IB with the principal that some of the staff didn't like because
> he was making too many changes. They just associated both together. I think the
> MYP was doomed from Day One for that regard. (Valerie, S2)

At S3, Bill said it was challenging to get staff on board because they felt 'the Australian curriculum is nationwide, why do we have to use the IB? There was a fair bit of negativity.' Additionally, Deb (S3) felt 'many of the teachers, not age-based but experience, were very negative to have another change…they keep getting comfortable with something and the new thing comes in…they feel like they are forced to do it… they don't do to it as well as they probably could have to the extent that it needs to be done to be successful.' This opinion was also shared by Janice (S3), who mentioned, 'In education, there's a lot of fads that come and go…sometimes people question the evidence behind jumping up at something especially when it takes a lot of time, a lot of money.'

Similarly, at S2, Kelly 'was confused as to why when we had a perfectly good (Australian Curriculum) option that we'd choose to implement the MYP, but we didn't get a choice (and) we were told we were doing it.' From a MYP Coordinator's viewpoint, Valerie (S2) felt that:

> Sometimes teaching staff can be very stuck in their ways. It's the nature of the
> profession that when the door closes, you're in charge of the classroom. When
> someone tries to tell you how to teach or to change your practice, people can be
> very resistant to change. I know in (S2), you needed the support of staff, needed the
> principal to support us. You needed the leadership to support it fully and to shut
> down any negativity the minute it started…but there's so much politics in the
> background, you are just fighting a losing battle. (Valerie, S2)

Their current principal, Cory (S2), who joined the school a year after they adopted the MYP and therefore was not intimately involved in the implementation process nor in a classroom teaching context, thought teachers' pedagogy improved but 'their sense of efficacy decreased… (Teachers) felt that they weren't doing as competently or as good a job as they were doing pre-IB.' Participants in this study also faced other issues within their organization as they felt unsupported in coping with the MYP, which is described next.

Organization

Limited Direction and/or Support

At each school, participants felt confused due to limited support and/or direction from their leadership team. At S1, Matt shared that 'while running the MYP, the school had three different staff members who were responsible for its direction which ultimately resulted in a lack of consistency…priorities were identified then changed according to who was directing it.' Similarly, Paul felt the leaders at S1 were not 'really forceful, convincing' and did not provide 'strong support, practical support for them to say, "We're doing it and you got to get on-board with it."' This feedback was also shared by staff at S2.

At S2, all four teachers who participated in this study felt they did not receive support from their former principal, who pushed to adopt the MYP, or their MYP Coordinator. For example, Rose (S2) shared that 'the support just wasn't there to help us do what we needed to do…we felt disenchanted by what was expected of us.' Kelly (S2) also shared similar sentiments and mentioned that while 'more things were being implemented, less things were being communicated well by the MYP coordinator.' Other teachers at S2 also expressed the following:

> Our opening meeting with new Principal (was) like, (if you) "don't like it,
> leave."…The principal that came in (and) the coordinator didn't necessarily work

with the staff (and) didn't get them on that journey…the coordinator didn't do the role that was required. It was more of a, "Here's the paperwork. Go on, read it. If you ask the questions, it's on the wiki, it's on the blog. Go on read it." If (teachers) asked for assistance, it was like sort it out yourself… For staff that may have not been trained in inquiry-based learning (and) in non-linear models of curriculum development, it was a little bit difficult. (Adam, S2)

(The Coordinator) didn't have an IB background either…she was still teaching for part of her time...her time was spread very thinly between the departments and I can honestly say hand on heart we got very little useful practical support because I believe she was still learning it as well. (Sandy, S2)

In terms of limited support, Deb (S3), who had joined the school after the MYP was established, felt that she could have received more guidance:

Because I come in after it had been established, I was in that gap...At the same time, no one thinks that you might need to have a bit of a rundown in how it actually works. I had to teach myself or seeking out help from staff that had been here longer and more experienced. I would have definitely benefited from a training day. (Deb, S3)

Participants from S3 felt they did not have much time to collaborate with other local MYP schools. Even though S3 was part of a cluster of MYP schools within a local area, Deb felt their engagement with the other MYP schools were limited:

Not utilized it to what it could be…I want to see how (MYP) works…I want my kids to engage with their kids…(students) need to see that there are other opportunities and other potentials out there. It would be good to actually utilize that partnership to its full extent and learn from one another. (Deb, S3)

Similarly, at S2, Sandy also felt like they were not given extra time at their school to cope with the additional demands on their workload since adopting the MYP, especially with implementing Personal Projects:

We haven't been given any time to implement this. Who on earth was going to take on board the Personal Projects, which is a massive undertaking in terms of time and energy commitment? (Sandy, S2)

When teachers feel unsupported in their work environment, they tend to experience more stress, which was another factor shared by participants from S2 and S3 as described in the following section.

Increased Level of Stress Among Teachers and Teacher Turnover

Teachers at S2 and S3 experienced increased stress levels due to teaching the MYP. At S2, Joy explained that teaching this IB programme 'increased the level of stress and burnout with teachers… I got sick four times that year which is not very normal for me… it was a lot of stress on our side.' This sentiment was also shared by Rose and Sandy (S2), who felt teachers became more stressed and there was more angst within their school. Additionally, Sandy (S2) added that 'things like staff morale (had) gone from very, very low during MYP to back to where it always was,' post-MYP. She also shared 'teachers became stressed because they hadn't had sufficient training' yet they

had to use their time and energy to develop 'brand new assessments, brand new rubrics all in terms of the MYP' without getting the proper initial IB professional development (Sandy, S2).

At S3, Bill also shared similar experiences of staff feeling frustrated when teaching the MYP due to the constantly changing MYP framework:

> It was seen as a chore by some teachers…they were always changing their curriculum and staff becoming frustrated with that…we would get used to the criteria, ways to assess unit planning, progress to learning and all of a sudden, they change the whole framework…everyone just got fed up… Because we had just gotten used to the whole program and then bang, it's hard to change it again. (Bill, S3)

Apart from increased stress, frustration and lack of support, some teachers did not embrace the professional development support given to them and felt these MYP training were costly, as described more next.

Costly and Insufficient Professional Development (PD) Opportunities

While teachers found it a perk to attend local and international MYP PD workshops to learn more about the MYP and network with other teachers globally, there were mixed opinions among participants regarding the frequency and/or the cost involved for such training. For example, due to high staff turnover at S3, Bill mentioned that providing PD for his new staff was expensive:

> We had a high teacher turnover so we're always having to train new staff (which) becomes quite costly… Lot of the staff coming in from universities were unaware of the IB because they've been focusing on Australian curriculum so with the pre-service teachers, I'm having to spend a lot of my time teaching them about IB. (Bill, S3)

Also, teachers from S2 and S3 talked about the cost factor of sending their staff interstate or overseas for these PDs. Dolly (S3) shared they rarely sent their teachers interstate or overseas as it was a 'huge cost and really extravagant for a school like ours.' Similarly, Cory (S2) thought these IB PDs were costly and it was a 'real impediment to get everyone trained or to be able to be accessing that in a way that's realistic.'

PDs were also provided inconsistently to staff at S2, according to the participants. One of the challenges is due to the unavailability of local MYP training (Cory, S2). Additionally, Adam (S2) shared the inconsistencies they faced with staff attending the PDs when they introduced the MYP at their school as most of his teaching colleagues only attending their first IB-run PD 'midway through the first year of actual implementation':

> Not always did the most appropriate person go…it wasn't always the dean of learning area that went. Sometimes it was a classroom teacher that went so they might not necessarily have the expertise to readily translate it to their colleagues in terms of the requirements. Some of them were also teaching it so that they were coming to grips as an educator as well as the coordinator of the area... It was just a very poorly formed quilt. (Adam, S2)

Similarly, Deb (S3) felt that new staff members joining their school may require more external MYP training, instead of learning just from colleagues. Furthermore, 'in a one lesson release time where they are sticking by everything they have done in a day or two training,' understanding the MYP can be challenging (Deb, S3).

At S1, Bob, Director of Teaching and Learning, mentioned he did not receive any MYP training but had the IB training for the 'Course Coordinator Level 2 for the DP' and was 'familiar with the (MYP) since my days in the UK.' His colleague, Pete (S1), noted that teachers 'didn't embrace the opportunity...We're busy with all the expectations placed on us...I'm not against PD but I'm very selective now. I certainly wouldn't be running, bursting my boiler to go to an MYP conference.' Beyond these organizational challenges, teachers also experienced issues with the curriculum, which are described next.

Curriculum

Teaching the MYP Increased Teachers' Workload

Staff from all three schools unanimously shared that one of the main drawbacks of the MYP was the substantial increase in paperwork. At S1, Matt felt 'the sheer weight of documents that came with the MYP that staff were suddenly expected to digest' was challenging. Additionally, Max (S1) shared that:

> The MYP added a layer of complexity to the work of our staff and, as a result, there
> was a great variance in the quality of delivery. In many cases the unique aspects of
> each subject were lost in the various layers of MYP requirements. (Matt, S1)

Their mathematics teacher, Pete (S1), also felt that the MYP added pressure on their teachers and 'the workload of the teachers just went through the roof.'

Similarly, at S2, Kelly shared that 'teachers just didn't want to do it because it was too much hard work or just a program they didn't believe in' and due to that, they had 'a lot of unrest with different areas.' Additionally, Adam (S2) thought the MYP at their school 'became more about the paperwork and the framework in terms of accountability than it was about actual pedagogical changes and shifts in the curriculum.' Likewise, Cory (S2) felt the 'real drawbacks were the paperwork, planning documents (and) reporting, and these were hurdles many teachers struggled with.' For example, Rose (S2) shared that her students were given a 14-page document for a science experiment 'to count the number of turns on anemometer' and her Year seven students 'just freaked out.'

These challenges were also shared by S3's participants. Deb (S3) felt the 'unit planning was a bit over-the-top (and) your time could be better spent as a teacher doing more effective things that are going to help the class.' Similarly, Ray (S3) thought they spent a lot of time on 'just creating documents to have in a folder to say you've done that step as opposed to planning (and) programming really meaningful stuff.' Additionally, Dolly (S3) also felt 'the paperwork and the unit planning are pretty full on…they had to take the (Australian Curriculum's content) and be delivering that but under the IB framework.' Apart from increased workload, time factor hindered teachers' collaborative planning as described below.

Interdisciplinary Units (IDUs) and Collaboration Among Teachers Were Challenging

Teaching timetables were re-structured at all three schools after adopting the MYP and the lack of communal time among staff hindered their collaboration and planning. It was challenging for staff at S2 and S3 to get time together to develop IDUs due to timetable factors:

> Some of the challenges, like timetabling and how schools are structured, made it
> really difficult to do interdisciplinary units well…too hard to get the same kids with
> the same teachers in the same place at the same time or just make it so that teachers
> have got enough time to sit down and collaborate and plan something out across the
> faculties. (Ray, S3)

There is a big timetabling issue...You got to have the same kids, running in the same classes, and have two teachers that want to do something together…we are running with the Australian curriculum content, so you got to find some content that can match…We haven't mastered that yet. (Janice, S3)

Timetabling made that hard because in Year Seven the kids could choose their electives, so they might choose dance, they might choose food… It means those kids all separated. My language kids who chose Indonesian might not be doing the same food subject. Some of them might be doing dance at the same time, so that was a logistics issue as well as far as interdisciplinary stuff. (Joy, S2)

Similarly, to carry out IDUs at S1, Matt shared that departments had to:
Suspend their original content delivery in order to accommodate it…its success was always going to be limited and it was restricted to those subject areas who had some natural overlap, e.g. History / English or Science/ Maths…A focus on interdisciplinary units was seen as a distraction from the core business of individual subject areas and the absence of any assessment rubric for such ventures made the practicality of such units seem rather nebulous. (Matt, S1)

Apart from planning and collaboration challenges, schools also faced issues with the MYP assessment and standardization.

Timetable and Assessment Issues

First, many participants from each school experienced issues with the MYP's assessment format and added that reduced teaching time limited their ability to teach and assess their students. Valerie (S2) shared that some of her colleagues found 'the assessments were huge problems…some people hated them, they wanted content, rote learning.' She felt 'having to assess two criterion over the course of a year meant that we were over-assessing students' (Valerie, S2). Valerie (S2) also mentioned that 'it was challenging to grade Year 11 students with the AC's A to E grading format since they have 'just come through being marked out of eight and then being marked out of seven at the end of the year.' This viewpoint was also shared by her colleagues at S2 (Sandy, Rose & Kelly) and Dolly at School 3, who said:
There was this disconnect between being assessed to get an Australian Curriculum, the grading looks different, it's A to E. Then you jump into IB and all of a sudden you getting seven to one. Then you're back to (the Australian Curriculum) and you're getting an A to E again. (Dolly, S3)

At S3, teachers also found it challenging to carry out assessments due to time constraints, which made them feel like they were over-assessing students:
Some staff found it tough to meet all the expectations of the IB…we only had one lesson of health and PE a week…if you're going to do the IB program properly, how are we meant to assess all the criteria twice, in one lesson a week and open our year eight and nine programs which are only a semester? We have to cram them in because we have to assess each criteria twice within the semester…It was seen as a chore by some teachers. (Bill, S3)

Additionally, Deb (S3) felt that the assessments were difficult to comprehend and teachers had to 'simplify it and for lack of a better word, dumb down…so that it's engaging because they're still just little babies here at Years Six, Seven…seeing a sheet that works for an adult doesn't necessarily work for the kids.' Assessments were also viewed as confusing, according to Pete and Bob (S1):

> It's very assessment-driven and it's looking at so many different criteria. I think there's so much time and energy arguing about standards and what determines how good someone is and so on. I don't think it's clear-cut …you had to assess all the criteria and then you had all these numbers for the criteria at the end… Back to the criteria, back to numbers, back to the criteria. This caused confusion. For some people, they gave equal weighting to all criteria then that changed, and then something else changed. They constantly modified it. (Pete, S1)

> Impossible to standardized between subjects and hard to do so within subjects…they are invalid due to the fact that they don't stipulate what to assess and how to assess. (Bob, S1)

At S1, Bob also mentioned it was the MYP is 'unnecessary and limiting (and) the grading system is invalid,' and 'reducing all subjects to a 1-8 four category criteria makes little sense.'

Second, time shortage due to timetable inflexibilities at these three schools limited teachers' ability to teach effectively. For example, at S1, Max mentioned their 'timetable did not allow much flexibility in providing staff with the time needed to deliver a program as complex as the MYP.' Nate (S1) also mentioned that they 'were doing formative assessments every week at home and so it just became assessment driven for it…the accountability was beaten into us.' Teachers at S2 and S3 also shared their views on reduced hours of class time and timetabling issues, which impacted their teaching:

> We went from seeing classes three times a week to two times a week because they needed to (increase the) hours in maths and English…science and HASS would have two sessions a week and math and English would have four sessions a week…twice a week wasn't quite enough to develop the relationship with the students, be able to assist them to develop their own ideas. (Rose, S2)

> Very few true interdisciplinary units (were) run…there a big time tabling issue there…you got to have the same kids running in the same classes, and have two teachers that want to do something together….we are running with the Australian Curriculum so you got to find some content that can match. (Janice, S3)

At S2, teachers also felt they were rushed into teaching the MYP, did not have enough time to learn about it and only ran the MYP for a short duration at their school (Adam, S2). Kelly felt the MYP would have been more successful at S2 if they had taken it on for at least 10 years instead of just having it for two years. She felt if they 'had those policies in place, maybe we might have been a little more successful' (Kelly, S2). Additionally, Sandy (S2) reflected they could have been given more time initially to explore and engage with the MYP and plan 'maybe one unit in that year…everyone was given lots of time to actually prepare that unit (where they received) lots of help and IB experts looking at it' to help them get used to this IB programme. Beyond the challenges faced by teachers with teaching the MYP outlined above, there were a few other, less commonly mentioned issues that were shared by participants as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Other teaching challenges faced by participants

Under-prepared to teach the MYP	'There wasn't much independence…very didactic and teacher-centered…shouldn't have been student directed necessarily all the time. When you're 13-year-old, you need to learn how to do that. Particularly, when you come out of a system that is very teacher driven… It didn't shift pedagogical practice all that much…The staff were wanting to do, they just didn't know how to access it. There were almost disenfranchised and disempowered' (Adam, S2)
	'Being uncertain and not having the confidence in the methodology, and teachers don't like not knowing what they're doing. The whole profession is built around that notion of the teacher being the expert especially in the senior school where you are specialist teachers and they didn't feel that they had the specialist knowledge to deliver the program.' (Cory, S2)
Too many constant changes to the MYP curriculum	'the 'next chapter' MYP did not make the MYP simpler or more accessible, not make planning of units more streamlined and clearer, not help to enable inquiry learning to occur more naturally…guidance was technical and convoluted.' (Nate, S1)
	'We would get used to the criteria, ways to assess unit planning and all of a sudden they change the whole framework … everyone just got fed up.' (Bill, S3)
MYP's features are very similar to the Australian Curriculum's components	'Perhaps in countries that don't have a national curriculum (the MYP) could be followed…actually gives a very good structure for learning in those sorts of environments. In Australia, they just seem to be doubling up on what has already been considered in terms of the national curriculum that needs to be delivered. We already have that, so we're compounding that with now different aspects we have to deliver on top of the curriculum. I would say it's great in theory…the reality is, unless you've got masses of money, time and very experienced teachers in that area, it can be shambolic.' (Sandy, S2)
	'(Australian Curriculum) really drew a lot of its ideas from IB. It's a terrific framework and has a lot of IB-ness to it…having a really good strong Australian national curriculum meant that there's not necessarily a need (for the MYP). I can imagine other countries that don't have a good strong national curriculum that the IB is perfect framework' (Dolly, S3)
Challenges with inquiry-based model	'An inquiry-conceptual model is simply not the best way to teach certain subjects, particularly Mathematics and Languages [skills and content-based, sequential and cumulative]. Teachers really struggled to address the content-based required in subjects when all of the assessment attention was on higher-level inquiry tasks. Certainly, in many subjects the actual content (syllabus) for the course was downplayed significantly, mostly because it was either absent from the criteria, or relegated to criterion A only ('knowledge and understanding').' (Nate, S1)
	'We've found the conceptual understandings when we were developing our courses quite broad and a bit difficult to decipher.' (Kelly, S2)
	'Formulaic teaching; lack of knowledge-based curriculum and poor preparation for Y11 and 12' (Bob, S1)
	'Fixes a style of teaching and in an attempt to make teaching genuinely inquiry-based (i.e. children co-constructing their own learning), instead makes teaching delivery fixed and robotic.' (Bob, S1)

Discussion and Recommendation

The MYP's Standards and Practices provided a suitable framework to capture the perspectives of participants. Philosophy, organization and curriculum are interlinked and interdependent. The stronger the belief (philosophy) and organizational supports, the stronger the commitment to curriculum and change (Dickson et al., 2019). Overall, our findings in this study suggest participants may have had limited understanding, support and/or appreciation of how the MYP worked, which could have contributed to the challenges they faced with the MYP.

The findings of this paper point to less of a deficiency of the MYP itself and more to aspects of the MYP that the school leadership could have managed more effectively. The failure of the MYP at these schools appeared to be due to the capacity of the leadership to negotiate ongoing demands of offering the MYP, while simultaneously needing to adhere to the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. The difficulties with timetabling, professional development, assessments, time given for collaborating planning and teacher resisting change, are issues that school leaders need to be prepared to deal with in order to implement the MYP successfully. Therefore, the leadership at schools offering the MYP must see it as a whole school approach and provide staff members with continual support and resources (Storz & Hoffman 2018) and create a collaborative culture (Hargreaves & Connor, 2018; Kools et al., 2020). Even though our sample size was small, the findings in this paper offer novel insight into the challenges of teaching from stakeholders at schools who have discontinued the MYP. These insights can offer prospective MYP schools the knowledge to guide them with implementing a curriculum reform more successfully.

Our findings were consistent with Bennie and Newstead (1999) in that participants in our study also faced great difficulties with the assessment format and MYP elements, such as the IDUs, lack of clarity and/or insufficient direction from their leaders. These factors contributed to staff at all three schools feeling stressed and disenfranchised with the MYP. Schools 2 and 3, which ran the MYP for only two and three years respectively, may not have adequately prepared for the adoption of the MYP and underestimated the amount of training and ongoing support required for teachers to be successful. Continuous PD and scheduling time to collaboratively plan the curriculum is necessary and an important factor when adopting the MYP (Dever & Raven, 2017; Fullan et al., 2015; Walters, 2007). Even at S1, which offered the MYP for seven years, staff members experienced significant frustration with the on-going demands and changes associated with the programme and felt that the school administration did not sufficiently promote the programme at their school. Additionally, the IB reviews and updates its programs every seven years and the MYP had been most recently revised around the time that the schools in this study gave up this IB programme. The additional requirement of having to accommodate the changing MYP may have further contributed to the staff members experiencing difficulties, which in turn may have been a factor in their decision to let the MYP go at their schools.

Additionally, limited resources to fund costly PD were reported by two of the three schools: S2, a private school that charges moderate fees, and S3, a public school. Participants from S1, a high-fee private school, did not report difficulties affording PDs. These findings suggest that even private schools that charge moderate fees may find the MYP too costly to maintain. Unsurprisingly, S3, a public school with fewer financial resources, less autonomy and more demands from its jurisdiction, faced challenges with affording these costly PDs. To help overcome this obstacle, policy makers could focus on promoting a more collaborative culture between staff members within and between other schools, so that educators can engage in collective PDs for continuous improvement (Fullan et al., 2015).

Third, teachers from all three schools reported difficulties meeting the requirements of the MYP and the Australian Curriculum at the same time, especially in terms of assessments and grading. Our findings were consistent with Sizmur and Cunningham (2013), who found that teachers faced more workload managing the UK's national curriculum with the MYP, and with Perry et al. (2018), Valle et al. (2017), Visser (2010), and Williams (2013), who found that teachers had difficulties integrating the grading style of their national curricula with the MYP's grading format. Given the consistency of these findings, greater clarity from the IB about how to design assessments in schools that use a national curriculum in conjunction with an IB programme may enhance teachers' capacity to efficiently and sustainably. Local policy makers can further support schools by encouraging the development and sharing of country- or state-specific supplementary documentation (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 1992; Fullan et al., 2015) that guides schools in relation to reconciling the MYP with the national curriculum. By encouraging a more effective shared and collaborative approach, each school would not have to feel like they are reinventing the wheel in isolation.

Conclusion

School administrative teams and teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring the effective implementation of and engagement with any curriculum. When school leaders implement a new framework, it is common for staff members to be challenged by its implementation. Staff at the schools in our study felt challenged with limited administrative support, time-related issues, costly PDs, which made them feel stressed and, in some cases, dampened the MYP's potential influence on their teaching practice. It is therefore important for leaders at current and future MYP schools to understand such challenges so that sufficient internal support from their leadership team and more school-specific guidance from the IB can be given to help teachers fully engage with MYP pedagogy and practices. Teachers reluctance to change practices hindered the effectiveness of MYP adoption. School leadership teams can support teachers by developing processes to promote and monitor pedagogical change through regular communication, time to plan and collaborate, and appropriate resources.

In addition, the IB could develop models for linking IB programmes with given national curricula, provide training that promotes deep understanding of the MYP, and increase their recognition of the leadership skills required of MYP coordinators. Addressing these inherent issues may free up time for school leaders and teachers to collaborate and best tailor the MYP to their school's individual context.

From the findings, policy makers can also refine policies to support staff members and leaders to better guide and manage possible organizational challenges that may occur and pedagogical changes required to implement the MYP wholeheartedly. Additionally, policy makers can also ensure that schools have enough teaching material and sufficient human and financial resources available to them to implement this programme successfully. Policy makers can also encourage collective collaboration between and among other schools within each state to minimize duplication of work related to compliance and planning. When policy makers and education authorities, the IB, school leaders and teachers work together, the conditions may improve for a more successful MYP implementation at Australian schools. These insights may also be useful for other contexts, especially those that have national or jurisdictional curricular frameworks.

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Appendix A

Interview questionnaire for teachers

1) Background questions
    a) How long have you been working at this school?
    b) Where did you work before coming to this school?
    c) How long have you been teaching?
    d) For how long did you work with IB programs before the school ceased offering it?
    e) Could you tell me about the depth of training you received while you were engaged with the MYP?
    f) How confident do you think you were with understanding how the MYP works and how to implement it in your classroom?

2) Impact of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) on teaching and learning
    a) If a parent asked you about what MYP is, how would you respond to that? How would you explain the MYP to others? Broadly speaking, what impact did the MYP have at your school when you offered it?
    b) What were the benefits of the MYP on teaching in your school?
    c) What limitations or challenges did the MYP have on teaching in your school?
    d) What benefits did the MYP have on learning in your school?
    e) What limitations or challenges did the MYP have on learning in your school?

3) Why do you think your school has chosen to no longer offer the MYP?

4) Other than what you have described so far, were there any adverse effects of offering the MYP?

5) Were there any other advantages or disadvantages associated with your experience in offering the MYP?

6) Would you encourage other schools to consider adopting the MYP? Why?

7) Do you have any recommendations for the IBO? For the Department of Education? For other schools in relation to the MYP?

8) Is there anything else about the MYP that you would like to give your opinion about, which we may not have discussed already?

Appendix B

Interview questionnaire for principals and former MYP Coordinators

1) Background questions
    a) How long have you been working at this school?
    b) Where did you work before coming to this school?
    c) How long have you been working in this capacity (as a principal or IB coordinator)?
    d) How long have you been working in the education field?
    e) For how long did you work with IB programs?
    f) How confident do you think you were with understanding how the MYP works and how to implement it at your school?

2) Impact of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) on teaching and learning
    a) If a parent asked you about what MYP is, how would you respond to that? How would you explain the MYP to others? Broadly speaking, what impact did the MYP have at your school when you offered it?
    b) Broadly speaking, what impact did the MYP have at your school when you offered it?
    c) What were the benefits of the MYP on teaching in your school?
    d) What limitations or challenges did the MYP have on teaching in your school?
    e) What benefits did the MYP have on learning in your school?
    f) What limitations or challenges did the MYP have on learning in your school?

3) What were your initial reasons for taking up the MYP?

4) Why has your school chosen to no longer offer the MYP?

5) Were there any adverse effects of offering the MYP?

6) Did you experience any other advantages or disadvantages associated with your experience in offering the MYP?

7) Would you encourage other schools to consider adopting the MYP? Why?

8) Do you have any recommendations for the IBO? For the Department of Education? For other schools?

9) Is there anything else about the MYP that you would like to give your opinion about, which we may not have discussed already?

About the Author

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Anisah Dickson completed her Doctor of Education at Murdoch University in Western Australia. In her thesis, she explored why Australian schools are letting go of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. International education is an area of interest due to her wealth of experience teaching English for six years at an International Baccalaureate accredited school in Singapore. She analysed issues in international education as part of her Master of Education, specialising in Leadership, Policy and Change.

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