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**The Administrator Role in Professional Development in International
Schools: Perspectives on Planning, Implementing, Evaluating and
Resourcing**

Peggy Paraskevi Pelonis Peneros

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

University of Bath
Department of Education

January 2017

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DEDICATION

To my daughter Lydia

I am grateful for the journey; for I am your parent but you are my teacher

ABSTRACT

Existing research shows the importance of teacher professional development and that decisions regarding professional development in schools lie with administrators. However, while studies have been conducted on the need for administrators fostering professional development in schools in the USA, there appears to be limited research on administrator views of professional development in international school environments. The purpose of this study was to consider views of administrators in international schools regarding professional development activities. Using a mixed methods sequential explanatory design, a questionnaire followed by in-depth interviews, data was collected from a convenience and purposive sample of administrators from international schools in Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East so as to explore and provide answers to the main research question: “What are the views of administrators on how professional development is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools?” Findings from quantitative data indicated strong agreement that administrators should work collaboratively with teachers to determine the professional development needs of the school and that teachers should be involved in assessing professional development effectiveness. Analysis of qualitative data indicated the following themes: teachers are sent to conferences/workshops for professional development or content experts are brought to the school; decisions about professional development should align with school goals; professional development needs should be determined by teachers and administrators collaboratively; there are no significant professional development evaluation processes in place; 2% of the budget is standard allocation in schools for professional development and school boards approve the budget while administrators decide on allocation. By addressing the study’s purpose, this research seeks to contribute to the larger conversation on how administrator views on professional development in international schools can add knowledge to the limited research on effective avenues to professional development in the international school context.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In the mid-1990s I moved across the globe from the United States of America (USA) to Europe. My education and career, up to that time, had been Psychology, teaching graduate and undergraduate students, setting up parent education centres or speaking to interested audiences. Moving to Athens gave me the opportunity to re-establish a career in private practice, training other psychotherapists. In 2005, an interesting career opportunity arose: I was asked to be on the leadership team of a K-12 international school. Moving into education leadership was both intriguing and challenging: At that time the school enrolment was declining rapidly due in part to changes in demographics and several unfortunate events.

School leadership in our international school changed about every three years and teacher retention was low, making it very difficult to maintain stability and sustainability in programmes. Budgetary constraints made the availability of professional development (PD) scarce and the top-down approach to decision making about allocation of resources caused tension among the faculty. In 2005, a drastic change in leadership brought new energy to the school and a renewed sense of belonging, commitment and excitement about being able to focus on effective teaching and learning. The school also found its footing financially. The enrolment improved steadily, almost doubling within the next four years. There were numerous other challenges to address: the curriculum needed updating; an archaic, almost non-existent technology system had to be updated; and numerous teachers set in their ways and resistant to progressive change had to be brought into a new era or helped to move on. Still, a progressive strategy and organisational development were making a difference in this international school. For the first time in almost two decades, the school administrator continued in his leadership role beyond the prescribed three-year-tenure and he continues in this role today, 10 years after his initial appointment.

I contemplated that PD was imperative in order to create a truly successful institution. PD literature indicated that it is vital for the growth of the school. Little of the PD literature, however, addressed the issue as it related to international schools. In our school, decisions about PD had, for some time, been made unilaterally: the President (title was revised from superintendent) made decisions about how to allocate funds, which teachers went to training and where they could go. PD activities consisted mainly of attendance at conferences with little or no follow-up and no processes to assess transferability into the classroom. Additionally, numerous teachers who attended PD activities quickly moved on to other international schools, depriving this school's students of any newly acquired knowledge or methods. Throughout this process questions arose regarding the practice of other international schools and their PD activities, budget allocations, leadership role in PD and decision-making process. I speculated about how administrators in international schools view their role in relation to PD and whether they include teachers in pertinent decision-making.

1.2. International Schools

International schools are expanding exponentially as the demand for this type of education is growing (Bunnell 2014). Ensuring the promotion of international education and fulfilling the central mission of today's international schools is demanding and complex (Shaklee 2014). Given this rapid growth, the organisational development of an international school has reached a level of complexity where Shaklee (2014) suggests that teachers increase the range of instructional practices in order to confront and attend to student learning needs. My experience in an international school attests to students from multiple and diverse cultures that must be acknowledged but also managed under a common philosophy as well as the high turnover rate in teachers and administrators who must be considered when developing sustainable processes. Therefore, one goal of any international school is the high quality of the teaching force. To meet this goal, international school administrators are usually the ones charged with promoting and providing PD opportunities for international school teachers whose task is to teach in a

distinctive manner outside of the boundaries learned in their home-country teacher education programmes (Pearce 2013).

While there does not seem to be any consensus about the definition of an international school, Hayden and Thompson (2000; 2013) suggest that international schools are those schools that promote international education and ‘international mindedness’. Skelton (2002), regarding ‘international mindedness’, refers to the UNESCO declaration of 1996 which considers entailing the values of freedom, intercultural understanding and non-violent conflict resolution. Within the national school context, however, the tradition of teacher learning through PD and administrative control over that learning continues today (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006). While there seems to be recognition that PD needs identification and allocation should be a collaborative process between teachers and administrators, administrators continue to maintain full control. The complexity of international schools, due to the variety of cultures being managed under a common philosophy, increases the challenge of promoting ‘international mindedness’ and the thus the need for collaborative processes.

In the USA, teachers’ PD denotes that teachers have the ability to formulate and systematically solve research questions based on their daily practice as professional educators (Loucks-Horsley et al. 2003; Hawley and Valli 1999). Teachers in international schools have embraced various professional learning models in order to elucidate some of their PD needs within their own organisational and multicultural context (Hayden 2011; Punia 2004). The specific problem is that while studies have been conducted on administrator-led PD in countries as diverse as China (Peng et al. 2014), Norway and Sweden (Cameron and Lindqvist 2014), Greece (Argyriou and Iordanidis 2014), India (Clement and Murugavel 2015), the United Kingdom (Nelson et al. 2015) and the USA (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Hawley and Valli 1999; Scribner 1999), research has yet to be conducted on the views of and best practices in teacher PD process led by administrators within international school environments. By exploring the views of administrators regarding PD in international schools, my aim was to consider emerging themes as well as

possible implications regarding PD and to inform the international leadership community of such findings.

1.2.1. International school administrators and professional development

There is “no shortage of literature relating to the importance of the role of school head” (Hayden 2006, p.95). Such literature however often refers to the leadership and management of national school systems. Tangye (2005) indicates that “the day-to-day management of the (international) school is the responsibility of the head assisted by the school senior management team” (p.15). Hodgson and Chuck (2015) write that in international schools “the head of the school is charged with the responsibility... to assure the smooth running of the school, within the school’s stated values and principles” (p.21). Despite the relevant literature on the role of Heads, Blandford and Shaw (2001) suggest there is a “paucity” (p.9) of scholarly research on administrators in international schools. The international school head or administrator is responsible for the development and enactment of organisational strategy and initiatives across the board including the PD of teachers. Teacher PD in international schools is directly influenced by the school administrator (Slough-Kuss 2014). The title of administrator will be used throughout to refer to Heads of School, School Leaders and Principals as Hayden refers to administrators in international schools as “someone who has reached a level of what might be described as a senior management: a deputy head or principal” (2006, p.93).

In order to effectively decide how PD programmes should be implemented, school administrators have a significant role to play (Pedersen et al. 2010). My personal conversations with administrators (Heads and Principals) of international schools, in international conferences indicated varying approaches to PD, suggested the absence of formal processes for potential PD need and participation and showed little awareness about how other international schools approached the subject or about how effective current PD activities in the respective schools are. This study was undertaken in order to determine the view of administrators on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools, with a view to informing the international school sector on this important aspect of their work. This aim is accomplished through firstly, a 25-item

questionnaire sent to a convenience and purposive sample of international school administrators. This questionnaire then served as a basis for more in-depth interviews with 20 administrators selected from the original sample.

1.3. The Research Question and Guiding Questions

To address the gap in literature of administrator views regarding PD in international schools I developed the following research question and guiding questions for this mixed methods sequential explanatory study: “What are the views of administrators on how professional development is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools?”

Consistent with the purpose of this study, I developed the following guiding questions for investigation:

Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?

Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision making process for initiating teacher professional development?

Q3: How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?

Q4: How do administrators in international schools view the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?

To answer the research question and guiding questions I collected data from school administrators in international schools in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. In June of 2015 I conducted a pilot study involving administrators of three international schools (two British schools and one American) in Athens, Greece. Following the pilot study, and once pilot questionnaires were collected, I continued by sending the questionnaire to an additional 200 international school administrators. The PD questionnaire (Appendix C) was used to determine views regarding PD of international school administrators. The questionnaire was used to determine views of administrators

regarding a) the nature of professional development in international schools, b) the decision-making process for initiating professional development, c) a description of the driving force for assessment and evaluation of professional development, and d) the resource allocation process for professional development.

The convenience and purposive sample included geographic location diversity meaning that the sample was comprised of international schools from all continents. I proceeded to conduct two pilot interviews on June 2015 via Skype, followed by 18 semi-structured interviews of international school administrators across all continents via Skype or telephone (in areas where Skype failed to work).

1.4. Contributions of the Study

Although the international school sector is continuously growing, there is little existing research in the area of administrator roles regarding PD decision making. Findings from this study could ignite collegial discussions, inquiry and solution finding, and could influence leadership practices among the existing international school community. School administrators must be aware of PD activities that are effective in teaching and learning. My intent with the findings of this study is to provide international school administrators with information that would allow them to better resource and evaluate PD activities. More importantly, however, with the findings of this study I mean to provide school administrators with information regarding decision-making processes of international schools as they relate to PD and to possibly bridge the gap in the existing literature regarding PD in international schools. Furthermore, the study can be a significant resource for PD programme planners and designers of PD activities.

1.5. Organisation of the Study

This study is organised into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides background information as to how the study came about. It further provides the context of international schools where the study was conducted and briefly touches on the role of administrators in relation to PD

decision making. The Research Question is stated and guiding questions are introduced. Finally, Chapter 1 addresses possible contributions of the study. Chapter 2 presents an extensive review of the scholarly literature of relevance to PD, PD in international schools and school administrator roles in PD decision making. Chapter 3 describes the research design as well as a review of related literature, data collection and processing, and the development and piloting of the survey questionnaire and interview questions. Chapter 4 contains the data analysis and results. Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion of the limitations, implications and conclusions of the study.

1.6. Summary

PD is important in any school sector in order to develop and support best practice in teaching. The importance of PD is stressed by many (Argyriou and Iordanidis 2014; Cameron and Lindqvist 2014; Peng et al. 2014; Hayden 2006; Elmore 2002; Guskey 2000). While most scholars refer to PD in national school systems, it is also recognised that PD in international schools is very important. In this case, however, the relevant literature is scarce (Jules 2014; Reeves 2010; Hayden 2006; Guskey 2000). The current study was undertaken because it is important to know more about how PD in international schools is organised. We are therefore looking at views of administrators regarding PD, which could be useful in informing the international school sector regarding findings and their implications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the relevant literature aims to contribute a deeper understanding of the study's purpose, which is to explore how administrators in international schools view the nature of PD; specifically, the present study purports to research how administrators in international schools plan, implement, evaluate and resource PD activities. The literature sources used, addressing the role of school leadership, PD and international schools, are numerous and have been primarily derived from the education discipline. Additionally, in order to include point of views from empirical and qualitative perspectives that support or challenge the major concepts of the study, peer-reviewed journals, seminal works and books authored by those regarded as experts in the field of educational leadership, PD, leadership theory and international schools have been included.

While the relevant literature for international schools as well as PD respectively is broad, particular attention is paid to widely cited work by Hayden and Thompson (2008, 1998), Hayden (2011, 2006), Bunnell (2014), Reeves (2010), Guskey (2000) and Elmore (2002). Such works provide the context from which various issues emerged and were investigated via the questionnaire (see Appendix C). Appendix G further provided a literature backdrop from which four guiding questions emerged, supporting the overarching question, and were investigated with in-depth interviews via Skype. Thus, in addition, the study will lead to a better understanding of PD needs in international schools as well as how current situations address these needs. The strategy for this literature review will include presenting historical research, a theoretical framework and peer-reviewed research related to the topic of study. The discussion within the literature review will include a critical analysis and synthesis of the literature so as to place the study in context.

2.1. The Context of International Schools

As previously stated, the purpose of this mixed methods sequential explanatory study is to examine the views of administrators in international schools on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced. To achieve a more in-depth understanding of this study's context, this section looks at a selection of the research available on describing and defining the international school context.

Definitions of international schools

Blandford and Shaw (2001) explain that international schools can include a combination of kindergarten, primary, middle and upper grades or may include one of these. Number of students can vary from 20 to 4,500. They can be single sexed or not and the governing body can take many forms, including a board of trustees, CEOs, agencies, owner of the school or headmaster. Moreover, Murphy (1991) asserts that traditionally such schools aim to educate children of the diplomatic corps, international organisations or multinational companies due to the transient nature of the families in each of these. Chesworth and Dawe (2000) agree that such schools were developed for children of varied cultures who move about internationally due to parents' work either with international companies or organisations such as the UN; they also state that teachers in such schools comprise a variety of nationalities and the programmes taught are also international. In an interview pertaining to international schools Blackburn stated: "It is so difficult to define. I put it, I think, that the purpose of international education is to teach our kids how to welcome diversity, not just to tolerate it" (Jonietz and Harris 1991, p.222). Still, there are some in the educational arena who believe that the curriculum in international schools is partial toward promoting European culture among the international elite and might do well to promote 'international mindedness' to national schools by becoming more accessible to children of host countries (Punia 2004). In fact, demand for global education is rising; therefore, international schools are growing exponentially with an indication that such demand will rise "from 2.173 million in 2007 to 3.720 million in 2025" (Bunnell 2014, p.5). In addition, the types of students attending international schools have changed as well, moving from ex-patriot families and 'global nomads' to more local clientele. "It is commonly asserted that 80% of the clientele are local children" (Bunnell 2014, p.7).

While the international school sector has changed significantly since such definitions were provided (Bunnell 2014; Blandford and Shaw 2001; Chesworth and Dawe 2000; Murphy 1991), definitions have been revised but not replaced. For example, my international school includes kindergarten, primary, middle and upper grades, number of students have varied in the last 10 years from 500–850, governance within the last 10 years has transitioned from a board of education to a board of trustees, and the school continues to service ex-patriot families and ‘global nomads’ while local student enrolment is rising. The inevitability, however, of catering to an increasingly local population is becoming a necessity, among other things, to ensure the survival of the school since transient populations are decreasing or vary from one year to another. Pressure from local legislature is contradictory, on the one hand to accept more local students in order to put students at the cutting edge of a very competitive knowledge society, and on the other to abide by local legislature that ultimately can exert more control of what is being taught and by whom.

More recent descriptions of international schools include a synthesis of definitions and characteristics of international schools compiled by Traffon (2003):

“International schools represent a very interesting setting for a study...there are students from up to 50 nationalities attending these schools; therefore encountering cultural difference is normal during the course of the day for these students. They are located in most countries worldwide; ‘a reasonable estimate of the numbers of schools which claim to be international schools could be taken to be in excess of 1000’ (Hayden and Thompson 2000, p. 48). Many offer a K-12 education, usually in English, following a British or United States curriculum.” (Traffon 2003, p.488)

Hayden and Thompson in their 1995 seminal paper indicated that “for the most part, the body of international schools is a conglomeration of individual institutions which may or may not share an underlying educational philosophy” (Hayden and Thompson 1995, p.332). My own experience in the American International School of Athens indicates both similarities and differences in philosophies with other local international schools as well as other schools in the region, therefore corroborating Hayden and Thompson’s original

definition despite the fact that it was provided more than 20 years ago. Additionally, demographics within my international school have changed considerably over the past 20 years with much demand from local population families despite the financial crisis in Greece.

According to Hayden and Thompson (2013), international schools until recently were considered Type A Traditional; non-profit organisations offering education to transient and ex-patriot families and having a diverse population of students. Two other types however, emerged and have been defined by Hayden and Thompson (2013): Type B Ideological, which promotes the idea of world peace, such as the United World College, and Type C Non-Traditional: for profit schools enrolling more local students and catering to the most wealthy. Bunnell et al. (2015) raise questions about the legitimacy of such schools being called international and explain legitimacy to mean an understanding and alignment by the school governance of internal goals with those of external demands such as accreditation bodies. In my own institution, practices assuring accreditation renewal are repeated every seven years. Best practices have recently moved the school toward a higher level accreditation process called “sustaining excellence” (MSA 2015), making the institution a model for other international schools to follow. However, change in local government and amendment of laws for international schools could pose a threat to such legitimacy if the school is asked to abide by local evaluative educational processes that may primarily serve local interests.

Hayden and Thompson (2002) conclude that there is little to no consensus on what defines and constitutes an international school, although according to Hill (2002) the concept of ‘world citizenship’ is fundamental to international education. Hayden and Thompson (2013, 2000) further suggest that we think along the lines of ‘international mindedness’ entailing the values of freedom, intercultural understanding and non-violent conflict resolution. Gellar (2002) indicates that ‘international minded schools’ differ from others in two ways, in curriculum that “emphasizes studies in world history and literature, world cultures” and in ethical practice; the “aim is actively to espouse and uphold certain ‘universal’ values” (p.31). One might then conclude with what Haywood (2001) refers to

as the *visionary ideal* of international schools: It “offers students an experience that will help promote a world view based on cross-cultural understanding, leading toward a holistic view of world affairs and ultimately towards more peaceful collaboration between people and nations” (in Hayden et al. 2002, p.171). While Gellar’s emphasis on curriculum content may distinguish international schools from local schools, the implication that mainly international schools promote ethical practice may raise eyebrows of local education institutions as well as the wider education community. On the other hand, promoting international mindedness in schools where various cultures come together could be the ideal place to put theory into practice toward promoting the UNESCO ideals.

International schools within different countries and national systems may vary in reasons for using this title; such reasons include differences in student population, type of curriculum, marketing approaches, and mission and practices (Hayden 2006; Toole and Louis 2002). As a result of reviewing definitions on international schools as well as my personal experience working in an international school and collaborating with numerous such schools around the world, I find the idea of promoting ‘international mindedness’ and practicing ‘international mindedness’, “living the mission in the daily life of the school” (Ellwood and Davis 2009, p.85), most prevalent and appropriate. I have thus used this as well as the idea that research is lacking on the topic of international schools and the particular educational leadership areas as well as PD (Carter and McNulty 2014; Hallinger and Lee 2012) as a backdrop guiding my questionnaire process.

2.2. Professional Development

PD as a construct is defined as “a comprehensive, sustained and intensive approach to improving teachers’ and principals’ effectiveness in raising student achievement” (Wei 2010, p.4). PD is a process that promotes ongoing learning and ongoing implementation of knowledge and skills (Guskey 2003b, 2000; Darling-Hammond 1997; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). PD associated with effective teaching includes “principles that describe effective teaching for students in classrooms [and] should not differ for adults in general and teachers in particular” (Rueda 1998, p.1). Quality PD should be comprised of

activities that effect teachers' knowledge and skills, lead to best practices and produce teachers capable of creating change within the classroom practice. Such activities are comprised of the following three components: content knowledge, opportunities for active learning and coherence with other learning activities (Garet et al. 2001; Hirsch et al. 2001). Teacher input with an emphasis on critical reflection, meaningful collaboration, internal coherence, rigor and sustainability (Sparks and Hirsch 1997; Renyi 1996; Little 1993) has led to effective PD and has allowed such work to be incorporated within the daily work of teachers (Garet et al. 2001; Darling-Hammond 1997, 1996; Elmore et al. 1996; Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995).

When teacher needs are addressed through PD, effective learning can take place. In order for this learning to be successful and sustainable, it is essential that the adult learner be involved in the learning process as well as the planning and implementation of learning activities (Tennant and Pogson 1995). The obligatory and often pre-packaged PD activities for teachers are inconsistent with and ignore much of the educational knowledge base related to current perspectives on PD in K-12 schools (Bredeson 2002; Van Driel et al. 2000). Such predetermined and customary programmes of PD do not allow for programmes that engage teachers in personally matched learning or for collaboration with peer learners on pertinent work (Elmore 1995; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1990).

What constitutes effective, quality PD and is consistent with the theoretical framework of adult learning theory is support for continuous, quality training and interventions that treat teachers as lifelong learners rather than simply grouping teachers with colleagues and then naming these *learning communities* (Correa Bernardo and Almonte-Acosta 2014; Reeves 2010; Roberts and Pruitt 2009; DuFour 2004; Villegas-Reimers 2003; Hiebert et al. 2002; Holderness 2002; Richards 2002; Hord 1998). Effective professional development is defined by Wei and Darling-Hammond (2009) as development that enhances teacher knowledge and teaching skills, which improve learning outcomes for students. Furthermore, standards for effective professional development adopted by the National Staff Development Council, USA, include criteria under the three following categories: Context Standards, Process Standards and Content Standards. Context Standards include

Learning Communities, gifted leaders and resources. Process Standards include data driven processes, evaluation processes, and training teachers for research, design and understating learning theories as well as collaboration skills. Content Standards include providing an equitable learning environment for all students, providing quality teaching and developing the skills to involve other stakeholders such as families (Wei & Darling-Hammond 2009). On the other hand Desimone (2002, p82), indicates that while the relevant literature highlights numerous characteristics on what constitutes effective professional development “there is little direct evidence on the extent to which these characteristics are related to better teaching and increased student learning”. Still, Sparks (2002, p. 2-1) argues that “low expectations of student achievements and poor quality professional development go hand in hand”. While criteria, as stated above, for what is considered effective PD, is outlined in the literature, understanding individual teacher needs as well as school wide needs is most important. Providing the context within which teachers can be supported with resources, time and feedback in order to learn needed skills and address gaps in learning is vital. Additionally, it is important not to assume that teachers understand research design, assessment and data driven processes but rather to provide appropriate training of such processes. As well, ensuring that teachers understand learning differences and are well versed in addressing these in order to provide a levelling field for student learning is crucial. All of the above imply that PD is an ongoing process but also touches on the need for PD to be effectively assessed so as to determine the relationship of PD to teaching and learning. In my view, PD is effective when teachers are asked to delve into a journey of growth and discovery, connecting and identifying with a learning process every moment where bonding between content and concept takes place and change is a natural next step to facilitate the best academic results for students. Building effective PD is a process that develops over time and requires creating both formal and informal support systems, collaborative opportunities and partnerships. Such processes and support systems ensure sustainability of learned PD content knowledge and best practice activities. These types of supportive environments involve the implementation of change in how teachers spend their time and how they work together (Roberts and Pruitt 2009; Borthwick et al. 2004; Astuto et al. 1993). Essential to this process is the creation of an environment that fosters learning. Within such an

environment, teachers and learners demonstrate trust and mutual respect. While leadership of learning activities belongs to the teachers, in the case of adult learners, roles may become interchangeable, because everyone involved in the classroom can both receive knowledge and contribute to knowledge (Draper 1992). Additionally, adult learners benefit most from small group work that encourages collaborative activities, teamwork and cooperation (Murphy and Lick 1998; Bruner 1996; Draper 1992). Further, in my experience, regular small group peer meetings where teachers develop cohesion and trust over time can allow teachers to share classroom challenges without fear of criticism. On the other hand, such group sessions can become forums of complaining and expressing negative experiences if they are not goal and solution oriented. Having said that, it is important to note that while standards exist in USA settings and continuous training and development has been deemed vital for best teaching practices (European Council 2004, 2006), such conclusions derive primarily from national settings. Given the complexity and demanding character of international schools, one cannot help but wonder if such characteristics are generalisable to international school settings and if so which schools, given the lack of consensus of what constitutes an international school and given the debate regarding international school 'legitimacy' (Bunnel, Fertig and James, 2015). Firstly, the challenges of international schools lie in the fact that they are imbedded within diverse cultures and subject to local influence as much as driven by the school mission. Secondly, the diversity of international schools makes it impossible to suggest common standards and characteristics across the gamut. A study conducted to understand principal leadership in relation to professional development in Ontario, Canada Schools indicates that despite provincial pressure to improve test scores, administrators emphasized the importance that professional development be relevant to the specific school and student needs (Hardy, 2010). Perhaps understanding the context, needs and practices of international schools inherently implies a case-by-case study of specific and individual school needs within the particular context. No doubt, the existing literature gap must be bridged if we are to understand such needs and develop relevant best practice guidelines.

PD is vital to preserve the necessary knowledge, skills and morale of a successful teacher. Such development, according to Diaz-Maggioli (2004), is a career-long process during which teachers can fine-tune their skills to meet student needs. Furthermore, PD can

provide educators with the chance to expand their knowledge, skills, approaches and dispositions so that there is improvement in job effectiveness (Owen and Skinner 2004). School districts in the USA public school systems have assumed the responsibility over the years of offering opportunities for teachers to learn new skills (Guskey 2000; Shields et al. 1999). Guskey (2000) concluded that the traditional practice of school districts in which short-term sessions or workshops are presented by an expert cannot adequately prepare teachers to use specific skills. Guskey's contention is supported by Joyce and Showers (1988) and Speck and Knipe (2001). Thus, PD activities seem futile if they are short, one-time events. It seems that in order to ensure sustainable and transferable skills into the classroom, long-term activities are necessary where teachers are called to challenge current practice and are supported over time to improve their teaching practice. Furthermore, Stigler and Hiebert (1999) state that "teaching is not just a skill, but a complex cultural activity" (p.103). Learning a skill in one context does not necessarily mean that it will transfer into another context (Perkins 1995). Vital in the process is the support to practice the skill learned if it is to transfer within the classroom (Joyce and Showers 1981). While research within national systems is important for understanding the needs and efficacy of PD, generalising such findings to international school settings would be inappropriate.

Waite (2009) produced a survey on international teacher PD needs that was given to 157 teachers globally. The study indicated that while teachers in international schools seemed to be adequately prepared for classroom instruction, the need for continuous PD was still a significant one. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Dellinger-Holton (2012), teachers coming from Greece and transitioning to the USA overwhelmingly supported the need for more PD learning activities addressing effective teaching and learning in an international school environment (Elmore 2002; Hayden et al. 2002). Nevertheless, research considering the ongoing needs of teachers regarding PD continues to be scarce.

PD is available to international school teachers and administrators and offered by organisations such as the Association for Advancement of International Education (AAIE), the European Council for International Schools (ECIS) and the Principals Training Center (PTC) for those aspiring to be administrators (Hayden 2006). Such training courses can

ultimately lead to organisational in-house certifications or in some cases counting educational credits towards professional licensing and certification (Fezler and Brown 2011). An important aspect of schools belonging to such organisations and attending their PD events is the informal social networking that takes place at such meetings. Such support has been reported by teachers and is shown in research as being immensely supportive and beneficial in breaking teacher and administrator isolation (Hayden 2006). Furthermore, as Carter and McNulty (2014) state:

“Specialised professional development is necessary because the international school setting is perceived as a more complex and demanding environment for teachers, academically, socially, emotionally, and psychologically, due to the cultural context and the high degree of mobility inherent in international communities.” (p.12)

An important part of PD is the promotion of on-site, on-the-job growth through “individual and group activity that includes independent study regarding PD, action research, study groups, peer coaching, journaling, computer applications, and training” (Carolina Professional Development Committee 2003, p.2). Continuing education for teachers and administrators also constitutes PD, and according to the standards of The National Staff Development Council (NSDC), USA, the purpose of PD should be student achievement and improvement. Successful results that become visible in classroom practice as well as student performance indicate a quality PD. Thus, while we witness an increase in staff development that aids in increasing teacher content knowledge and increases knowledge of effective pedagogy, teachers do not necessarily use this knowledge to improve classroom curricula and improve student outcomes unless there is continuous, integrated professional learning (Ball et al. 2009; Gallimore et al. 2009; Hiebert and Morris 2009; Jansen et al. 2009; Morris and Hiebert 2009; National Staff Development Council 2009). While most such data refer to the USA public school system, survey data in my own international school, as part of the evaluative process of PD activity, indicate that continuous integrated PD seems both more desirable and more effective in implementing best practice. In fact, an Action Research project promoting in house continuous and

sustainable PD has been reported by teachers as being the most effective type of PD in the last ten years in the international school where I work. This positive outcome was mostly due to the fact that teachers were asked to identify best practice approaches through research while also, identifying their own ‘gaps’ in teaching leading to the implementation of best practice researched. Through self-reflection as well as peer feedback, teachers were able to focus on improving practice based on personal insights gained without fear of administrator criticism when teaching weaknesses were identified.

Change in the mindset of effective PD for teachers is necessary in order to make it a seamless part of daily practice (Johnson et al. 2002; Darling-Hammond 2000; Fullan 1999). Such change involves altering how time is used throughout the school year and beyond, so that there is a sustainable network with fellow practitioners and the venue to conduct and review research, talk with colleagues and experts, learn about new educational trends and time to create plans for improvement (Schlager and Fusco 2004; Sparks 2002; Sparks and Hirsh 2000). Retaining and supporting new teachers must be part of the strategic plan for improvement, because this has direct implications for teachers, students, parents, veteran teachers, administrators, teacher educators, policymakers and taxpayers (Russo 2004; O’Laughlin 2001). Retaining new teachers creates a stable and effective learning environment, spreads the burden of responsibility among new and veteran teachers alike, and ensures effective use of the money and time that is spent on recruiting, hiring and training new people (DePaul 2000). Additionally, retaining teachers allows for long-term planning, curriculum revision and targeted school funding; however, this type of reform is not always possible in high turnover schools (Halford 1999). In my international school, efforts to assess individual and school needs have led to creating multiple opportunities for PD. According to teacher reports such opportunities have supported teacher desires to remain in the school and country longer because when professional needs are met, teachers are able to devote more time and energy to transitioning to a new country and culture. It seems that when continuous and targeted support is provided for best practice, teachers experience less anxiety about living abroad, thus affecting retention rates.

2.2.1. A constructivist learning theory as applied to professional development

Constructivist learning theory refers to learning as a self-monitored procedure usually taking place when teachers interact with colleagues in an organised environment where there is room for reflection. In this way, new information is integrated into existing knowledge and meaning is made (Fosnot and Perry 2005). Constructivist theory in relation to PD implies that new information cannot simply be transferred to teachers in single-day workshops; instead, teachers must create their own meaning through contextually meaningful learning activities (Sturko and Gregson 2009). My own experience, having co-organised a school-wide action research endeavour where each teacher, counsellor and learning specialist in my school is involved in conducting action research, is that, identifying a question or challenge in their particular learning environment, reviewing the literature on best practice, implementing new knowledge, and engaging in regular group meetings to share, receive and provide feedback seems to have thoroughly engaged teachers in their own learning and to have brought about a new sense of excitement about teaching. As this is a pilot programme in its first year of implementation, there are numerous issues to iron out, such as assisting teachers to understand how to conduct literature reviews, providing supervision so that they are thorough in their action research process as well as devising evaluation procedures. However, teachers report that their level of engagement with current best practice approaches is noteworthy and further report the use of new learning methods in the classroom. This continued momentum is being maintained, according to the majority of teachers, because of the peer support and encouragement. Whether such current processes can be effective or feasible in other international schools is open to investigation.

Research conducted in the 1990s on learning organisations identified elements that are today embedded in PD (Darling-Hammond 1993; Senge 1990). One definition of learning organisations is an institution where people, on a path of continuous improvement, systematically strengthen their competency skills to bring about desired results (Senge 1990). These organisations allow people to keep on “learning how to learn together” (Senge 1990, p.1). In the same vein, and given that more can be accomplished in a collective manner (Fullan 2005), one prerequisite for their success is individuals further

developing their capacities through interaction with the external environment—e.g., published resources, other educators and students (Servage 2008; Fullan 1993).

In traditional PD, characterised by an individualistic approach, the focus was on results of targeted actions and institutions run as bureaucracies following procedures that delivered standard products (i.e., students) (Darling-Hammond 1993). The top-down approach of the late 1980s and early 1990s meant principals mostly led and teachers implemented (Isaacson and Bamburg 1992). The scholarly community signalled a need to transform the way in which PD was delivered and received in learning organisations. That is, a change from an individualistic approach to the system's design and direction (most often driven by the principal) to one that develops capacity—i.e., a constructivist approach (Darling-Hammond 1993). Introducing the idea of collaboration, Darling-Hammond (1993) underlined the importance of the constructivist approach and an organisation's investment in the educational system's human capital. Similarly, Hargreaves (1994) highlighted the shift in new professionalism towards an emphasis on enhanced relationships with colleagues, students and parents rather than a system supporting teachers' autonomy and authority. The inclusion of collaboration underlies current methods of constructivist PD (Lujan and Day 2010).

2.2.2. National and international support for professional development

In 1995, the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) in the USA published the first set of standards for PD. Revised in 2001 and 2011, this framework was based on theorists' ideas regarding a constructivist approach (National Staff Development Council 1995). The standards cover learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation and outcomes, and aim to “improve educator practice and student results” (Learning Forward 2011, p.6). Targeting relevant, interactive and sustained educator learning (Learning Forward 2011), the standards identified elements of PD regarded by researchers as best practice. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993), for example, noted that one descriptor of a collaborative professional learning community (PLC) was teachers' reports of a shift in professionalism in relation to students.

The NSDC (1995) stated that “staff development that improves the learning of all students provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate” (p.2). A key feature in the PD standards, this focus on collaboration was identified as essential for PLCs. It is still embedded in PLC models that are currently being employed (Erkens and Twadell 2012; Hirsh and Hord 2008). Over the past two decades a large body of research underscored the need for constructivist, job-embedded approaches to PD (see, for example, Hord 2009; Darling-Hammond 2004; Fullan 1995).

In Europe, as well, the Council Resolution (European Council 2002) regarding lifelong learning asked Member States to assist teachers in acquiring the skills necessary for effective teaching by improving their education and training. A report produced jointly by the Council and Commission (European Council 2004) regarding developments on the Lisbon objectives for preparing educators initiated the development of common European principles as to the types of qualifications and skills teachers would need in order to meet the demands of the knowledge society. Further, both Council and Commission developed the ‘Education & Training 2010’ programme stressing it is vital to train teachers and support educational leaders as well as educational institutions in order to improve education. The Council and Member States concluded that continuous PD is important to support both teachers and educational leaders in attaining successful learning outcomes (European Council 2006). Further, discussions emphasised that there must be European cooperation to support continuous PD so as to produce the most qualified teachers (European Council 2009).

2.2.3. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley’s models of professional development

Within an organisational context, administrators, principals and teacher leaders have a catalytic influence on school culture and the quality of PD (Harwell 2002; Sparks 1996). In their seminal scholarly work, still used in USA public school systems today, Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) examined five effective models of PD (in their seminal paper, the term “staff development” was used).

These five models of PD focused on the areas of PD as individually guided, observation and assessment, a process model for development and improvement, a training model and an inquiry/action research model. Using an individually guided approach to PD permits the individual to establish objectives to fulfil their learning needs. However, not only did the research show that this kind of PD is expensive, it also assumes that individual teachers know their own learning needs. The authors found observation and assessment a prominent second model of PD. Observation and assessment advance the use of personalised feedback for teachers. The third PD model featured teacher collaboration in the development and improvement process. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) found that when teachers worked together to create or improve curriculum, the collaboration resulted in more informed teaching strategies, deeper content knowledge in practice and teachers becoming expert teachers for their colleagues. The fourth model is based on bringing an outside trainer into the school to provide training. I find that although cost effective due to the high teacher to trainer ratio, many educational consultants provide training sessions that are not tailored to specific teacher needs. The fifth model of PD presented is the inquiry/action research model. In this model, teachers are encouraged to experiment with PD through the methodology associated with action research, supported by peer coaching and study groups. Dewey (1998) first wrote that teachers needed to engage in reflective action in teaching. In his writings on paradigms of teacher education, Zeichner (1983) cites three decades of research identifying *teachers as action researchers*. Lieberman (1986) presented a similar process whereby teachers developed teams to solve problems across the school rather than only in the classroom. As a result of working together to create a PD methodology, teachers and administrators could address school-wide, organisational problems collaboratively (Sparks and Simmons 1989; Stallings and Mohlman 1981; McLaughlin and Marsh 1978).

This Inquiry-based professional development model abides by the notion that teachers have the intelligence, expertise, experience and ability to ask questions about their work and methods, that they can identify and collect related information and that they can be reflective on such information leading them to find the solutions needed (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). As teachers ask questions associated with their

teaching quandaries, teachers will arrive at new understandings, accrue new knowledge, and attain meaningful solutions. Thus, the inquiry model of professional development presupposes that teachers actively take part in formulating their problems/quandaries/challenges while searching for appropriate solutions (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). The inquiry model provides teachers with more control over the type of knowledge and skill they gather because the choice is consistent with their own values and needs. The model's main point is that

“...the most effective avenue for professional development is inquiry by the teachers themselves into problems and issues arising from their attempts to make their practice consistent with their educational values...the approach aims to give greater control over what are to count as valid educational model to teachers”.

- Ingvarson, 1987, p. 15, 17

Indeed, the Action research model implemented in my international school has thus far allowed teachers, through their collaborative problem solving and reflective practice, to address academic curricula issues as well as issues in delivery methodology, effectively with little need to consult an administrator.

2.2.4. Recent professional development models

New models supporting teacher learning and skills acquired from PD activities have arisen in the last 10 years and have also created ground for collaborative learning. This shift toward collaborative learning as a PD approach emphasises group work with shared responsibility and commitment (Garmston 2012; Reeves 2010). Moving away from conventional training approaches, DuFour et al. (2006) and Hord and Sommers (2008) gave credence to the idea of PLCs. The concept of PLCs moved teachers away from traditional training models allowing them to learn collaboratively, share expertise, and align learning and expertise with a common vision, values and learning (Hord and Sommers 2008; Hord 2007; DuFour et al. 2006). By distributing leadership, focusing on developing relationships and improving school climate for optimal learning, school leaders provided the best possible assistance (DuFour et al. 2006; Drago-Severson 2004). I find the distribution of such leadership essential as teachers can be the foremost best judges of individual needs, strengths and weaknesses. In collaboration with school administrators

(also referred to as school leaders in the literature), who can objectively observe and evaluate best practice, teachers can be assisted to align individual skill-building goals with school-wide goals and to seek appropriate PD experiences.

2.2.5. Models for mentoring

Guskey (2003b), Drago-Severson (2009), and Joyce and Showers (2002) found that PD models are enhanced by mentoring. The mentoring model can be addressed as an addition to Sparks and Loucks-Horsley's (1989) five models of staff development. Guskey (2000) notes that mentoring has mutual, individualised benefits for both administrators and teachers. A strong, mutually beneficial relationship is a desirable foundation for long-term teacher professional growth and learning (Guskey 2003b, 2000). In turn, teacher mentoring and support among teachers via PD can be a form of continuous, sustainable PD that can be linked to student achievement (DuFour and Marzano 2009; DuFour et al. 2006; Bredeson and Johansson 2000). Teacher mentoring, I find, can be non-threatening, allowing teachers to 'let their guard down' and to be more receptive to constructive feedback. On the other hand, lack of confidence in teaching, being new to teaching or veteran teachers can become intimidated by mentor teachers, thus refraining from sharing personal classroom challenges and frustrations. Making time for support and creating possibilities for immediate feedback that address concerns or questions stimulates teacher progress, teacher learning and modelling, leading to successful teaching experiences for both students and teachers (Brown 2008).

2.2.6. Collaboration on professional development between teachers and administrators

Central to collaborative learning through teacher PD is the implementation of new knowledge and strategies (Harwell 2003; Joyce and Showers 2002; Scribner 1999; Corcoran 1995). Elmore (2002) encourages the development of group work and networks within and among schools as opposed to individual learning, because he believes that better learning takes place within group settings where teachers have the opportunity to struggle with problems, brainstorm, give and receive feedback in order to arrive at a solution. The collaborative engagement of administrators is essential as decisions regarding time and

money in relation to PD activities are in their hands (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Elmore 2002).

The variables considered in teacher and administrator attitudes regarding PD can be easily operationalised, assessed and modified for best practices and can be adapted to numerous school cultures and settings. Such processes can then lead to the question of how the results can be used within the school structure and how they can be connected to overall school improvement. To meet this goal, administrative policies and practice must align with those of teachers in order for PD activities to align themselves with teaching goals and student achievement (Elmore 2002). The challenge of developing agreement between teachers and administrators on support of PD requires a change in a school's culture by developing an internal structure so that teachers and administrators reach consensus on what is best practice for student teaching and learning (Newmann et al. 2000). Administrators must become actively engaged in supporting this new cultural mindset and letting go of control over teacher learning (Elmore 2002; Abelman and Elmore 1999; Little 1993). Such a shift in mindset can be particularly challenging for international schools that are for profit or those schools with mainly tuition-based budgets, I suppose, as PD activities may be seen as superfluous and not using teacher capital optimally.

Building on the works of Elmore (2002, 1999) and in research conducted in schools in diverse settings, Ancess (2003) highlighted seven proposed school policies to impact student achievement:

1. written processes for incentivising teacher inquiry,
2. delineating opportunities for teacher inquiry,
3. supporting teachers' abilities for leadership in inquiry and innovation,
4. respecting teacher authority,
5. devising a non-rigid school schedule,
6. outlining ways to access supportive and responsive administration, and
7. clear communication of resources, time and flexibility in regulation.

Action research opportunities for teachers can produce local knowledge, which in turn creates a felt need to work as an organisational team to solve local problems within individual school contexts (Hiebert et al. 2002). Thus, feedback from their own inquiry-based PD activities can lead to changes in a school that may have a direct influence on students' learning and achievement (Ancess 2003; Lytle and Cochran-Smith 1994). Inquiry-centred staff development must build on what people in the local setting—both teacher and administrator—collectively believe is an effective adult learning model to improve student outcomes (Lytle et al. 2001).

Teachers' views of traditional PD may indicate an imposed change rather than change in which they are involved (Lieberman 1996, 1995). Therefore, PD that inspires and prepares teachers to initiate activities, which will support and enhance the curriculum with appropriate tools irrespective of delivery format, is a challenging task. Certainly, the use of technology-based tools should have a main goal: quality teaching for the advancement of student learning (Rossiter and Bagdon 1999; Cooper and Bull 1997; Roach et al. 1996). Other possible outcomes that result from quality PD are a positive school culture, improved teacher skills and multiple opportunities for peer learning. Teacher agreement as to how to approach classroom challenges as well as support and resources to tackle challenges can also be provided through collaborative processes. For this reason and for successful learning to take place, it is imperative to involve teachers in the planning and implementation of learning activities (Guarino et al. 2004).

Administrators, however, tend to lean on traditional models of PD that tend to not be wholly collaborative in nature. In doing so, administrators are apt to incite competition among teachers rather than collaboration. This can result in fierce competition among individuals, unwarranted organisational stress and feelings of isolation among teachers (Powell 2013; Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Hawley and Valli 1999). These tactics are more aligned with de-motivating effects and less with an effective managerial approach to school education (Tang and Choi 2009). In such situations, administrators may function in an authoritarian leadership style in order to maintain control over school staff. The result is often a devaluing of teacher knowledge as an integral part of PD. Teachers must have

greater control and be the chief decision makers over PD activities that enhance evidence-based classroom practice (Darling-Hammond et al. 2009). I find that entrusting and empowering teachers to assess their own PD needs may contribute to teachers feeling valued and willing to take risks in being more creative in the classroom. On the other hand, administrators often have the big picture of school-wide needs in mind and may need to make budgetary decisions in favour of a particular PD activity one year as opposed to another; for example, to enhance the math curriculum and improve test scores, a math specialist may be brought into the school to work with all math teachers, the cost of which may not allow other PD activities to take place. Nonetheless, collaboration between administrators and teachers for PD goals seems essential in order to sustain best practice.

2.3. Educational Leadership

“In many international schools an administrator is someone who has reached a level of what might be described as senior management: a deputy head or principal for instance” (Hayden 2006, p.93). For the purposes of this study, I use the word administrators to refer to heads of school or principals of international schools, noting that in the literature such administrators are also referred to as school leaders, educational leaders and instructional leaders, the latter mainly in the USA literature.

The complexity of international schools as well as international school leadership has been well documented (Hayden 2006; Stirzaker 2004; Joslin 2002; Blandford and Shaw 2001). Teachers in international schools have reported that one area of potential conflict in decision making with administrators is that of teacher PD (Furlong et al. 2013; Powell 2013). There appears to be limited research, however, in the area of PD as it relates to international schools (Dellinger-Holton 2012; Waite 2009). This limitation does not allow for a clear understanding of the nature of the PD process led by administrators in international schools. As per Wagner et al. (2006), “most efforts to improve education have at their core a focus on professional development as a way to build competency” (p.99). In order, however, to help teachers understand the significance of transferring

knowledge and skills gained via PD activities, research suggests that leadership support plays a vital role (Baldwin and Ford 2009; Broad and Newstrom 1992).

To effectively facilitate the implementation of PD learning in the classroom, administrators must clearly understand their role as leaders of instructional change as it relates to the PD process (DuFour and Marzano 2011; Berkey and DuFour 1995). Indeed, according to the elementary and secondary school literature, mainly in the USA, administrators, as school leaders, are considered essential in initiating and navigating change in schools (Zepeda 2013b; Yager et al. 2012; Glickman et al. 2009; Glanz 2005). Thus, while ample research advocates active support, assistance and follow-up by administrators in facilitating change (Fullan 2011, 2007; Ingvarson and MacKenzie 1988), questions exist regarding the role of administrators in teacher learning (Joyce and Calhoun 2012; Sparks 2007, 2003; Guskey 2000; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). There remains a gap in the literature on how administrators impact teacher PD in international schools which the research question addresses.

PD ultimately aims to expand teacher knowledge, assist in acquiring new knowledge and to transfer knowledge into the classroom (Fullan 2007; Joyce and Showers 2002). However, structures must be in place in order for administrators to support teachers in implementation, thus avoiding negative responses toward PD and ensuring its ongoing implementation (Yates 2010; Printy 2008). Tallerico (2005) noted that “without follow-up and support over time, targeted skills and strategies simply will not be transferred into routine and successful use in classrooms” (p.46). In fact, I find that follow-up to determine effectiveness of PD activities is a major weakness in international schools where my experience lies.

The role of the school leader plays a pivotal role in how PD is delivered in various school systems (Zepeda 2013b; Tallerico 2005; Guskey 2003b, 2000; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). Broad and Newstrom (1992) insist that school leaders must support the acquisition of new skills within the school. It is important for PD to be focused and closely related to curriculum, educational needs and ongoing growth in order for instruction as well as

student achievement to improve. These professional activities are available or can be designed; it is transference to the classroom that becomes challenging (Glickman et al. 2009; Hargreaves 2007; Joyce and Showers 2002).

It is also becoming increasingly challenging for teachers to increase student achievement in order to best prepare students for competitive higher education and the work force beyond (Wagner 2010) without PD. Feiman-Nemser (2001) writes:

“What students learn depends on what and how teachers teach; and what and how teachers teach depends on the knowledge, skills and commitments they bring to their teaching and the opportunities they have to continue learning in and from their practice.” (p.1015)

And yet, there is no clear understanding of how administrators support teachers’ PD within the classroom (Holland 2009; Battey 2008). What seems necessary is for teachers to trust administrators regarding PD decisions and learning (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis 2015).

Educators in primary and secondary schools, who acquire learning, find it difficult to implement this acquired knowledge back into the school (Reeves 2010; Wagner 2010, 2006; Guskey 2000), once again supporting the need for administrators to provide ongoing sustenance processes in order to ensure that there is an ongoing use of knowledge and skills in the classroom (Guskey 2007; Fullan 2002). Attempts to foster teacher PD are often frustrating for administrators (Hardy 2010; Printy 2008; Holland 2001). Although there is research on PD and instructional leadership (Darling-Hammond 2009, 1997; Hord 2008; Fullan 2007; Roy and Hord 2007; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989), it is difficult to define the role of administrators in supporting teachers toward implementation (Glickman et al. 2009; Holland 2009). Holland (2009) indicated “...while the principal’s role as instructional leader included attention to and support of teacher’s professional development, the literature was sparse on what principals should actually do to support this development” (p.1).

There is limited research regarding the obstacles to successful PD support and follow-up (Holland 2009; Ingvarson and MacKenzie 1988). In order for true change to take place within the classroom, there must be a clear understanding of how the use of knowledge and skills could be guided and supported (Guskey and Yoon 2009; Hargreaves 2009). Since there is a constant reference in the literature regarding the relationship between teacher PD knowledge and student outcomes (Reeves 2010; Killion 2008), particular attention must be given to how administrators can successfully influence teacher performance and transference of new skills and knowledge obtained (Sebastion and Allensworth 2012).

2.3.1. Educational leadership theories

Recent literature in the field of leadership and educational leadership theory by experts such as Fullan (2010), Northouse (2013) and Bush (2011) were used for this study. Such works aided in conceptualising leadership theory and practice. Despite the numerous theories and varied opinions on educational leadership theory, there does not seem to be one best definition. Therefore, a combination of historical and contemporary research including the works of these three scholarly experts in the field of leadership theory and change was used. Such research provided a framework conceptualising leadership. A context within which the study took shape is described below.

The origins of leadership theory lie in organisational theory (Bush 2011), which is primarily used for understanding; leadership theory more practically pertains to practice. Bush (2011) contends that leadership theory has the following three characteristics: 1) theories tend to be normative (as opposed to descriptive) in that they reflect beliefs about the nature of educational institutions and the behaviour of individuals within them; (2) theories tend to be selective in that only certain aspects of the phenomenon are emphasised; (3) theories of educational leadership are often based on or supported by observation of practice (Bush 2011).

Educational leadership theory also contends that unless education is linked to practice it lacks relevance (Northouse 2013; Bush 2011; Fullan 2010). A review of the literature on the description of leaders and approaches to leadership suggests that scholars interpret

leadership in numerous ways (Northouse 2011). However, even after years of research and scholarly debates on the evolution of leadership, there is still no common definition of leadership (Northouse 2013). Likewise, there are differing points of view on leadership and management, but as illustrated by Bush (2011), some schools closely associate the two. Kotter (2008), however, clearly distinguishes between leaders, defined as those who produce “change and movement”, and managers, defined as those who produce “order and consistency” (p.4). Kotter believes that both are necessary in an organisation.

The work of Bredeson and Johansson (2000) indicates that leaders must be proficient in both leading and managing as they construct ways in which to influence PD. Opposing this view, Fullan (2010) finds that managers are disconnected from the work and consider themselves to be above others. For the purposes of this study, however, the work of Northouse (2013) on educational leadership is adopted: “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p.3). Northouse’s ideas linking theory and practice correspond to this study’s focus on administrator’s roles in influencing teachers and their practice; in particular how new learning is applied in the classroom or learning environment. Northouse’s definition of leadership was chosen for the current study primarily because of the emphasis on ‘process’ which involves a group of people working toward a goal. Northouse in describing the idea of leadership provides four components that he refers to as “central components to the phenomenon” (p.1):

- 1) **Leadership is a process** – principals were asked how they know when their efforts to support teacher transfer of learning are working over a period of time;
- 2) **Leadership involves influence** – the research indicated that leaders are key in influencing what goes on in their schools;
- 3) **Leadership occurs in groups** – recent research on communities of learning indicated the role of the principal influencing a collaborative learning culture;
- 4) **Leadership involves common goals** – the common goal evolved from teacher transfer of knowledge and skills, potentially resulting in raising levels of student learning that directly impact school improvement.

Two parts stand out for me in Northouse's definition: the first is "influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal", influence being essential, as opposed to directive, in order to have 'buy-in' by teachers toward a common goal. The second has to do with the word "process" as without process, sustainability is volatile and influence can be perceived as manipulative toward accomplishing a particular agenda. Bush and Glover (2010) stated "... instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and in behaviours of teachers in working with students. Leaders' influence is targeted at student learning via teachers" (p.24). However, the way this is accomplished can make the difference in degree of cooperation between teachers and administrators as well as among teachers for a smoother transition to best practice processes.

According to Fullan (2010), it is very important for leaders interested in improving the organisation and navigating change to be active learners themselves. Fullan further states that leaders must base practice on learning in order to be successful leaders. Theory, therefore, must develop from practice. Thus a shift in understanding school development is necessary according to Bredeson & Johansson (2000 p.153); to get a clear view of what entails a successful administrator we must shift 'to a more collaborative understanding from leader toward leadership'. It is extremely important to explore personal practices first, before looking at the laboratories of others in comparable situations and discovering, perhaps, something novel in their work that will contribute to the development of theory. While I find that school administrators engage in their own PD to support leadership approaches and school management, engaging in PD that involves collaboration with teachers about best practice in teaching seems inconsistent or altogether lacking. Such collaboration can lead to better understanding of their school and their teachers so as to enhance the school climate and sustain best practice on both sides.

2.3.2. School leaders and the implementation of professional development

In order to effectively decide how PD programmes should be implemented, administrators have a significant role to play (Pedersen et al. 2010). Administrators must be in a position to lead ongoing school improvement programmes and best practices, particularly in light of the fact that there is great emphasis on results-based instructional practice. School

administrators must ensure that schools stay abreast of best practices in education and that these are closely linked to accreditation (Tallerico 2012). It is clear that administrator roles as they relate to PD are closely linked to the research (Yager et al. 2012, 2011), a belief strongly recognised by Bredeson and Johansson (2000). Bredeson and Johansson studied leadership roles in relation to PD and indicated that school administrators have considerable influence on teacher learning in four areas: (1) the principal as an instructional leader; (2) the creation of a learning environment; (3) direct involvement in the design, delivery and content of PD; and (4) the assessment of PD outcomes.

The Principal as an Instructional Leader. According to Bredeson and Johansson (2000), there are four areas through which administrators can influence teacher learning as (1) stewards, (2) models, (3) experts and (4) instructional leaders. School administrators as stewards understand that PD has an impact on student achievement. Stewards make certain that this value is successfully communicated to stakeholders while ensuring that both students and teachers are ethically treated. Teacher learning can then be highly influenced, because administrators are seen as learners and behaviour is modelled. Ensuring, however, that all stakeholders understand the importance of PD can be a daunting task in my experience as often school boards, without first-hand knowledge of needs or best practice, can exert pressure on the administrator to allocate funding in more obvious areas such as facilities or sponsoring athletic events.

In contrast to administrators seen as learners, traditional methods used by administrators can be catalysts for negative modelling as teachers learn without the advantage of seeing administrators as learners, thus limiting professional engagement. Striking a balance is important and gives credibility to the idea that “principals as learners have significant influence on the attitudes and behaviors of teachers as learners” (Bredeson 2000, p.392). Zepeda (2013b) understands the role of a school leader to be one of strategic responsibility, and within this responsibility is the necessity to follow through so as to improve teaching and create change in the classroom. Additionally, in order to make an impact on teacher achievement and learning, it is imperative to provide feedback, as well as be a coach and model. Finally, “as instructional leaders principals [also] need to be willing to confront

problems and help teachers deal with the contradictions that inevitably accompany teacher professional development and school change” (Bredeson 2000, p.393).

The Creation of a Learning Environment. Administrators can support PD endeavours in many forms (Dickson and Mitchell 2014). Encouraging, for example, teachers to try new teaching methods and to risk possible failure in the process can support teachers to be increasingly creative and innovative in their teaching (Barth 2006). Furthermore, encouraging teachers to stretch beyond safety limits by offering knowledge and expertise as well as emotional support, personal insights and opportunities to problem solve can promote inquiry and provide teachers with the courage to take risks beyond their safety zone (Elmore 2000). Equally as important is making available a safe place where discussions about PD can take place. In this way, school leaders take a variety of roles: managers, supporters, and encouragers of a learning environment with growth-enhancing processes and learning opportunities (Cranston 2009). Without doubt school leaders take on managerial roles (Bredeson and Johansson 2000), which are enacted in classroom visits, for example, and can be very helpful in the development of supportive learning environments (Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). In this sense, classroom visits are also a leadership responsibility in addition to a managerial task. Managerial tasks include such things as “recruiting teachers, coordinating professional development, scheduling time” (Bredeson and Johansson 2000, p.391).

Collaborative school leadership establishes a culture of support that builds collaboration and teamwork among the staff who in turn work toward a shared vision (Dickson and Mitchell 2014). This is a significant feat and one that Sparks (2002) believes is not part of the innate knowledge that administrators necessarily possess. On the contrary, administrators must be adequately prepared for effective implementation and this requires that leaders take part in their own PD. Well-trained leaders are active in promoting and maintaining a culture that fosters and encourages risk taking, cooperation among faculty, and clear communication with and among teachers. A process that promotes the best possible teaching and learning is one that will allow all participants to engage in meaningful, varied experiences (Dickson and Mitchell 2014; Barth 2006).

For a PD programme to reach its goals there must be collaborative decision-making and harmony between teacher and administrators on the issue of PD (Miles 1983). Working relationships between teachers and administrators should be based on clarity of goals for organisational improvement for such efforts to produce the desired results (Crandall and Loucks-Horsley 1983). Teachers' successful use of new skills learned through staff development often occurs when administrators show consistent support for implementation and are central to school improvement efforts (Huberman 1983). Administrators are charged with creating conditions conducive to autonomous teachers' PD, particularly in countries with a decentralising, deregulating and privatising educational policy (Clement and Vandenberghe 2000). Less teacher autonomy on self-guided professional learning activities can lead to polarised tension between administrators and teachers and even erode teacher collegiality (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Clement and Vandenberghe 2000). In addition to contributing to better working relationships, collaboration regarding PD between teachers and administrators, in my view, can alleviate some of the burden of responsibility from administrators preventing them from second-guessing decisions about PD or having to justify such decisions.

In order to assure that PD is both available and sustainable, administrators must have adequate skills to not only properly allocate resources but also to find resources when there are budget restraints or insufficient funding (Drago-Severson 2004). Being an advocate for PD activities for teachers is an administrator's responsibility. This responsibility may include discussions with school boards and adding PD activities within the school schedule in order to support and encourage teacher involvement (Tallerico 2005). It is significantly crucial for administrators to make time for teacher training even though it can be a challenging task (Barth 2006). It requires however, that all stakeholders understand the significance of PD in international schools, a conviction, which I hope this study will convey.

When funding for PD is constrained by tight budgets, administrators can find ways to be creative and innovative. A positive work environment where teachers feel that their leaders

care about them can encourage teachers to continue their work instead of moving on because of low or inadequate salaries (Cranston 2009). Maintaining consistent and sustainable PD activities can be very useful in this regard, while the opposite can be strongly discouraging for teachers (Dickson and Mitchell 2014). Working collaboratively with teachers often means that administrators invite teachers into decision making about budget allocation; such inclusion is a foundation for sustainability (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009).

Direct Involvement in the Design, Delivery and Content of Professional Development.

“Principals are key actors in helping build teacher capacity as autonomous learners and practitioners” (Bredeson and Johansson 2000, p.395). Bredeson and Johansson discuss and promote cooperation between administrators and teachers in planning, delivering and deciding on the content of PD: They particularly point out these seven areas of collaboration:

- (1) aligning PD with school goals and teacher needs;
- (2) empowering teachers as decision makers;
- (3) identifying needs;
- (4) developing ongoing planning process;
- (5) creating dialogue on teachers PD;
- (6) supporting a variety of learning opportunities for teachers, and
- (7) keeping the focus on student learning.

Making sure that teachers are focused on the goal is an important skill for administrators to have when ensuring constant and meaningful PD. In order for administrators to adequately understand teachers’ needs, plan PD activities and work effectively, cooperation between administrators and teachers is necessary (Bredeson and Johansson 2000). Additionally, DuFour and DuFour (2007) state that “if adult learning in schools is truly to become professional development, educators must commit to the collective pursuit of best practice” (p.28). PD that creates opportunity, time and space for exchanging ideas, problem solving and reflecting on teaching approaches can take place through the development of learning communities (Gupton 2010). Sustainability and value of such

practices is possible if administrators also become leaders of change (Dickson and Mitchell 2014; Fullan 2007). As change is inevitable and happens continuously and on multiple levels—technological, social, environmental, political, economic, personal—administrators must be able to navigate, manage and initiate change in order to have sustainable institutions (Gialamas et al. 2014; Gialamas et al. 2013).

Teacher needs, individual needs, and personal and collective goals must be supported by administrators. For example, programmes to enhance literacy can be jointly developed by both teachers and school leaders (Socol 2007). This step-by-step process requires time for reflection, revision and fine-tuning enacted within a collective effort in which the administrator facilitates the group, but the group develops the goals and process; such a leader helps the group to keep all eyes on the goal, to improve their personal and professional knowledge in regarding student improvement in literacy. Such leadership ensures mechanisms of negotiating PD according to teacher needs as well as school strategic priorities

Socol (2007) supports the importance of connecting what takes place in study groups with classroom learning, a process that encourages self-understanding and makes learning more meaningful. Ongoing learning for teachers can benefit students by ensuring best practices, and cooperation encourages continuous growth for both administrators and teachers (Gupton 2010). As previously stated, it is imperative that both teachers and administrators have opportunities for professional growth (Gupton 2010) so that optimal student outcomes are certain; otherwise, student results may suffer (Tallerico 2005; Joyce and Showers 2002).

It is also important in order to promote group learning that leaders recognise and endorse teaching opportunities (Sparks 2009). By working together, teachers exchange views about professionalism and how knowledge is acquired and therefore, can increase individual know-how and professional learning (Chew and Andrews 2010). Teacher collaboration and learning is strongly supported through the PLCs that promote cooperation and team mindsets (Hord and Sommers 2008; Hord 2007; DuFour et al. 2006). The goal of teams

of teachers is to highlight student learning. Teams work with individuals and the goals they have identified to address classroom challenges that can be resolved via the team's knowledge and skill in order to bring about the best outcomes (DuFour et al. 2006). Administrators must also make themselves available to respond to teacher questions and to be catalysts for growth via PLCs (Hord and Sommers 2008; Hord 2007; DuFour et al. 2006). A very important part of this approach is providing opportunity and time for teachers to reflect and for cooperative inquiry (Drago-Severson 2009, 2008). This practice emphasises the knowledge based on theories, activities and methods of what is experienced by learning teams, and the benefits of such practice to "improve teaching, build leadership, and enhance student achievement" (Drago-Severson 2004, p.154).

The Assessment of Professional Development. Assessing PD programmes can be particularly challenging to administrators (Bredeson and Johansen 2002) because assessment of teacher PD is still underdeveloped. A common assessment method mentioned in the USA-based PD literature is the use of surveys that have no follow-up related to teacher classroom activities (Reeves 2010; Killion 2008; Bredeson and Johansson 2000). This can be alarming but is still used in the works of Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), the more recent work of Killion (2008), Reeves (2010), DuFour and Marzano (2011), and others in the field who outline and provide guides of what such assessment should be about. Successful assessment includes a well thought through plan involving observation and follow-up, detection of individual teacher needs, and availability of support for teachers to seek and receive knowledge where necessary. This contributes to meaningful assessment and data collection (Killion 2008; Bredeson and Johansson 2000; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989), addressing the question of whether PD is effective. Conversely, administrators may come up against negative reactions of how teachers see and participate in PD if there is no preparation (Yates et al. 2005). In my view, clearly outlining for teachers what professional opportunities are available, what are the criteria for participation, what are the expectations upon return to the classroom and what assessment and evaluative procedures will follow is imperative in ensuring the cooperation rather than resistance of teachers.

2.3.3. Administrators as role models

Administrators must also make certain that the most up-to-date information is reflected in PD activities and is available to teachers. The latest research must also be the foundation of any PD activities that aim to alter educational mindsets and improve student performance (Leech and Fulton 2008; Fullan 2007; Talerico 2005). Again, current research on school leadership emphasises the requirement to combine effective management with leadership (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis 2015; Brazer and Bauer 2013). “Instructional leadership is the effort to improve teaching and learning for PK-12 students by managing effectively, addressing the challenges of diversity, guiding teacher learning and fostering organizational learning” (Brazer and Bauer 2013, p.650). The primary figure, once again, in the PD process as well as the key person influencing change in schools is the school administrator (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis 2015). The international school context poses grand challenges in each of these areas. Managing diversity within international schools can be hairy particular for administrators trained within national school systems. Furthermore, skill and experience play a vital role in order for administrators to properly assess and address teacher knowledge and skill so as to provide proper PD opportunities.

Understanding best practices in PD internationally as well as how these can transfer into the classroom is also required of administrators (Price and Moolenaar 2015). In conversations with administrators, I found that there was little to no understanding of best practice in PD internationally. Furthermore, creating processes that encourage PD activities via conferences and conversations with colleagues that maintain a focus on school improvement and best student outcomes are ways that administrators can spread the word about the seriousness of their efforts (Payne and Wolfson 2000). Encouraging teachers to share among themselves so that continuous learning is promoted and schools can be more “site based” (Berkey and DuFour 1995, p.4) is another way that administrators can be role models. Finding avenues to promote growth and distribute leadership is the best type of role modelling (Price and Moolenaar 2015; Payne and Wolfson 2000).

According to Sergiovanni (2005) “the greatest asset a school has is its collective intelligence” (p.177): a foundation for PD that is inclusive of both leader and teacher. Administrators can be role models for PD that uses as well as expands the horizons of best practices (Gento et al. 2015). In this sense, effective PD engages the teacher as well as the administrator (Bunce 2001). Still it is important to have a balanced approach in managing this area in order to avoid too much involvement from administrators. If the sole responsibility for PD lies with the administrator, then teachers may feel at a disadvantage or that they don’t have a voice, which may in turn negatively affect collaboration in school improvement goals via PD (Gento et al. 2015; Elmore 2000).

2.3.4. The educational leader’s role and the culture of the institution

School culture is shaped by administrators, principals and other school personnel; by far, the quality of PD available to teachers is in the hands of administrators. School culture must be addressed in three essential processes: (1) reading the culture, understanding the history of institutional culture, and analysing current norms and values; (2) assessing the culture and determining which factors support and which factors hinder the school’s main purpose and mission; and (3) shaping the culture actively by reinforcing positive aspects and working to alter negative aspects (Peterson and Deal 2002). In this sense, the administrator examines, interprets and shapes the school’s “persona” and therefore determines whether the school culture is positive or negative (Fullan 2002, 2001, 1999; Peterson 2002; Peterson and Deal 2002; Peterson and Brietzke 1994). In my view, positive school culture is primarily defined by willingness to collaborate, share ideas and best practices, and willingness to give and receive constructive feedback on teaching approaches. On the other hand, a negative school culture promotes competition, lack of trust and isolation.

Because culture deeply affects change or the resistance to change in schools as it relates to PD (Peterson and Deal 1998), it is important for the administrator to get a good sense of the school culture (Wagner et al. 2006). A culture that will allow PD implementation to be successful is comprised of shared values, assumptions, expectations, and “the invisible but powerful meanings and mindsets held individually and collectively throughout the

system” (Wagner et al. 2006, p.102). All of the above define school culture, which greatly affects the success or failure of PD (Habegger 2008). If the basic ingredients necessary to preserve a culture that promotes student and teacher learning are missing, productive teaching can be hindered and negativity could permeate the atmosphere defeating efforts of the administrator and all collaborative attempts (Peterson and Deal 1998).

Studies show that when PD is linked with the culture it influences, it has much more value. Sparks (2003) asserted that administrators “are responsible for developing a high-performance culture in which productive relationships can thrive” (p.1), particularly when PD shifts to a new mindset away from traditional methods. While it is imperative to offer a place where teachers can exchange ideas and share practices with colleagues daily in respectful ways, this, according to Sparks (2007), is one of the “most underused sources of professional learning and instructional improvement” (p.1). Still, considering such an approach can have many benefits and can create sustainability (Cranston 2009). In practice, this might look like a group of teachers coming together in front of a committee of teachers to ‘pitch’ a potential conference topic for best practice while eliciting the committee’s feedback. It might look like a group of teachers trained in classroom management protocols spending time in colleagues’ classrooms where behavioural issues are challenging and offering strategies for improvement. It might look like having a ‘tech geek’ afternoon where teachers versed in technology applications demonstrate their usage and usefulness to interested colleagues, as is currently practiced in my international school.

Additionally, in order for effective change to take place, it is important to consider socialising a culture; finding ways to form thoughts, feelings and activities and provide models for behaviour. Both teachers and administrators must create processes and venues via which they can work together to meet such professional needs. Similarly, aligned perceptions of teacher working conditions are also important. The 2004 Teacher Working Conditions survey and the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (SECTQ) report notes that teachers and local school administrators had different perceptions of teacher working conditions in the USA. How such perceptions can impact the current study within the international school context will be noted in the findings. However, such research might

suggest that teachers and administrators see a connection between non-collaborative PD, negative working conditions and teacher attrition. Additionally, given the focus on the day-to-day responsibilities of teachers and administrators, lack of communication can also be expected. In too many instances, school personnel can have an overall goal of positively impacting students, but very different perceptions on how such a goal can be accomplished.

Meaningful staff development implementation encourages assistance for teachers in meeting their individual goals and defining their deeper purposes via modelling, coaching and support (Glickman et al. 2009). Talerico (2005) outlined three central ideas when addressing school culture and change:

1. School cultures evolve slowly but continuously.
2. Improvement means change for the better.
3. Change can be uncomfortable.

Being aware of and understanding the elements of what comprises a strong school culture can help administrators to guide teachers to reflect on their own learning and to seek support that can be beneficial to students (Dickson and Mitchell 2014; Peterson and Deal 1998). Habegger (2008) agreed with this conviction and aligned the success of administrators to the success in their schools by appreciating the importance of “positive school culture and how it can help student achievement and professional growth in the school building” (p.46).

2.4. Professional Development and Leadership in International Schools

To nurture PD learning in classrooms, school administrators as leaders of instructional change must clearly know their own role in the PD process (Devono and Price 2012; DuFour and Marzano 2011). The school administrator “is a teacher who balances political concerns and creates a management style that encourages participation by all stakeholders” (Kowalski 2001, p.8). While research over the past four decades indicates the importance of the administrator’s role in active support, assistance and follow-up in teachers’ PD activities (Cannon et al. 2013; Holland 2009; Ingvarson and MacKenzie 1988), a paucity

of research exists on how the school administrator's specific role and leadership in teacher learning impacts the PD process (Devono and Price 2012).

According to Wagner et al. (2006), "most efforts to improve education have at their core a focus on professional development as a way to build competency" (p.99). Administrator support for teacher transfer of learning is one of the most effective tools in helping teachers realise the importance of utilising newly acquired PD knowledge and skills (Devono and Price 2012). The administrator is defined as the central figure in initiating and promoting change in school systems (Zepeda 2013a; Yager et al. 2012). In many school environments, administrators are first in line to take the leadership role in programme delivery in order to resource, foster and sustain effective PD (Redburn 2009; Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995). Without a clear plan for influencing teacher PD learning, administrators can ignite a negative perception of PD from teachers and low commitment to the furtherance of teacher improvement. Administrators may not always understand how their role successfully affects transfer of PD (Taylor et al. 2011). Without an administrator's clear vision and thoughtful planning of teacher PD within their particular school environments, relationships between administrators and teachers can deteriorate with the potential for ongoing conflict over control in all areas of the organisation (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis 2015; Devono and Price 2012; Pedersen et al. 2010), and this conflict could lead to an unproductive school culture with lower student achievement (Bryk et al. 2010; Leithwood et al. 2010; Redburn 2009). My own experience in the international school of Athens indicates that many conversations among teachers referred to favouritism from administrators on who went where for PD, seemingly contributing to a community feeling of unjust treatment, adding tension and possibly contributing to decreased morale. I find that all of the above challenges are compounded in an international school setting where teacher retention can be difficult. Furthermore, facilitating adjustment to as well as maintaining a balance between varied cultures and mindsets on a daily basis can be daunting. With such challenges, it can be overwhelming for administrators to ensure that all constituents stay on task toward common goals.

What model of professional learning is chosen for teachers still remains a point of contention and differentiation among teachers, administrators, and even education practitioners and scholars (Avalos 2011; Webster-Wright 2009). The overarching goals of a teacher learning community are to connect theory and ideas to the everyday practice of the individual teachers in the group. Such a group can partake in a variety of learning activities, including collective responsibility, ability to deal with internal conflict, reflective inquiry, and dialogue and mutual trust (Vescio et al. 2008).

Teachers in international schools have followed various professional learning models in order to elucidate some of their PD needs within their own organisational and multicultural context (Hayden 2011; Punia 2004). The problem that research, practitioners and policymakers need to tackle is how to link the theoretical precepts of school-wide PD needs with the real problems of school-wide adoption of teacher PD led by administrators within specific school systems (National Council of Professors of Educational Administration [NCPEA] 2009; Elmore 2002) and, in the case of this study, international schools in particular.

Training and retaining teachers also remains a challenge to administrators in international schools who must work toward such a goal in order to ensure school success (Garton 2000). Continuous PD is necessary as “the implications on staffing policy of education for global citizenship is that teachers are required to share common values, attitudes, and practices in order to perform in the context of a curriculum with an integrated code” (Cambridge 2014, p.28). Supporting current candidates and recruiting future qualified candidates in international schools is crucial in order to address the issue of inadequately trained educators to ensure high calibre, qualified teachers, principals and other administrators to serve in leadership roles (Roberts and Pruitt 2009; Bolman and Deal 2002; McCreight 2000). Furthermore, along these lines, according to Bunnell (2014) there are limited inclusive orientation programmes for new teachers inducting them to the new school environment. According to Hayden (2002), “no specific training is provided to international school staff ... before they embark upon their international school experience” (p.117). This could be explained by the types of contracts offered to

international school teachers, short-term appointment contracts (Holderness 2002), despite the contrary notion that teachers seek international posts to enhance their professional repertoire (Hardman 2001). My own experience corroborates Hayden's comment, although it was made more than a decade ago, indicating that while orientation programmes are available to acclimate teachers into the new environment, these are limited to finalising residency paperwork in the new home land as well as assisting teachers to settle in their new home. Little inductive activities are available prior to arrival and certainly none that I know of that have to do with best practice in the new institution. Furthermore, the needs of teachers embarking on the international school journey are varied and can include needs for new teachers, established teachers, curriculum leaders and senior teachers. One cannot make the assumption that a 'one fits all' approach to PD can effectively meet the needs of all involved.

This situation presents challenges for international school leaders because as there is little information regarding leadership in international schools (Blandford and Shaw, 2001), administrators are still faced with the complex and demanding challenges of promoting international mindedness and upholding the school mission within a cultural context that may be completely unfamiliar. However, "culture on the local community level cannot be ignored by school heads" (Shaw 2001, p. 226) as the ignorance of or oversight of cultural complexities can lead to the imposition of management styles that take administrators down a slippery slope.

Studies indicate that administrators tend to lean on traditional models of professional development that are not necessarily collaborative in nature. Thus, administrators are apt to incite competition among teachers rather than collaboration. The result can be intense and unwarranted competition among individuals, unnecessary organizational stress, and isolation among teachers (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Powell, 2013; Sandholtz & Scribner, 2006). Procedures such as these are related to de-motivating outcomes rather than to effective managerial approaches to school education (Tang & Choi, 2009). Such authoritarian leadership styles can be attempts to maintain control over school staff and can result in devaluing teacher knowledge as an integral part of professional development.

Teachers must have greater control and be the chief decision makers over professional development activities that enhance evidence-based classroom practice (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009).

No doubt, school culture is shaped by administrators and other school leaders who impact the quality of professional development for teachers. There are three essential processes to keep in mind: Firstly, observing the culture, understanding the history of institutional culture, and considering current norms and values. Secondly, evaluating the culture to determine supportive and hindering factors of the school's main purpose and mission. Lastly, shaping culture actively by encouraging positive aspects and working to modify negative aspects is important (Peterson & Deal, 2002.) The administrator examines, interprets and shapes the school's "persona" and therefore determines whether the school culture is positive or negative (Fullan, 1999, 2001, 2002; Peterson, 2002; Peterson & Brietzke, 1994; Peterson & Deal, 2002). The cultural context of international schools adds to the complexity of effective leadership. Given the high mobility rate of international school administrators who tend to stay in any given international school an average of 3.7 years (Bunnell, 2014) understanding culture can be challenging and altogether overwhelming. Yet, international school leadership, as Hayden (2006) indicates, take a special type of person, skilled in observation, able to problem solve and flexible enough to move according to the demands of the role within the particular context. Sparks (2007) further indicates that "improving instruction and building a culture by their very nature involve intense relationships and often are ridden with conflict. Unless leaders successfully address these complex and emotionally-laden interpersonal demands, schools will not produce the long-term improvements they need".

Fullan (2002, p.1) makes the distinction that the administrator is not just an instructional leader but more so "a leader in a culture of change". However, Fullan (2002) further clarifies that too much external innovation can be detrimental and is a sign of an administrator not accustomed to leading a culture of change. Inquiry within a culture is continuous reflection of the self and the means by which teaching or leadership vision and practice is transmitted. Inquiry is crucial to help administrators become aware of their own historical cultural contexts. It can help uncover hidden assumptions that influence practices

and contribute to the marginalization of some cultures. Inquiry can also lead administrators to challenge personal truths that have been assumed to be the only truths. Inquiry leads to understanding “the process of cultural border crossing” and to the decision to “cross this border smoothly or violently?” (Afonso, 2009, p,281).

The tradition of teacher learning through PD and administrative control over that learning continues today (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006). Teachers’ PD denotes that teachers have the ability to formulate and systematically solve research questions based on their daily practice as professional educators (Loucks-Horsley et al. 2003; Hawley and Valli 1999). The specific problem is that while studies have been conducted on administrator-led PD within national contexts (Cameron and Lindqvist 2014; Hallinger et al. 2014; Perry 2012; Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Scribner 1999), research has yet to be conducted on views of and best practices in the teacher PD process led by administrators within international school environments.

The complexity of international schools as well as international school leadership has been well documented (Hayden 2006; Stirzaker 2004; Joslin 2002; Blandford and Shaw 2001). As previously noted, teachers in international schools have reported that one area of potential conflict with the decision making by administrators is that of teacher PD (Furlong et al. 2013; Powell 2013). Yet, there appears to be limited research in the area of PD as it relates to international schools (Dellinger-Holton 2012; Waite 2009). This limitation does not allow for a clear understanding of the nature of the PD process led by administrators in international schools.

2.5. Summary

There is no consensus on a definition of international schools. For the purposes of this study I refer to the idea of schools promoting ‘world citizenship’ (Hill 2002) and ‘international mindedness’, an idea that includes values of freedom, intercultural understanding and non-violent conflict resolution (Hayden and Thompson 2000). Leading international schools is as complex as the schools themselves due to the diversity of

cultures, international curriculum content, governance and pressure for optimal student performance, among other things. PD therefore is significant in order to provide teachers with the tools needed for best practice in the particular setting while preparing students for higher education. Administrators have a significant role to play in how PD is resourced and allocated. Collaboration between teachers and administrators in assessing PD needs and allocating funds toward specific activities is essential. However, although PD and the role of administrators has been researched for national system, there appears to be limited research regarding PD as it relates to international schools. My aim, with this study, is to document and describe PD administrator views in international schools and to inform the international school community of such findings.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will begin with a narrative explaining the development of the four guiding questions answered in this study. Together, the four guiding questions were developed to determine administrator views regarding PD in international schools. Each question focused on an issue, which collectively defines the elements of administrator-led PD in international schools.

Despite extensive research conducted regarding PD and best practices, minimal research is available to determine administrator views regarding PD in international schools. The following research question was the main focus of the study: “What are the views of administrators on how professional development is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools?” Thus, the purpose of this mixed methods sequential explanatory study was to explore the views of administrators in international schools on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced.

Although the scope of this study has its limitations, it was carried out with the hope that the results disseminated in the international school community will shed light on the ongoing conversation on the influence of an administrator’s views on planning, implementing, evaluating and resourcing PD to teachers in international schools. Subsequently, EdD researchers may use this research as a launching point to develop research studies on a larger scale within the international school community on issues of teacher PD.

Section 3.2 is a narrative on each of the four research questions, positing my perspective on each, and indicating provenance.

Section 3.3 includes a description of Crotty's (1998) four questions on epistemology, ontology, methodology and methods as well as a presentation of research methodology literature, my viewpoint on research design, data collection and data interpretation aligned with the purpose of this study. The four guiding questions are listed below. Each is followed by a brief narrative of its alignment and significance to address the problem of the study.

3.2. Guiding Questions

Consistent with the purpose of this study, the following guiding questions were developed for investigation through this research. I believe it essential to discuss the four guiding questions that have emerged and explain their importance. Each is followed by a brief narrative that includes a brief literature content analysis and each question's alignment and significance to address the problem of the study. The questions consider and specify administrator views regarding PD in international schools. Each question has bearing on the weight placed on PD by administrators in international schools, thus affecting pertinent decision making and ultimately possibly teaching and learning. Albeit limited, I hope the present study will at least spur discussions related to PD in international school settings about the processes involved regarding PD activities in order to elicit more effective and pertinent results.

Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?

International schools are becoming a rapidly growing commodity and they are quickly multiplying across the globe (Bunnell 2014). Teachers and administrators require increasing support particularly when proximity does not allow for frequent participation in PD activities organised by international organisations (Hayden 2006).

Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision-making process for initiating teacher professional development?

In order to promote effective PD activities within the specific school it is important for school administrators to not only understand the particular school culture but to also base decisions about which activities to promote on research-based evidence of PD best practices. Focusing on research-supported strategies will improve student learning and avoid decisions based on current trends (Reeves 2006; Harwell 2003; Guskey 2000). By current trends, I refer to one-time workshops and or conference presentations without follow up.

Q3: How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for the assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?

There is little known in international schools, regarding best practices for evaluating PD. Evaluation processes are at best superficial, at worst non-existent and more closely resemble observation–documentation rather than assessment and evaluation (Reeves 2010; Guskey 2000). Assessing PD programmes can be particularly challenging to administrators (Bredeson 2002) because assessment of teacher PD is still in an infancy phase.

Q4: How do administrators in international schools view the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?

Collaborating with teachers to assess PD needs and engaging teachers in the decision-making process for allocation of resources can add positively to the school culture and contribute toward sustainability (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009; Cranston 2009). In addition to allocating resources, school leaders must be skilful in locating resources to support their efforts.

Appendix F includes full text of the guiding question narratives. Appendix G includes provenance and implications of the four guiding questions.

3.3. Research Methodology

The current section considers methodology and methods. I apply Crotty's (1998) ideas as cited by Creswell (2014) in designing my research study as explained in the following sections. I considered and planned my narrative based on Crotty's (1998) four questions:

- “1. What epistemology-theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective- informs the research?
2. What ontology-(theoretical perspective/philosophical stance)-lies behind the methodology in questions?
3. What methodology-strategy or plan of action that links methods to outcomes-governs our choice and use of methods (e.g., experimental research, survey research, ethnography, etc.)?
4. What methods-techniques and procedures do we propose to use (e.g., questionnaire, interview. focus group, etc.)?”

(Crotty 1998, cited by Creswell 2014, p.4)

These four guiding questions exemplify the interrelated levels of decision making that go into the process of research design and inform a choice of approach, from the broad assumptions of this study to the more practical decisions I made about data collection, processing and analysis. With these ideas in mind, I present my own philosophical and epistemological stance that informs the research and a rationale for my use of mixed methods follows in this section. I explain the use of a questionnaire in order to obtain initial data on views of administrators in international schools regarding PD, followed by online interviews focusing on more specific issues. I proceed to explain the preparation and piloting of the questionnaire followed by the results of the questionnaire in Chapter 4. Subsequently, I proceed to discuss the online interviews and the medium chosen for follow-up with particular questionnaire subjects. I discuss the way subjects were selected as well as the process for piloting and conducting the interviews. I conclude with reflections on research instrument design and ensuing data collection.

In terms of the present study, I started with the premise that educational leadership is a highly complex construct and even more so in specific contexts, such as that of

international schools. It is clear that the participants of this study, administrators in international schools, each expressed their views based on their own beliefs, leadership qualities—both strengths and limitations—their personal values and the unique professional position they find themselves in as leaders in international school contexts. Given this understanding of the area of investigation, and the emphasis on ‘administrator views’ and ‘delivery methods of PD’, I decided that 1) this should be a mixed methods study leading primarily to qualitative results, and 2) my own personal philosophy of research must be examined so as to avoid bias, given that I am also in a leadership position in an international school and professionally acquainted with some of the study participants.

For these reasons and with supervisor consultations, a mixed methods research design was decided upon. Mixed methods designs are increasingly being used in social and health sciences and such methods are used in a single study during which the researcher combines quantitative and qualitative data or uses a procedure for collecting, analysing and “mixing” data during the research process in order to better understand the research problem (Creswell 2002; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003). When quantitative or qualitative methods are insufficient, alone, to determine trends or particular information of a situation being studied, a mixed methods approach allows both kinds of data within one study. Such a blend allows the researcher to consider the strengths of each for a more rigorous analysis (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998; Miles and Huberman 1994).

Factors in my background (personal and professional experiences) and personal perspective on the central study theme lead to further thought on addressing the limitation of researcher bias and how this can be blended with my philosophy of research. It is important at this point for me to engage in reflexivity on this matter. Through further discussions with peers and the study supervisors, I worked to read and write extensively a detailed literature review that can be viewed in Chapter 2 of this document. Equally, I engaged in critical reflection and thought on how my own background and personal beliefs influenced research design, research implementation, data analysis and conclusions. Even where researchers attempt to remain objective, there is no such thing as the “blank slate”

birthing unbiased ideas in research. I found critical thinking and journal writing as a strong support to explore my own philosophy of research—that experience and participation was important for me and that working with participants with a synergy of ideas through dialogue we can be co-constructors of knowledge.

The guiding questions as outlined lend themselves to listening to the perspectives of administrators who design PD opportunities for teachers in international schools. The objectives call for an exploration of views of administrators on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools.

3.3.1. Constructivism: The epistemology that informs my research

Constructivism argues that individuals actively generate their own representations of the world, which in turn influences their behaviour (Young and Marks-Maran 1998). Kelly (1955), a more well-known proponent of constructivism, advanced his own personal construct theory. He posited that cognitive constructs link new and old knowledge and that people make meaning of their world through these constructs. According to cognitive theorists, learning is a constructive process in which individuals who are learning search for and build information based on old knowledge and experiences. The underlying assumption is that people do not just respond to the world around them, they act upon it (Shuell 1986).

The above is in line with the belief that knowledge is an individual and social construct. It follows then that the context of learning must be considered, especially in the case of PD, which calls for teaching activities that target bringing theory and practice together. It must facilitate a word–world relationship (Shor and Freire 1987) that supports a link between theory and practice and between reflection and action (Horton et al. 1990), that marries “knowing what” with “knowing how” for an individualised construct of knowing.

Schön (1987) noted that growth takes place through dialogue that involves a master and a learner reframing experience and experimenting to arrive at better practices. In formal settings of PD, reflection on action replaces Schön’s focus on reflection in action. The

definition of reflection is “an individual process containing two elements: metacognitions (awareness of the strategies, theories, and feelings that underlie one’s professional problem solving) and appraisals (judgments about performance)” (Ross and Reagan 1993, p.92). According to the constructivist model, PD is seen as a modest or a radical restructuring of the knowledge a learner already has.

The constructivist approach also informs the research design. The choice of a mixed method design has allowed me to gather initial information via a questionnaire from administrators in international schools regarding PD views. Additionally, further in-depth interviews with a sample of administrators has allowed me to delve further into their mindsets and build on the information initially obtained for deeper understanding.

3.3.2. Pragmatism: My philosophical stance in choosing a mixed methods design

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) coined the term “pragmatism”. A distinctly American philosophy, pragmatism, as described by Peikoff (1974), “represents a continuation of the central ideas of Kant and Hegel—with an added twist of its own. Pragmatism is German metaphysical idealism, given an activist development” (p.332). For the pragmatist, truth is a negotiation between the person who knows and what is known; it is not simply that which tallies with reality, and it is not constant, certain, beyond dispute or eternal. Truths are those formations of ideas or concepts that have passed the test of experiential experimentation, and facts are dependent, situational and conditional. As such, reality is a construction that is not absolute; it is tentative and ever-changing.

Kneller (1971) highlighted that “William James emphasizes the right of the educated individual to create his own reality, whereas Peirce and Dewey declare that the facts of reality are best established by experts, especially scientists” (p.14). Livingston (2003) stated that “Dewey’s stance for education begins from a social standpoint and borrows from psychology along the way to reach these social goals” (p.11). The modern “progressive” classroom is fundamentally a product of Dewey’s work, and his impact on modern education persists and remains practically unchallenged.

As Kneller (1971) noted, “pragmatist philosophy has animated most programs in teacher education” (p.15), and “for Dewey, the purpose of education is to develop agents for social reform” (Livingston 2003, p.9). Therefore, any major change to the basic educational philosophy of administrators and educational leaders will require a detailed revision of experiential learning and progressive education, which has activism and socialisation at its core.

Socialisation is achieved when an individual offers their abilities to the community, not acting through habit, but doing something useful for society (Childs 1967). When government has the monopoly on education, with a view to achieving socialisation, this can be described as a progressive’s coup d’ecole. In his book *The Ominous Parallels: The End of Freedom in America*, Peikoff (1982) observed:

“The process of spreading a philosophy by means of free discussion among thinking adults, is long and complex. From Plato to the present, it has been the dream of certain philosophers and social planners to circumvent this process, and, instead, to inject a controversial ideology directly into the plastic, unformed minds of children—by means of seizing a country’s educational system and turning it into a vehicle for indoctrination. In this way one may capture an entire generation without intellectual resistance, in a single coup d’ecole.” (p.130)

Pragmatism lays claim to excluding matters such as meaning, concepts, theory and objective reality. Rand (1971) explained that Dewey “opposed the teaching of theoretical, (i.e., conceptual) knowledge, and demanded that it be replaced by concrete, ‘practical’ action, in the form of ‘class projects’ which would develop the students’ social spirit” (pp.67–68). There is a gap in the approach that simply offers “what works” rather than a theoretical or conceptual framework. This creates a problem regarding how one can discover “what works” without any theoretical constructs and evaluate “what works” without a theoretical standard.

3.3.3. Pragmatism in educational research

Scholars have in recent years increasingly turned to pragmatism in their search for an epistemological foundation for mixed methods research (see, for example, Denscombe 2008; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Rossman and Rallis 2003). While the approaches may differ, and authors such as Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) recognise certain shortcomings in the pragmatism of philosophers such as Charles Sanders Peirce. The general characteristics of pragmatism, as identified by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), are: rejection of dualisms like subjectivism versus objectivism; knowledge is constructed and also based on experience of the world; theories must be judged according to how well they work at the present time (this workability is judged in terms of applicability and predictability); accepting eclecticism and pluralism (even conflicting theories can help to form an understanding of the world); and truth, meaning and knowledge are not fixed and can change with the passage of time. These characteristics may be applied to educational research, its purposes and the data it generates, and they can support a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approach.

Considering the work of discovery as more important than how knowledge is acquired, pragmatism allows researchers to act “without the need to identify invariant prior knowledge, laws, or rules governing what is recognized as ‘true’ or ‘valid’” (Maxcy 2003, p.85). More recent research proffers that pragmatism encourages researchers to favour what is useful over what is ultimately true (Feilzer 2010) and that “epistemology is empirical, not foundational” (Scott and Briggs 2009, p.225)—i.e., the primary basis for knowledge is what an observer sees, hears, tastes, smells and/or touches (sense experience).

With regard to the social sciences, Bechhofer and Paterson (2000) see both comparison and control as “fundamental to research design” (vii). They note that “comparison is a fundamental aspect of cognition”, and suggest that “the act of description requires us explicitly or implicitly to compare the object being described with something else, and it is this feature which makes the idea of ‘pure description’ meaningless” (2000, p.5). This has important implications for educational research. For example, a researcher’s analysis and interpretation of observations, recordings or field notes taken in a classroom are likely to be influenced by previous classroom experiences. In other words, the researcher cannot

give a ‘pure’ description or analysis of what took place. As noted by Eisner (1993), “knowledge is always constructed relative to a framework, to a form of representation, to a cultural code, and to a personal biography” (p.54).

How personal biography affects research design, execution, data analysis, and interpretation and conclusions is an important issue in educational research as this “is an interactive process shaped by [a researcher’s] personal history, biography, gender, social class, race and ethnicity” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.6). That is, the outcome is influenced by explicit or implicit comparison with the researcher’s previous experiences of research settings and problems. As such, a researcher needs to reflect on how personal factors and biases are likely to impact (or have influenced) the totality of their work—from design to outcomes (Borg 2010). Offering a more succinct definition, Hardy et al. (2001) note that “reflexivity involves reflecting on the way in which research is carried out and understanding how the process of doing research shapes its outcomes” (p.532).

In line with Tooley and Darby’s (1998) rejection of the idea “that there is one (true) point of view from which reality can be apprehended” (p.15), researchers can avoid being accused of partisanship (Tooley and Darby 1998) by recognising that factors in their respective personal backgrounds play a role in their choice of theoretical standpoints, chosen methodology and methods, and interpretation of the data. While introspection cannot be expected to capture all factors that influenced a project, this is likely the only way to present such information to the research study’s audience. It is equally important to keep in mind, when investigating participants’ perspectives, that research is “an interactive process” that is also shaped by the backgrounds “of the people in the setting” under study (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.6).

3.3.4. The application of my epistemological and ontological stance in choosing a mixed methods design

John Dewey, a founding member of philosophical constructivism and pragmatism, intimated that reconstruction is a core task of philosophy (Dewey 1931a). When philosophy is centred on the problems of philosophers or is too theoretical or abstract and

does not take into account contemporary social concerns, it is not true to its function. In this light, to be able to address the problems presented in any situation or context, philosophy must utilise and reconstruct intellectual resources (Dewey 1931b). Pragmatists and constructivists agree on adopting an attitude that rejects the notion that the human mind is tasked with copying reality since there is no external reality. The construction of reality and our world versions of it are influenced by culture given that, whether as observers, participants or agents, we construct reality through interactions with our environment (Hickman et al. 2009).

Another common point for constructivists and pragmatists is the absence of pure and value-free rationality—and consequently that the task of philosophy involves considering the power relations and interests that come into play in rational discourse. Additionally, constructivism and pragmatism agree there should be a close link between the legitimacy of forms of knowledge and the communication and social structures that enable their realisation. Scientific development needs democracy and vice versa, and by the same token forms of knowledge reflect social forms. As such, dialogue across cultures must take place in the spirit of the principles and values of an honest cultural exchange. This is likely the point that constructivists would most want to underline in Dewey’s philosophy—philosophical worldviews are contextualist in nature. Both schools make a case for testing and endorsing problems according to their cultural context. It is no surprise then that constructivists often quote the following from Dewey’s (1931a) *Context and Thought*: “The most pervasive fallacy of philosophic thinking goes back to neglect of context” (p.5).

Considering all the above, it is fair to say that pragmatism and constructivism share affinities and that their differences can be outlined using a shared framework. Neubert et al. (2012) appear to consider this a complementary relationship. As such, on accepting the philosophical background advanced by Dewey, constructivism could correct its flaws or weaknesses and classical pragmatism could temper the extremes of constructivism. There are, however, two issues with the role assigned here to constructivism. Given that the constructivist paradigm underlines the subjective and cultural dependence of our

representations of reality, this suggests that Dewey desired a naturalist ontology (Neubert 2009).

The concept of a paradigm (originally suggested by Kuhn (1970)) is not clear-cut and, as Morgan (2007) noted, comes with different connotations; there are two in particular that deserve mention here. The first is that a paradigm is a set of ontological and epistemological assumptions—i.e., a set of common beliefs regarding the (social) world's nature and its “knowability” (Denscombe 2008). The second connotation is that a research paradigm is a common research practice characterised by a shared identity and also a “specific problem or set of problems that are regarded as particularly significant in relation to the advancement of knowledge” (Denscombe 2008, p.276). Pragmatists also hold an “antirepresentational view of knowledge”, arguing that research should no longer aim to most accurately represent reality, to provide an “accurate account of how things are in themselves” but to be useful, to “aim at utility for us” (Rorty 1999, xxvi). The notion of utility raises some difficult questions about how such a concept could be defined (Morgan 2007, p.66) and it appears to me to be more useful rather than a strict definition of a concept; I now ask, “what it is for” and “who it is for” and “how do I as the researcher...” I considered these questions as guided by methodological literature (Feizler 2009), making my study more than an attempt to “mirror reality” (Morgan 2007, p.7).

“At the level of translating epistemological concerns into research methodology and finally the decision of research methods, a pragmatic paradigm, poses some methodological questions. If phenomena have different layers how can these layers be measured or observed? Mixed methods research offers to plug this gap by using quantitative methods to measure some aspects of the phenomenon in question and qualitative methods for others. Mixed methods research has grown in popularity, so much that this journal has been developed which is devoted to mapping mixed methods research studies and the extent to which they integrate the different research methodologies employed and, ultimately, developing a strategy to achieve consistent integration.” (Feizler 2009, p.8)

Taking into consideration all the above issues related to pragmatism, reflexivity and the different notions regarding research paradigm, decisions were made in relation to whether the quantitative or qualitative approach should be prioritised, the collection and analysis of data, how the study's quantitative and qualitative phases should be connected, and the integration of the results of the study's two phases. Employing such a mixed methods research design, the study purpose and research questions determined the sequence of quantitative and qualitative data collection (Ivankova et al. 2006). There are two ways to mix in the sequential explanatory design. The first is to connect the study's quantitative and qualitative phases by interviewing participants for the second phase and advancing qualitative data collection protocols based on the results of the statistical tests like the t-test conducted during the quantitative data analysis to compare the mean (Ivankova et al. 2006). In this study, for the purposes of confirming the associations made, two-tail t-tests were run for each pair of questions within the questionnaire. The second way to mix in a sequential explanatory design is to integrate the results of the questionnaire and interview phases while discussing the study's outcomes and outlining implications (Ivankova et al. 2006). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) note that a mixed methods sequential explanatory design provides a better quality of researcher inferences. In the following sections of Chapter 3 I explain in detail the development and execution of the study's research design as viewed below.

3.4. Rationale for the use of Mixed Methods

In order to address the purpose of this research study I used a mixed methods research, “a class of research where researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004, p.17). As Yin (2014) states, “mixed methods research forces the methods to share the same research questions to collect complementary data ... and collect a richer and stronger array that can be accomplished by any single method alone” (p.65–66). In addition to quantitative survey method, I used a general qualitative method interview design to collect qualitative data. The questionnaire analysis, using Likert-style questions, and interview analysis, using open-ended questions, allows the researcher to

obtain additional information. The analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative responses will be presented using a mixed methods sequential explanatory design (Creswell 2014) to potentially determine and document views of administrators on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools.

There are about 40 mixed methods research designs reported in the literature (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2011). The basic six designs include three concurrent and three sequential designs (Creswell 2014). One of those designs, the mixed methods sequential explanatory design, is widely used among researchers; the researcher using this design collects and analyses quantitative data first and then qualitative data in two consecutive phases within one study. The characteristics of the mixed methods sequential explanatory design are intricately described in the extant literature (Creswell 2014), and the design has been applied in the fields of social and behavioural sciences (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2011). Researchers who choose to conduct a mixed methods sequential explanatory study

“have to consider certain methodological issues. Such issues include the priority or weight given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in the study, the sequence of the data collection and analysis, and the stage/stages in the research process at which the quantitative and qualitative phases are connected and the results are integrated (Morgan 1998; Creswell et al. 2003).” (Ivankova et al. 2006, p.4)

A mixed methods explanatory sequential design was the appropriate design to best align with the purpose and research questions of the study (Ivankova et al. 2006). Convenience sampling was used in the quantitative phase; however, sampling for the qualitative phase was purposive, and specifically using criterion and snowball sampling techniques (Patton 2002), to develop meaningful themes (Clark and Creswell 2011). The data collection plan for the interviews followed the questionnaire data collection since the interview protocol was developed based on the results of the quantitative phase (Ivankova et al. 2006).

Researcher's engagement in choosing mixed methods

I have chosen to investigate administrator views as opposed to teacher views because generally administrators are the decision makers in the international school context (James and Sheppard 2014). Administrators usually decide on budget allocation as well as allocation of PD delivery methods (Zepeda 2013b; Tallerico 2005; Guskey 2003a, 2000; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). Additionally, I find that administrators have a greater perspective of school needs beyond teacher development and set priorities accordingly; moreover, administrators hold the primary responsibility for managing the school (Tangye 2005) and the weight of such responsibility, possibly causing them to settle on a narrow perspective of PD opportunities or to rely on outdated modes of delivery. My engagement in a “thought experiment” (Maxwell 2005, p.58–60)—i.e., speculation and critical thinking of concepts and observations—led me to wonder whether, particularly, in international schools where PD participation can be costly due to the remote location of the school in certain cases, decisions regarding PD participation, or lack of, may be negative for the school culture. In fact, my choice of mixed methods explanatory sequential design was greatly influenced by my thoughts about culture in general. If inquiry within a culture, as Fullan (2002) indicates, involves continuous reflection of self, then it becomes necessary to aide administrators to become aware of their own cultural backdrop. My choice of mixed methods approach in this case, was partly related to an attempt to aid the self reflection, inquiry process by first identifying an overview of ideas from administrators and then probing deeper via the interviews into the private thought world of each administrator, possibly providing context for challenging personal truths (Fullan 2002) but more importantly aiming to understand their thinking as it related to PD. Such thought challenges could lead to a better understanding of the current culture where administrators abide and could provide for smoother transitions. These possible by-products of the interviews, self-reflection and inquiry, can ultimately assist administrators in shaping school culture in their role as leaders of change. It was clear to me that administrators have the power to make decisions and influence, either positively or negatively, school culture, and I silently pondered that “imposing a favoured mental model on people, like imposing your vision, usually backfires” (Senge 2006, p.188). It was also clear, however, that there is a gap in the scholarly literature regarding PD administrator views in international

schools. Consequently, through the present research I aim to address the gap in the literature.

At this point, a brief explanation of my choice of the word “views” in this thesis might be in order. When inquiring about one’s view, the question is two-fold and addresses both factual information and opinions. Therefore, the data collected includes factual information that is either known or not; there is no opinion about it. On the other hand, the second part to the question includes beliefs, attitudes and judgments (Denscombe 2007). Linguistically, the noun “view” is defined as “the ability to see something or to be seen from a particular place” (Merriam-Webster 2013). Clearly, my aim in collecting the “views” of administrators was to encapsulate their experiences on PD in international schools, from their “particular place”, within their specific context. My own views have been embedded throughout this study, thus both administrator views and my own provide a larger picture explaining the use of the word “perspectives” in the title. In qualitative research, Flick et al. (2004) claim that social circumstance are best evaluated “from the inside out”, from the “point of view” of the people who participate in specific events. By analysing “views” of participants, a study then “seeks to contribute to a better understanding of social realities and to draw attention to processes, meaning patterns and structural features” (Flick et al. 2004, p.3). “Views” held by administrators are tacit and need probing questions in order to be brought to light. Yet, these questions cannot be fully examined unless they produce the “views” of this specific set of participants who view PD issues in international schools from their particular position. Thus, I find that the term “views” is appropriate for such inquiry as my interest lies in understanding not just personal attitudes and beliefs on the study topic, but also administrators’ context-specific “views”, from “the inside out” as Flick et al. (2004, p.3) indicate. No doubt, such “views” holistically influence the participants’ decision-making about PD within their international school context.

The decision to investigate administrator views of PD in international schools led me to reflect on the use of a questionnaire in order to consider the wide range of issues involved, followed by individual interviews as a useful way of collecting data applicable to my

research questions. “The word ‘survey’ means to view comprehensively and in detail and refers to specifically to the act of ‘obtaining data for mapping’” (Denscombe 2007, p.7). Surveys have three characteristics: 1) wide and inclusive coverage, 2) at a specific point and time, and 3) empirical research. They include Internet surveys (i.e., web-based questionnaires), face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews. “It’s designed to collect information to be used for data analysis, consists of written list of questions, used to gather information by asking people directly” (Denscombe 2007, p.154).

I will proceed to provide my rationale for both. Questionnaires include “facts and opinions” (Denscombe 2007, p.155) and range from requirements of basic information, such as demographic data, to views and beliefs. Respondents then could disclose information that is more than mere reporting to include possible value judgments. My aim was to receive preliminary information promptly before administrators dispersed for summer break, thus a questionnaire, being conducive to receiving particular information quickly (Bell 1993), was appropriate. Analysis of the data suggested four emerging themes and led to the development of interview questions for follow-up and further investigation.

As mentioned previously, my desire to research administrator PD views in international schools came from my own experience in an international school and the evolution of a collaborative approach to PD decision making and allocation of resources that added positively to the school culture. Conversations in international conferences and other school visits about PD seemed to indicate that administrators had a united front placing high priority and importance on the necessity for PD; in practice however, things seemed to differ behind the isolated walls of their institution. I thought it important to ascertain, to the degree possible, the views held by administrators, in essence the decision makers, about PD in international schools around the world.

I pondered and brainstormed possibilities for obtaining lists of administrators via professional associations such as the European Council for International Schools (ECIS), Central and Eastern European Schools Association (CEESA), Near East South Asia (NESA), Council of International Schools (CIS), the Association for the Advancement of

International Education (AAIE) and the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE). My involvement in these associations ranged from committee chair to conference presenter, and I thought it would be a fairly smooth process. I designed a questionnaire to be sent to administrators; heads of school (some also have titles of Directors, Superintendents, Presidents), and principals or instructional leaders. The questionnaire consisted of questions rated on a 4-point Likert scale, to determine degree of agreement. An odd-numbered Likert scale is used when a neutral middle category (e.g., 3 or 5 categories) is required and an even-numbered Likert scale is used in questionnaire development or to “force” the respondent to give a certain tendency of example “agree/disagree” (e.g., 4 or 6 categories) and usually with a convenience and/or purposive sample (Leung 2011; Lozano et al. 2008). Lozano et al. (2008) indicate, “that the optimum number of alternatives is between four and seven. With fewer than four alternatives the reliability and validity decrease, and from seven alternatives onwards psychometric properties of the scale scarcely increase further” (p.27). Also, criterion-related validity of a questionnaire is not affected by the number of Likert-scale points. The issue of selecting 4- versus 5-point scales usually depends on the empirical setting (Chang 1994). There was also space in the questionnaire for additional, open-ended comments. See Appendix C for the questionnaire.

On the one hand, the amount of perspective data to be collected seemed daunting; on the other hand, I had no way of knowing how many responses I would receive. I established contact with one administrator in each of these associations and received offers to help that ranged from including my questionnaire link in their newsletter with a note to school administrators to participate to personal email requests directly to school administrators. Others, however, did not respond at all to my request. In the cases that did reply comments were made about the significance of the topic being studied. Once responses to the questionnaire were received via www.SurveyMonkey.com I would later be in a position to personally contact, initially via email, all respondents who consented to being interviewed. These follow-up interviews would later allow comparisons of questionnaire responses and interview data in order to enable a degree of triangulation.

Views of administrators regarding PD in international schools will inevitably affect the nature of PD within the school, the decision-making process for initiating PD activities, the assessment and evaluation process or lack thereof, and budget allocation for PD activities. Ultimately, such decisions will influence teaching and learning. For these reasons, investigation of this topic is timely particularly at the rate that international schools are growing globally; specifically, Bunnell (2014) quotes Ian Hill, the former Deputy Director-General of the Geneva-registered International Baccalaureate (IB), who indicated that there are “almost 6000 International Schools around the world” (p.1). Furthermore, the International Schools Consultancy Research (ISC Research) reports “the number of children attending the 6000 international schools passed the three million mark” (Bunnell 2014, p.2). Clearly, in my view further investigation is necessary and requires a combination of a broad questionnaire followed by a narrower focus through interviews. The four questions being investigated regarding administrator views of PD in international schools could not be thoroughly answered with quantitative data; a combination of quantitative and qualitative data was necessary.

3.5. Data Collection and Processing

Quantitative data collection and analysis was performed first to reveal the breadth of the topic area under investigation from the perspective of the sample population, and was later followed by qualitative data collection and analysis to provide interpretation of the findings. Data collection for the quantitative part was conducted through a questionnaire that was distributed to administrators (heads of schools and principals) of international schools cross-nationally. The questionnaire questions were developed based on a literature review and pilot-tested (further explained below) to reveal any issues relating to coverage and comprehension of each item. The feedback received from the pilot test assisted in the refinement of the questionnaire questions and the elimination of ambiguous and overlapping items. Apart from basic demographics (years of teaching experience, years of administrative experience, years in current position in current school, location of school), all questionnaire items were expressed in a 5-point Likert scale form with “Strongly Disagree”, “Disagree”, “Strongly Agree”, “Agree” and “Not Applicable” as the

sequentially ordered options. The final questionnaire was distributed to administrators (heads of schools and principals) of international schools and there were 90 responses collected of which 74 were valid completed questionnaires. After eliminating faulty and incomplete entries as well as removing the “Non Applicable” response, the data was entered into SPSS V.20 for descriptive statistics analysis. SPSS is a widely-used statistical package that provides reliable results. Used for a broad range of descriptive and inferential statistics, with a decreased probability of error in analysis and provides statistical analysis in a manner easy to understand by the non-statistician. For each questionnaire item, the frequency distributions were plotted and the mean and standard deviation were calculated.

The significantly important data in the quantitative survey were further considered for the qualitative part of the methodology that was conducted through in-depth interviews. More specifically, the development of the qualitative interview questions was based on the significant findings of the quantitative part of the analysis. The unit of analysis for the qualitative phase of this study was the administrator/principal presently employed at an international school. Qualitative researchers attempt to explore how participants understand these events and how this understanding leads to behaviour (Maxwell 2004). Given the subjective nature of the research questions, a qualitative design, which is best used for subjective studies (Noor 2008), was appropriate for the nature of this study. The research questions of the study were not testing knowledge as much as they were seeking individual and personal responses. Because these personal responses inform international school administrator behaviour, it was appropriate to explore these responses in an in-depth and detailed manner, and therefore qualitative data collection method subsequent to initial quantitative data collection was judged to be most appropriate to answer the study’s research questions.

3.6. Survey Instrument Development

3.6.1. Online questionnaire development and piloting

After a review of the applicable scholarly literature, I developed a questionnaire. All items on the questionnaire originated from a thorough literature review. I was also keenly aware

that designing good questionnaire questions, a technique at the heart of survey research, would increase the validity of my findings (Dolnicar 2013). Items 1–3 investigate a definition of PD per administrator and the type of PD available as well as required in their school in order to establish a common language and baseline understanding. Items 4–9 and 14–17 attempt to determine decision making regarding PD needs, decision about who participates, which type of PD activities are encouraged as well as who is involved in assessment of PD activities. These questions provide an indication of whether decisions are unilateral or collaborative in nature. Items 10–13 inquire about who is involved in assessing PD activities. Items 18–25 are designed to determine how funding is resourced, including degree of expectation of teachers funding their own PD and the degree to which the school funds PD. Below is an itemised listing and rationale for each section of the online quantitative questionnaire as identified above in this paragraph.

1. *Which of the following do you consider to be professional development?*
 - a. *Graduate courses*
 - b. *Conferences with content-specific topics*
 - c. *Content experts coming into the school to train teachers*
 - d. *Courses for certification renewal*
 - e. *Peer support from colleagues*
 - f. *International Baccalaureate workshops*
 - g. *Advanced Placement workshops*
 - h. *Other Please explain_____*
2. *Which of the below apply to your school?*
 - a. *Graduate courses*
 - b. *Conferences with content-specific topics*
 - c. *Content experts coming into the school to train teachers*
 - d. *Courses for certification renewal*
 - e. *Peer support from colleagues*
 - f. *International Baccalaureate workshops*
 - g. *Advanced Placement workshops*
 - h. *Other Please explain_____*
3. *Professional Development in my school is*

- a. *Required by the school for all teachers*
- b. *Required by the school for IB teachers*
- c. *Required by the school for Advanced Placement teachers*
- d. *optional but highly encouraged*
- e. *optional and encouraged when absolutely necessary*

Items 1–3 investigate a definition of PD per school administrator and the type of PD available and required in their school, in order to establish a common language and baseline understanding of what school administrators consider PD. While debates continue about what constitutes an international school without consensus being reached (Bunnell 2014), Hayden et al. (2002) have previously suggested that we consider the idea of ‘international mindedness’ and the values we wish students to adopt via studies in such subjects as world history and literature as opposed to one country’s viewpoint. The curriculum thus is one important aspect of an international school with such programmes as the IB being widely embraced around the world. Additionally, programmes such as the Advanced Placement (AP) and the International IGSE seem to be among the most popular programmes within international schools (Bunnell 2014; Hayden 2006; Hayden et al. 2002). On the other hand, Bunnell (2014) suggests that “new innovative international curricula (e.g. IPC, IMYC) have emerged, undermining the monopoly hold of the IB programmes” (p.33). Valuing ‘international mindedness’ implies that schools are prepared to support teachers in their development, especially as emerging technological advances require skills that need continuous upgrading (Hayden 2002). Regardless of the curricula adopted by international schools, PD is necessary to keep abreast with the changes as well as best practices. The following questions are intended to reveal what school administrators consider to be PD.

4. *As the school’s senior administrator (Head, Principal) I determine professional development needs for teachers*
5. *As the school’s senior administrator (Head, Principal) I should determine professional development needs for teachers*
6. *Teachers work with me the administrator to determine the professional development needs of the school*

7. *Teachers should collaborate with administrators in determining the professional development needs of the school*
8. *Teachers determine their own professional development needs*
9. *Teachers should determine their own professional development needs*

14. *As the school administrator I decide which teachers participate in professional development*
15. *As the school administrator I should decide which teachers participate in professional development*
16. *Teachers are involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development*
17. *Teachers should be involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development*

With items 4–9 and 14–17 I attempt to determine decision-making practices regarding PD needs as well as decisions about who participates and which type of PD activities are considered essential and by whom. Reeves (2010) asserts that teachers are significantly influential not only in student learning but also in other teacher and administrator performance. Involving teachers in the decision-making process regarding PD decisions seems to positively affect school culture and sustainability of best practice (Senge 2012; Fullan 2002, 2001, 1999; Peterson 2002; Peterson and Deal 2002; Peterson and Brietzke 1994). In my experience, collaborative thinking can be effective in a number of ways: 1) those involved in decision making need not be persuaded because there is buy-in early on, 2) dialogue provides varying points of view that may not have been considered otherwise, and 3) involvement of people with different perspectives toward a common goal can result in the construction of new knowledge that can become a cauldron of creativity. “The enemy of instructional change ... is isolation” (Elmore and Burney 1997, p.16) and PD activities must be related to the greater picture; aligned with school vision and strategic planning goals rather than disjointed and disconnected (Hattie 2012; Richards 2002; Garrett 2001). The following questions provide an indication of whether decisions are

unilateral; made by school administrators alone or collaborative in nature involving teachers.

10. *As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I assess professional development effectiveness*
11. *As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I should assess professional development effectiveness*
12. *Teachers are involved in assessing professional development effectiveness*
13. *Teachers should be involved in assessing professional development effectiveness*

Items 10–13 aim to determine who is involved in the assessment of PD activities. One way to get around “professional isolation is by establishing effective appraisal systems ... and identifying appropriate areas for professional development” (Hayden 2006, p.88). “Evaluating professional development is a systemic process that considers change over an extended period of time” (Guskey 2000, p.20). However, little attention is given to assessment and evaluation of PD primarily because most educators lack both the skills and the time. “Effective teaching is not about workshops and checklists, but about deliberate practice” (Reeves 2010, p.65). It seems to me that deliberate practice is about focusing on refining one’s craft by receiving feedback, engaging in self-reflection and revising strategies accordingly. In this sense, assessment and evaluation of PD activities seem more effective if it is a collaborative process involving both teachers and school administrators.

18. *Investing in professional development is based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution*
19. *Investing in professional development should be based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution*
20. *All professional development is funded by the school*
21. *All professional development should be funded by the school*
22. *Teachers are expected to fund at least some of their own professional development*
23. *Teachers should be expected to fund at least some of their own professional development*

24. *There are adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development*

25. *There should be adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development*

Questions 18–25 are designed to determine how funding is resourced; including to what extent teachers are expected to fund their own PD or to what extent the school is expected to fund PD. Within the last two decades, international schools in some regions are increasingly investing in PD in an effort to be more effective as they are being held accountable for student performance outcomes (Holderness 2002). I find that I must agree with Allen’s (2002) conviction that despite the growing number of international schools, due to geographical location, many continue to be isolated and since taking advantage of PD opportunities requires travel, the costs can be exuberant. A problem to be reconciled is that international schools typically recruit teachers from national schools with little opportunity for orientation into the international system (Wilkinson 2002) and with short-term contracts due to local legislation restrictions (Hayden 2006).

26. *Please elaborate with respect to resources and professional development*

27. *Please use the space below for any additional comments and/or recommendations on the current state of professional development in your school and if there is room for improvement please state how*

Items 26 and 27 provide opportunity for “free” comments about PD resourcing and other issues related to PD in their respective schools.

A questionnaire was firstly sent for piloting to three international school administrators: two at British international schools and one at an American international school. These three administrators were chosen as they were professionals known to me and I knew I could secure a fast and efficient turnaround on my questions for the pilot study. Respondents were asked about leading questions, vagueness and ambiguity as well as double-barrelled questions (Elias 2015). Feedback from all three respondents indicated that the wording and general design were clear and unambiguous. The questionnaire was

then sent via SurveyMonkey, including a cover letter to administrators who met the participant criteria, as well, and the link was placed in a newsletter with a request to complete it, which was circulated to administrators in international schools in late spring of 2015 (see Appendix C). Indeed, 90 responses via www.SurveyMonkey.com were eventually received, of which 74 were valid, providing insights that led to the development of interview follow-up questions with 20 administrators.

The questionnaire provided fairly structured data since all respondents answered the same question, yet were also encouraged to provide additional comments in spaces provided pertaining to their own reactions and reflections. By choosing points on a scale, respondents provided standardised data yet also had opportunity for individual comments, thus balancing the scales. In the interest of time and so as not to miss administrators leaving for summer vacation, I sent my questionnaire to the participants during the last week of March 2015 and responses kept coming in until June 2015, normally the close of the academic year in international schools. The number of responses, I must admit, exceeded my expectations, as I was sceptical that administrators, at the end of a school year, a significantly busy time, would take time to respond to a questionnaire request by a researcher unknown to them. Later, through the interviews, some light on this was shed as there was considerable information pointing to an interest related to the topic and a curiosity to know about findings.

While direct contacts were made with approximately 150 administrators, I have no way of knowing how many administrators were reached by or responded to the newsletter request or how many respondents forwarded the questionnaire link to colleagues. Random sampling thus cannot be claimed as it implies that “the probability that any one respondent will be selected must be exactly equal to the probability of selecting any other” (Alreck and Settle 2004, p.81). The definition of convenience and purposive sampling seems best suited in this situation: convenience “is built upon selections which suit the convenience of the researcher and which are ‘first to hand’” (Denscombe 2007, p.18) while purposive are “selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular

qualities of the people or events chosen and their relevance to the topic of the investigation” (Denscombe 2007, p.17).

3.6.2. Interview question development and piloting

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were used as a major data source to collect information (Creswell et al. 2007). Semi-structured interviews are appropriate to use because they afford a more flexible format for interviews (Noor 2008). Semi-structured interviews consist of a set of structured questions followed by more open-ended questions in order to obtain more information (Gall et al. 2007). This semi-structured interview approach allows the researcher to obtain a basis of data in a standardised method but with an added element of depth (Gall et al. 2007). Each participant met the study criteria and had ticked a box in the questionnaire volunteering for the interview phase of the data collection. Those questionnaire participants who volunteered to be interviewed received a follow-up email confirming their interest in the second phase of the data collection. While I originally planned to conduct 10 interviews, having gotten enthusiastic responses, I interviewed 20. The first two respondents were chosen for the pilot study and the remaining 18 were interviewed for the main study. Participants were interviewed for approximately 20–30 minutes using the interview questions (see Appendix J).

The questions in the interview guide developed for this study were based on a selection of seminal and foundational literature presented in Chapter 2 of this document. A pilot study was conducted to confirm the validity and reliability of the interview questions and qualitative data collection techniques. Skype interviews with two subject matter experts having professional experience with the study topic were conducted to obtain summative input for the interview guide. The responses from the pilot test’s interviews underwent a quality audit (Patton 2002) by a third subject matter expert to determine the credibility, dependability and applicability of the qualitative interview questions in this study. Such pilot testing establishes trustworthiness and credibility in the study findings (Golafshani 2003).

Part A of the Interview Schedule (see Appendix I) included documenting participant information as follows: interviewee identification number used to protect each participant's identity, job title, location, date and time of interview, duration of interview, and documentation regarding interview process. Part B of the Interview Guide (see Appendix J) included six interview questions. Analysis of the interview responses aided in the development of appropriate lines of inquiry for answering the research questions in this study (Patton 2002). Data triangulation assisted in ensuring construct validity and for improving the quality of the study (Yin 2013) by using the quantitative questionnaire, the qualitative interview schedule and observational field notes as lines of evidence to corroborate the phenomenon, and a chain of evidence was supportive and linked to the research questions in the study (Yin 2013).

Interview Question #1 was as follows: “Based on your knowledge and experience what kind of PD do you believe takes place in international schools; those schools of which you are aware?” This question explored participant awareness, knowledge and experience regarding the type of PD that takes place in international schools generally. Since administrators are initiators of change in schools (Yager et al. 2012; Zepeda 2011) it is important that they understand how to best guide such change (Guskey and Yoon 2009; Hargreaves 2009).

Question 1a was as follows: “What types of learning activities do you believe should be included in professional development at international schools?” This question explores administrator knowledge regarding effective PD activities in international schools and how this meets teacher needs. Research supports the notion that PD promotes continuous learning and continuous usage of knowledge and skills (Guskey 2003a, 2000; Darling-Hammond 1997; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989).

Question 1b was as follows: “Could you describe two specific professional development activities that teachers from your school engaged in this year?” This question specifically examines PD activities in international schools that teachers engaged in and whether this

aligns with current researched best practice. In order for effective and sustainable learning to take place teacher needs must be addressed via PD (Tennant and Pogson 1995).

Interview Question #2 was as follows: “What should be the decision-making process for initiating a professional development activity for teachers in international schools?” The question was used to examine administrator views about decision making since administrators have a significant role to play in such decision making (Pedersen et al. 2010).

Question 2a was as follows: “Who should decide on what professional development activities teachers in international schools engage in and why?” The question was used to determine who administrators believe should be engaged in decision-making about PD and whether this is a unilateral or collaborative process (Price and Moolenaar 2015; Payne and Wolfson 2000).

Question 2b was as follows: “Who should decide which teachers in international schools attend specific professional development activities and why?” The question explored whether there was collaboration with teachers in deciding about PD attendance and who it should involve (Sparks 2007).

Interview Question #3 was as follows: “What is the decision-making process for initiating a professional development activity for teachers in your international school?” The question looked at whether there is a process in place to initiate PD activities and whether this process was collaborative with teacher involvement (Powell 2013; Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Hawley and Valli 1999; Miles 1993).

Question 3a was as follows: “Who decides on what professional development activities teachers in your international school engage in and why?” The question was to understand whether the endeavour of identifying teacher needs and deciding who attends which PD activities was corroborative between teachers and administrators or not (Elmore 2002; Bredeson 2000).

Question 3b was as follows: “Who decides which teachers in your international school attend specific professional development activities and why?” The question was used to determine the process for the allocation of PD activities and whether individual teacher needs were considered (Elmore 2002; Little 1993).

Interview Question #4 was as follows: “What should be the driving force for assessment and evaluation of professional development activities for teachers in international schools?” The question was used to determine the criteria that administrators consider important in assessing and evaluating PD (Bredeson and Johansson 2002; Guskey 2000).

Question 4a was as follows: “Can you describe how the professional development activities in international schools should be assessed and evaluated?” The question was used to further explore assessment and evaluation of PD (Reeves 2010; Killion 2008; Bredeson 2000) and whether administrators use specific criteria toward this end.

Question 4b was as follows: “Can you describe the methods used in your international school to assess and evaluate professional development activities?” The question was used to delve deeper into understanding the methods used for assessment and evaluation of PD in the particular international school.

Question 4c was as follows: “Can you describe the specific benchmarks or standards by which professional development activities in your international school are assessed and evaluated?” The question specifically explored the presence or absence of assessment and evaluation criteria for PD within the particular school (Guskey 2000).

Interview Question #5 was as follows: “What part of your international school budget is allocated for professional development?” The question was used to determine the percentage of overall budget allocated for PD (Drago-Severson 2004).

Question 5a was as follows: “Who is specifically involved in how this budget is spent on professional development in your international school?” The question was used to determine if budget allocation for PD was a unilateral administrative decision or not (Cranston 2009).

Question 5b was as follows: “What decision-making process is involved in how you or your management team allocate funds for professional development in your international school?” The question explored the decision making process for allocation of PD funds within the specific school (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009).

Interview Question #6 was as follows: “Do you have any additional experience or insights pertaining to the nature of professional development in international schools that you wish to share?” The question was used to give administrators the opportunity to add additional comments.

For complete analysis of the qualitative interview question development, see Appendix K.

Interviews and piloting

As I have previously indicated, I became interested in understanding views of international school administrators regarding PD due to decision-making processes that I have witnessed and have been a part of in an international school as well as conversations with administrators of other international schools. I had the impression that decision making regarding PD was unilateral, often biased and probably leading to PD that was not as effective as it could be. If this was true, it seemed to me that it would have an effect on teaching, most probably in a negative direction. The 25-item questionnaire was intended to shed light on this interest. Conclusive data from the questionnaire led to the formulation of six interview questions to pursue the topics further in depth.

To thoroughly understand the topic under investigation, greater detail and more in-depth discussion was necessary than the questionnaire provided; furthermore, the opportunity to interact with respondents gave me the chance to clarify issues in real time as the

conversation evolved while allowing respondents to relax and offer more information, some of it caustic, than would be provided in writing. Ideally, face-to-face interviews would be optimal. In fact, face-to-face interviews were conducted where possible. However, due to geographic locations of the other schools (i.e., Nicaragua, India, Pakistan, Israel, Venezuela, Indonesia, Germany, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia (2), Egypt, UAE, China, Qatar, Kenya, Austria and Colombia (2)), travel for on-site interviews was costly and I would be unable to be away from my own job for prolonged periods. Thus, virtual interviews were set up via Skype, a new and accepted method of data collection for qualitative interviews (Bertrand and Bourdeau 2010). Skype also gave me the opportunity to record the interviews while simultaneously taking handwritten observational field notes for further triangulation purposes.

All 20 respondents who volunteered for the interviews via SurveyMonkey agreed to Skype calls and confirmed both Internet connections and Skype availability. Interviews were transcribed as close as possible to the time they took place as the interviews remained etched in my mind and recollection was vivid and could be compared to the notes and recordings. Six Skype recordings however failed while in process, resulting in conversations through audio and recording through field notes.

Prior to the Skype interviews, the questions, the medium and the interview style were piloted with two administrators, one in Europe and one in the Middle East. Reflections from the interviewees led to slight revisions in the questions for further clarification before sending them off to the study participants. I estimated the duration of the interview to be approximately 20 minutes. In fact, interviews were close to this time frame, ranging from 19 minutes to 34 minutes. I wanted to keep it as close as possible to this time frame due to an awareness of the busy time of the year for school administrators. Some, however, despite indication of a busy schedule, seemed happy to elaborate and I was happy to listen. I am grateful for their efforts to fit me into their schedules, sometimes late in the evening, on weekends and even when travelling. I am also grateful for the time they took to complete the questionnaire and in 20 cases to be interviewed.

Observational field notes

Field notes were written during interviews to capture participants' key responses, emotions, actions and themes that may not appear in transcripts (Katz 2014). Throughout the interview process, field notes were an important method of gathering data. A technique adapted from Groenewald (2004) was used to collect field notes adhering to the process, and

“which included (a) observational notes which were taken in order to record events as they actually happen during the interview, (b) notes which were taken which reflected the initial interpretation concerning meanings, (c) methodological notes which were written in order to remind the researcher to do certain things at the right time, and (d) memos which were taken at the end of each interview session to develop brief abstract summaries.” (Groenewald 2004, p.15)

As I set up times to interview volunteer administrators, I kept a calendar with appointment dates and times to make sure that I was on track with time zones across the world. Sometimes, these interviews took place on weekends, late at night (Greek time) or while participants travelled away from their schools. They were very willing to participate in the interviews regardless of some of the circumstances mentioned. All interviews were audio taped using the Skype recording application. Exception to Skype interviews were two: one was the administrator at my school, and the other involved an administrator on the list who was visiting my school. Both of these interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded. Detailed notes were taken during the interview noting important points and highlighting such things as voice intonation, apparent emotional reactions—e.g., one interviewer indicated anger at the lack of funds available for PD and I noted that his face turned red—and other observations such as willingness to continue interview attempts when Skype connections failed. I also recorded comments made at the end that wished me luck on the research and eagerness to receive the results when done.

The interview process itself provided valuable and more in depth information about PD views. Firstly, the willingness with which information was offered was a surprise. In most

of the interviews and once the initial formalities transpired, the participants seemed to become more relaxed and more verbal with comments. Despite my being conscious about addressing all questions within the time frame indicated, participants were willing to go beyond the allocated time in order to provide more information. The tone of voice and facial expressions as seen on Skype provided further information on which I was able to focus, for example, one participant showed exasperation about the idea that teachers seem to believe, according to him, that PD should be about teachers needs and emphasized vehemently that priority for PD is to address school wide goals. Due to time zone differences, it was not uncommon for participants to speak with me after working hours and a few times, I accommodated their schedules by waking in the middle of the night. One participants' enthusiasm to speak to me stands out as he was already on vacation on the other side of the globe from the international school where he worked and yet willingly participated through Skype in his vehicle with his family present. In another instance, Skype connection failed despite several attempts and phone lines kept going down. Despite the frustration and time constraints, that particular participant insisted that we keep trying and indeed the interview finally took place. In yet another situation inability to connect schedules left one of the initial interview volunteers out of the study replacing him with another, yet I received messages days and weeks after, asking me if we could still connect. I wondered, silently, why participants were so eager to participate in the study. By the end of the interviews however, I believe I had received the answer as in one way or another each participant made comments about their interest in the topic, lack of information related to PD in international schools, perplexity about how to handle certain aspects such as assessment and evaluation and their curiosity about how the study will turn out. My questions for the most part were answered easily without much hesitation or taking time to think. However, this was not the case in relation to the question about assessment and evaluation for PD. Participant responses indicated perplexity and sometimes, frustration regarding this aspect. One participant in particular indicated that if I, the researcher, figure out the best way to assess and evaluate PD to let him know. Another one indicated that there were detailed processes in place but there is no way to assess how effective they really are. Still others seemed to be less concerned about assessment and evaluation as they found the networking that took place in conferences and workshops the most valuable for their

teachers, indications that corroborate similar comments by Hayden (2006) as well as the opportunity to leave the isolated confines of their international school. Despite requests for artefacts related to their PD processes and the promise that they would send me what they had, only one participant sent me a detailed process manual for PD in their school. Finally, it was my impression that while almost all participants indicated that collaboration with teachers PD decision-making was important, some were not as convinced that this was the best route. I speculated based on facial expressions and tone of voice that perhaps this was due to their willingness or lack of to give up decision-making control.

Once the interview was over, I added to the notes such things as themes that seemed to emerge and noted specific areas to read up on such as snowballing, when administrators indicated that they passed on my questionnaire link to other colleagues. In my journal notes later, in the day or next few days, I summarised the interviews and noted questions for personal reflection regarding my philosophical stance as well as interpretation of meanings such as “collaborative decision making”.

3.7. Structure of Data Analysis

3.7.1. Quantitative data analysis

The quantitative part of the survey was developed to gather demographic data regarding the sample population and also designed to reveal significant aspects of the participant characteristics and opinions regarding PD in their schools. An initial pilot phase collected data that indicated the feasibility and validity of the questionnaire as perceived by participants. It included information about the clarity and structure of the questionnaire, the coverage of the research topic and the time for completion.

The completion of the pilot study and the processing of the collected information by data entered into SPSS V.20 was followed by a full-scale distribution of the questionnaire. The collected data was categorised into demographic information detailing characteristics of the participants’ schools and their professional characteristics as well as instrument data about the PD practices they follow or should follow. While the demographic information

was processed and displayed as tables with percentages, the questionnaire items were processed descriptively to provide the mean and standard deviation of each one of them. To further reveal potential significant information, the questionnaire items were treated as pair items that included what participants do (first group) and what they believe they should be doing (second groups). t-Tests were run for each pair to reveal significant agreements and disagreements (Creswell 2002) and in order to provide insight for the next phase of the interview data collection (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006).

3.7.2. Qualitative data analysis

As the data collection process was completed, I analysed the development of rich descriptions that formed the basis for interpretation of the results obtained from the interviews and observational notes (Patton 2002). The analysis involved a thematic analysis of the multiple-case study evidence collected and the development of tables or matrices using Microsoft Word to display themes (Yin 2013). Thematic analysis was specifically applied to multiple-case studies because it treats each case separately, such as in an experiment (Yin 2013). There were 18 participants chosen for this study. The thematic analysis technique was used for analysing multiple cases, such as in this research study (Yin 2013). This method of analysis permitted comparability across the cases. The greater the number of cases included, the greater the strength and robustness of the research (Punch 2013).

A thematic analysis of 18 participants in face-to-face interviews provided compelling evidence from administrators in international schools on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced. The thematic analysis required that I develop strong, plausible and fair arguments supported by the data collected (Yin 2013). Potential variations in data accuracy and errors were identified and noted as part of the data collection and analysis process. The data from this in-depth qualitative study was sufficient to confirm patterns among the interviewed participants. The patterns were linked to the theoretical propositions, which can be an effective strategy to guide “how” or “why” questions for case study analysis (Yin 2013). To achieve this objective, interview questions were designed in an open-ended and semi-structured format (see Appendix J) for collection of

participant responses. Prompts were used as necessary to promote discussion of the issues surrounding the interview questions and the data was grouped with supporting information that occurred outside of the semi-structured questions and responses. In addition, the data was transformed into groups of findings that facilitated the analysis of international school administrators' views on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced. The research question and guiding questions, participant insights, analysis and interpretation of the findings were combined in developing the study's conclusions (Patton 2002).

The data collection approaches in this study, besides open-ended, semi-structured interviews, included observational field notes, transcribed interview responses, member checking and additional information that emerged during the interviews offered by participants (Yin 2013). The interview session was digitally recorded to capture key responses to ensure accuracy. Microsoft Word functioned as a tool to store the collected data, the detailed schedule of interviews, and the development of matrices or tables of grouped themes, and provided a numerical classification system for the research questions and the participants involved in the interviews. This information was backed up and stored in a password-protected file on a personal computer for protection and security of data and retrieval as necessary (Yin 2014).

Thematic analysis was used to perform the content analysis of the collected qualitative data to identify themes, ideas, key words or meanings that were deemed consistent, referenced and traceable in development of the case study database (Yin 201). Content analysis was used to organise and analyse the content of the transcribed interviews to develop themes and patterns in the data (Yin 2009; Hatch 2002). Content analysis made it possible to gauge the extent of emphasis, or omission of emphasis, of an analytical category or alignment with the theoretical propositions (Yin 2013). Each theme identified was analysed to describe the phenomena being investigated. The organisation of key themes followed a number and letter sequence. For example, a number referred to a research question in the study and a letter indicated the theme. Therefore, the first theme for research question Q1 was notated as Theme 1A, and the second was Theme 1B, and for research question Q2 the Theme was 2A, then 2B and so forth. Thematic analysis involved the identification of

themes, patterns, trends, ideas and meanings, and related interpretation of the data (Yin 2009).

The research results were analysed to identify themes that were recurring across the multiple interviews. Some evidence was non-recurring and related to the construct of the individual case. The data was coded by the interview questions and the emerging patterns that resulted were compared to other coded categories to gauge possible connections between and across the cases reviewed (Patton 2002). The codes were labels that helped identify common themes or the categories analysed that revealed patterns that existed across the multiple responses collected from each respondent, including the personal field notes (Katz 2014).

Triangulation of multiple data source was used to corroborate the facts and to increase the rigor and validity of the study (Yin 2009). Personal field notes of main points and highlights were handwritten and collected during the interview process to capture key responses, notate participant behaviour, emotions or impressions that may not appear in the interview transcriptions (Patton 2002). Another step in construction of the evidence and interpretation of the research was subject matter expert examination and evaluation of the data collected. A selection of the interview participants were given their interview transcripts and asked to provide feedback on the accuracy and validity of the transcribed information through member checking (Hatch 2002).

3.8. Ethical Issues and Assurances

The proposed study was conducted in keeping with BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011). No data collection was initiated without supervisory approval. Adherence to ethical codes of conduct during the conduct of research requires care for the participants (Gibbs et al. 2007), as well as for the obligations of researchers to the public and to their profession. Therefore, protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy and honesty with professional colleagues was assured by adherence to specific procedures (Gibbs et al. 2007).

Participants were informed that risk of harm would be minimal and limited to the stress of taking a test online and answering questions regarding some professional matters. There was no exposure to either physical or psychological harm for administrators' participation in the study. Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. There was no excessive inducement or coercion to participate in the study. Prior to the questionnaire each participant checked an informed consent form explaining the questionnaire and the purpose of the study and guaranteeing anonymity. Only the study's sole researcher conducted and concluded the data collection process, the analysis of quantitative data and any other procedures that may identify the participants. Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of subjects were further preserved with the coding of survey data and by locking the data in a secured location. Maintaining ethical standards in the conduct of this study also included honesty in presenting accurate findings from the results without intent to mislead or misrepresent readers and without compromising the integrity of the institutions that support this research.

By being involved in qualitative research, as a researcher I became greatly engaged with the subject matter and the participants. This was likely to happen since the participants shared commonalities with my own professional background in working as administrators in international schools. I did not know any of the participants on a personal level; however, I had worked with one participant closely and knew at least three others on a professional basis having interacted with them through the international school network. So, one may say that both the participants and I knew our subject matter at an in-depth level and would share multiple views on the topics and conversed about these in the qualitative interview phase of the study. It is however this sharing of "professional space" that can raise ethical concerns for the study, the researcher and, mostly, its participants. As a researcher I was constantly aware of the fact that as an academic administrator myself in an international school, my professional position could be viewed as both a strength and a challenge in conducting ethical research with the sample of participants. My primary ethical concerns were in the following areas: 1) the influence of my own values and biases,

2) questions of power distribution inherent in qualitative research, 3) confidentiality and trust between myself and participants, and 4) reporting the data to study participants.

3.8.1. Values and biases

Completely exempting one's own values and biases from mixed methods research is almost impossible to achieve in totality. Even in the positivist approach research may be impacted by the researcher's own views and values. My own biases and values can be reflected in the research questions themselves, research design choice and conducting of the data collection process (Bryman 2008). An examination of my values, biases and views on administrators in international schools and teacher PD activities could impact validity of study results. This issue was examined at the beginning of the study in discussions between my thesis supervisor and myself and was clarified at the onset of the study (Gall and Acheson 2011; Merriam 2009). I worked diligently for my data collection methods to reflect honesty and objectivity in the process of the collection, processing and analysis, and reporting of data (Creswell 2014). In choosing the topic of administrators' views on PD activities in international schools, I did risk the possibility of transferring my own biases and values to the research questions (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998; Miles and Huberman 1994).

Factors in my background (personal and professional experiences) and personal perspective on the central study theme led me to further reflect on the limitation of researcher bias and how this can be reconciled with doing ethical research. It was important at this point for me to engage in reflexivity on this matter. Through further discussions with peers and the study supervisors, I worked to read and write extensively a detailed literature review. I engaged in critical reflection and thinking through peer discussion and journal writing on how my own biases and professional position could impact research design, research implementation, data analysis and conclusions. A mixed methods explanatory sequential design was the appropriate design to best align with the purpose and research questions of the study (Ivankova et al. 2006). Sampling in the quantitative phase was convenience and purposive. However, sampling for the qualitative phase was purposive, and specifically using criterion and snowball sampling techniques (Patton

2002), which can produce group bias. Researcher bias in the data collection plan for the qualitative stage was addressed by following the quantitative data collection, the goal of a mixed methods explanatory sequential design (Ivankova et al. 2006).

As an international school administrator within the network context of international schools, I am aware that my affiliation to the population being studied can influence my value judgement thus potentially biasing data interpretation either in support or against the participants being studied. This awareness was directly related to my choice of a mixed methods approach for data collection. My goal was to diminish such ethical dilemmas or potential conflict by minimising any bias that may have been present due to my personal perspective and principles in relation to the research question. In the final analysis, I do recognise that a completely unbiased researcher stance is impossible. However, my choice of the mixed methods explanatory sequential design for executing my study met my goal of mitigating this ethical conflict as much as possible.

3.8.2. Power relationships

During both data collection phases, the quantitative questionnaire and the qualitative interviews, several participants were administrators in international schools known to me through professional interactions. No one was my direct report although in one instance, I was a direct report to one participant. Pondering this power relationship, I seriously wondered if participants felt obligated to respond or needed to maintain a “cooperative” distance for research on international schools because of being peers or, in a couple, of instances personal friends with my school supervisor. Participants might have felt that refusing to be interviewed for the study would cast a “bad light” on them as uncooperative” or appear to be an “outsider” to a fellow colleague from an international school—all of whom belonged to the same peer and professional group within the international school network.

In an effort to address these fears with survey participants, I made clear the scholarly purpose of the study as well as the data collection goal as it related to their professional position. I also explained that their participation would be valuable in providing research

literature for this under researched area of international education. I further informed all participants of the significance of the research study in improving their own professional practice and support for their work as administrators in international schools. Furthermore, I explained that anonymity of responses would be ensured by using an online computer-based survey tool and this would also allow participants the freedom to abstain from participation.

3.8.3. Issues of confidentiality and trust

Ensuring ethical practice within a study also involves avoiding deception (Yin 2009). For this reason participants were made aware of the intention and the potential use of the study (Schram 2009; Yin 2009). Informed consent procedures were followed ensuring that participants were implicitly aware of any risks related to the study; explicit information was also provided for participation in the interviews (Yin 2009). Included in the informed consent were particulars about my identity as the researcher as well as the affiliated institution. It was also made clear, via the informed consent form, that participation was voluntary and that minimal risk was expected in association with the study and that there should be no expected benefit for participating (Yin 2009).

As subjects in a research study, participants have the right to privacy; strict concealment of participants' identities was assured and was accomplished. Additionally, withdrawing from the study without backlash is the right of every participant and was reiterated to participants. Information collected from participants regarding personal identity was secured and not available to anyone not affiliated with the study (Yin 2009). Confidentiality of aforementioned information was maintained at all times and extended to the usage of data; that is, information was combined methodically and particularly in order to assure protection of participants' identities. Furthermore, information related to the study was communicated honestly and truthfully (Yin 2011). Ultimately it was crucial to document progression and procedures precisely in order to correctly report results as well as to preserve the integrity of the study and the relevant professional boundaries (Yin 2011, 2009).

Researchers are expected to communicate the purpose of a study with participants before conducting any interviews (Patton 2002). Before interviews were conducted each participant was informed about the purpose of the research project, the data collection methods used, high regard for ethical standards and an explanation about the informed consent process (Shank 2006). Therefore, participants were informed of their rights; including the right to cease the interview at any time, as specified in the informed consent process. Informed consent approval was acquired from participants preceding any interview questions (Creswell et al. 2007). Any questions participants had were addressed to ensure they understood the informed consent process as well as interview questions (Creswell et al. 2007).

Study volunteers participated willingly and were amenable to contributing to the study by providing their views, experiences and remarks. Particularly important for participants prior to the commencement of a study, is the assurance that elaborate responses will be kept confidential as well as anonymous (Patton 2002). Using a range of procedures, I protected participant private information. Informed consent forms were acknowledged. Additionally, I kept the raw data, transcribed notes, recorded interview sessions and documentation gathered in a password-protected electronic file. Hard copies of material were kept in a locked file cabinet.

During the course of the study my primary objective was my obligation to preserve participants' privacy and confidentiality (Creswell et al. 2007). Additionally, there was no discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, religion or culture. Voluntary participants were also notified about the methods used, in order to assist participants in understanding the breadth of the research project. All participants were informed that they could leave the study at any time if they chose to do so. Results of the study will be shared with all participants at the same time maintaining anonymity of identities. Participants' names and responses on study materials are identified by a unique number classification.

3.9. Summary

To address the gap in the scholarly literature regarding administrator views of PD, said study was undertaken. The question developed to investigate this issue specifically considered administrator views of PD in international schools. Beginning with the conviction that educational administration is a complex construct compounded by the context of the continuously growing and changing international school sector, clearer understanding of administrator views was necessary. The study addressed international school administrators using a mixed methods approach eliciting both quantitative and qualitative data in order to collect a stronger array of data than would be possible with a single method. Thus, after a review of the relevant literature, the development and administration of a questionnaire ensued and was sent to administrators of international schools. Twenty individual semi-structured interviews of a purposive sample of the participants then followed. Interviews were audio recorded, and during the interview process field notes were taken as an additional source of gathering data. Throughout the process, I engaged in journal writing as a means to assist in critical thinking. Questionnaire items were analysed providing a mean and standard deviation and a t-test was performed to compare sets of questions determining what administrators reported as happening in their schools versus what they think should be happening regarding PD. Thematic analysis was utilised for analysing interview data and results of qualitative data were compared with quantitative data. Results revealing administrator views regarding PD in international schools can be useful in providing information about PD in international schools in its current state. Further, such data can have implications for decision making regarding PD activities, allocation of funds as well as assessment and evaluation of efficacy of PD.

CHAPTER 4
SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1. Results of the Main Study

4.1.1. Survey data analysis

As indicated in the previous chapter, the initial phase of this investigation involved quantitative research to allow for the generation of numerical data about the participants' views on PD. A pilot phase was initiated first to test the functionality and validity of the questionnaire. Three international schools in Athens, Greece (one American and two British) took part in the pilot study in May 2015. The participants were asked to comment on the instrument regarding item ambiguity, validity and appropriateness for the research. The respondents made no comments or suggestions regarding the structure and content of the questionnaire, confirming in this way the appropriateness of the instrument for the focus of the research. The participants' evaluations of the questionnaire instrument are included in Table I

Table I: Pilot Evaluation Questions

Question	Answers
Would you agree that the questions were clear, i.e., not ambiguous and jargon free?	I agree, I agree, I agree
Are there other questions that you believe should be included?	No, No, No
Are there questions that you believe should be removed (i.e., redundant, superfluous)?	No, No, No
How long did it take you to complete the survey?	20 minutes or less, 20 minutes or less, 20 minutes or less

Following the pilot phase the full-scale distribution of the questionnaire and data collection took place during June, 2015. In addition to the questionnaire questions, demographics information was collected to provide a profile for the participants.

4.1.2. Sample demographics

The demographics of the sample were collected to provide added information and details about the participants that could potentially identify biases and influences with respect to the questionnaire items. Regarding the geographic distribution of the participants' institutions (Table II), the majority were in Europe with Middle East and South America following closely. The widespread distribution among continents eliminates the possibility of geographical bias of the results. Regarding the student enrolment in the participants' schools (Table II), the great majority (70%) had less than 1,000 students enrolled during the 2014–1015 academic years, with another 23% stating higher numbers of enrolment.

Table II: Geographic Distribution of the Sample Population

Region	Frequency	Valid Percent
Europe	21	24.7
Asia	17	20.0
Africa	9	10.6
Middle East	19	22.4
North America	3	3.5
South America	16	18.8
Total	85	100.0

Table III: Enrolment Data (Enrolment of Students in School (Middle School and High School together))

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
less than 1,000 students	63	70.0	74.1	74.1
1,001 - 2,000 students	18	20.0	21.2	95.3
Valid 2,001 - 3,000 students	3	3.3	3.5	98.8
3,001 students or more	1	1.1	1.2	100.0
Total	85	94.4	100.0	
Missing System	5	5.6		
Total	90	100.0		

An institutional characteristic that was deemed important for this research was the curriculum that schools followed. From the data collected (Table III), the great majority of the participant schools followed either the IB or their own curriculum, while the next popular choice was the national curriculum of their country of operation. Potential influence of this demographic on the instrument questions was not anticipated as the spread among the various options did not show a strong preference for a certain option. Potential influences could be revealed at the qualitative stage of the research.

Table IV: Participant School Curriculum

Curriculum	Frequency	Valid Percent
National curriculum of any country	17	20.0
International Baccalaureate diploma	29	34.1
International Baccalaureate and Middle Years Programme	7	8.2
IGCSE	3	3.5
School's own curriculum	29	34.1
Total	85	100.0

Regarding the personal characteristics of the participants, gender-wise the data revealed (Table IV) there is a strong bias for male participants as they were more than twice the females. This might potentially reflect my own observation of school administration in

international schools that is dominated being predominately male. Other than the explanation provided, interpretation of findings should include the potential of gender bias.

Table V: Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Valid Percent
Male	60	70.6
Female	25	29.4
Total	85	100.0

Information about the participants' years of experience in administration and teaching was collected (Table V) for validation purposes to ensure the sample population was experienced enough to provide valid and reliable information that reflected the PD realities in their schools. Almost 90% of the participants had more than 5 years of teaching experience, with 43% of the total having more than 16 years of experience. Additionally, 78% of the total had more than 5 years of administrative experience while 30% of them indicated they had more than 30 years of experience. This type of distribution indicates that senior-level professionals participated in the questionnaire and respectively the collected questionnaire data adequately represents the real-life situation in international schools.

Table VI: Years of Experience in Administration and Teaching

Years of Teaching Experience (include only the years actually taught to the nearest year)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 5 years or less	6	6.7	7.1	7.1
Valid 6-15 years	40	44.4	47.1	54.1
Valid 16-25 years	22	24.4	25.9	80.0
Valid 26 years or more	17	18.9	20.0	100.0
Total	85	94.4	100.0	
Missing System	5	5.6		
Total	90	100.0		

Years of Administration Experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 5 years or less	15	16.7	17.6	17.6
Valid 6-15 years	43	47.8	50.6	68.2
Valid 16-25 years	20	22.2	23.5	91.8
Valid 26 years or more	7	7.8	8.2	100.0
Total	85	94.4	100.0	
Missing System	5	5.6		
Total	90	100.0		

A final demographic collected concerns the years of employment of the participants in their current positions. This was collected to reveal the level of familiarity of each participant with the policies and practices of the school they worked at. It is apparent from the data that the majority of them (almost 70%) had been working in their schools for less than 5 years. This was anticipated given that the observed turnaround of administrators and teachers in international schools is high and there is a tendency to frequently move from one school to another. Although few years of participation in a school might indicate less familiarity with the school system, the fact that the participants are quite experienced professionals is expected to balance this limitation.

Table VII: Years of Employment in the Current Position

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5 years or less	62	68.9	72.9
	6-15 years	22	24.4	98.8
	16-25 years	1	1.1	100.0
	Total	85	94.4	100.0
Missing	System	5	5.6	
Total		90	100.0	

Overall, the analysis of the collected demographic data suggests the sample is composed of professionals qualified to participate in the research. The information they provided in the questionnaire questions is expected to reflect on the average the realities about PD observed that exist in the international schools they represent.

4.1.3. Statistical analysis

Following the analysis of the demographic data, the first three questions in the questionnaire included check box dialogues to collect information about specific aspects of PD. Regarding what the participants regarded as PD (Q1), the activities suggested by all participants included graduate courses, conferences with content-specific topics, content experts coming into the school to train teachers, courses for certification renewal, peer support from colleagues, IB workshops and AP workshops. When asked to choose the PD type(s) that applied to their school (Q2), all participants identified the same activities as taking place in their school.

Regarding the PD practices in the participants' schools, 60 of them indicated this was required by the school for all teachers, 15 indicated it was a requirement for IB teachers only, and 10 indicated that it was required by the school for AP teachers only. The distinctions observed suggest the importance some schools place on their advanced

curriculum programmes as they make an extra effort to ensure high-quality standards for the teachers that attend these programmes. A smaller number of schools (25) indicated that PD programmes were optional and teachers were only encouraged to participate.

Further to the initial section (questions 1–3) of the instrument, the remaining questions (see Table VIII) used a 4-item Likert scale with options for *strongly disagree (SD)*, *disagree (D)*, *strongly agree (SA)* and *agree (A)*, and an additional one for *not applicable (NA)*. With respect to the processing of the Likert scale data the assumption will be made here that Likert-type categories constitute interval-level measurement. Even though the interval nature of individual items in Likert scales has been debated, the fact that the summed scale score may still be of the interval type may be insensitive to the violation of interval assumption at item level (Leung 2011; Jamieson 2004; Knapp 1990). This is reinforced by the argument that sample size and distribution are more important than level of measurement in determining whether it is appropriate to use interval-level statistics. The assigned numerical values for the Likert scale were arbitrarily assigned sequentially to $SA = 5$, $A = 4$, $D = 3$ and $SD = 2$ values.

Table VIII includes the summary statistics of the questionnaire items Q4–Q25. These items measure the participants’ views of what they do versus what they believe they should be doing. Overall, 90 questionnaires were collected. After discarding invalid responses (erroneous or incomplete entries), the sample size for the individual items ranged from 74 to 79 complete responses.

Table VIII: Mean and Standard Deviations of Questionnaire Items Q4–Q25

No	Question	n	Mean	SD
Q4	As the school administrator (Head, Principal) I determine professional development needs for teachers	76	3.7	0.8
Q5	As the school administrator (Head, Principal) I should determine professional development needs for teachers	78	3.8	0.8
Q6	Teachers work with administrators to determine the professional development needs of the school	77	4.3	0.7

Q7	Teachers should collaborate with administrators in determining the professional development needs of the school	79	4.6	0.6
Q8	Teachers determine their own professional development needs	77	3.8	0.7
Q9	Teachers should determine their own professional development needs	76	3.9	0.7
Q10	As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I assess professional development effectiveness	77	3.9	0.7
Q11	As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I should assess professional development effectiveness	78	4.2	0.6
Q12	Teachers are involved in assessing professional development effectiveness	79	4.1	0.7
Q13	Teachers should be involved in assessing professional development effectiveness	79	4.4	0.5
Q14	As the school administrator I decide which teachers participate in professional development	76	3.7	0.8
Q15	As the school administrator I should decide which teachers participate in professional development	76	3.8	0.8
Q16	Teachers are involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development	77	3.6	0.9
Q17	Teachers should be involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development	77	3.8	0.9
Q18	Investing in professional development is based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution	76	2.7	0.7
Q19	Investing in professional development should be based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution	74	2.7	0.7
Q20	All professional development is funded by the school	78	3.3	0.9
Q21	All professional development should be funded by the school	77	3.4	0.9
Q22	Teachers are expected to fund at least some of their own professional development	77	3.6	0.7
Q23	Teachers should be expected to fund at least some of their own professional development	78	3.8	0.8
Q24	There are adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development	79	4.2	0.8
Q25	There should be adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development	79	4.7	0.5

An interesting observation from the data in Table VIII is that there is no significant difference between what the participants believe is happening in their school and what should happen. As a minor trend, it could be said that in general there is room for

improvement in the sense that the scores of what should be done were always equal or higher.

Anything above 3.5 in Table VIII is an indication of agreement, while anything above 4.5 (bolded numbers) indicates strong agreement as it rounds to 5, which represents *SA*. In the first category we have the pairs Q6-Q7 indicating the importance participants placed on teachers and administrators working together in determining the PD needs of their schools. Interestingly, while there is significant cooperation, the participants felt it should be strengthened more. Strong agreement was also observed regarding teachers being involved in assessing PD effectiveness (Q12-Q13) and the existence of adequate resources in schools to ensure effective implementation of PD (Q24-Q25). Still, the scores of both pairs indicated the participants' belief that there was room for improvement.

The lowest agreement ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 0.7$) observed was regarding the belief that PD is (or should be) based on the number of years a teacher has been in the school (Q18-Q19). This could be interpreted in a variety of ways, including the fact that mature teachers would perhaps have already been exposed to professional training and that new teachers might have a greater need for PD. Excluding the aforementioned reasons, the result could be an indication that participants do not believe there is and should not be an association between years of employment at an institution.

For the purposes of confirming the associations made, two-tail t-tests were run for each pair of questions (Table IX). The results of the tests confirm the conclusions made for the three pairs (Q6-Q7, Q18-Q19, Q24-Q25) identified and discussed previously, but failed ($t(78) = -3.9$, $p = .00$) to provide strong support for pair Q12-Q13 regarding agreement between teachers' involvement or need for involvement in assessing PD effectiveness.

Table IX: t-Tests for Questionnaire Item Pairs

No	Question	t	p(2-tail)	d
4-5	As the school administrator (Head, Principal) I (should) determine professional development needs for teachers	-1.7	0.09	78
6-7	Teacher work (should collaborate) with administrators to determine the professional development needs of the school	-5.4	0.00	76
8-9	Teachers (should) determine their own professional development needs	-1.0	0.30	75
10-11	As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I (should) assess professional development effectiveness	-4.7	0.00	78
12-13	Teachers are (should be) involved in assessing professional development effectiveness	-3.9	0.00	78
14-15	As the school administrator I (should) decide which teachers participate in professional development	-2.0	0.05	77
16-17	Teachers are (should be) involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development	-3.5	0.00	77
18-19	Investing in professional development is (should) be based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution	-2.4	0.02	78
20-21	All professional development is (should be) funded by the school	-1.4	0.16	76
22-23	Teachers are (should be) prepared to fund at least some of their own professional development	-1.2	0.25	77
24-25	There are (should be) adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development	-5.4	0.00	78

4.1.4. Qualitative data analysis and discussion

Data collection was organised using an Interview Guide (Appendix J) which assisted in recording of information, and served as a reminder of essential information that included the purpose of the study (Yin 2009). The questions were of a conversational style that allowed the participants to elaborate on the topic; however, the Interview Guide was followed and I used prompts when needed (Yin 2013). The interview questions were pre-established to include: 1) opening welcome, 2) interview questions, and 3) a closing summary thanking the participants. Permission was obtained from each participant to record the interview to preserve accuracy, which was transcribed and loaded into Microsoft Word files for analysis. I used the observational field notes (Yin 2009; Patton 2002) as

well as a review of the quantitative survey results to perform triangulation. It was necessary that I develop a strong understanding of the multiple-case study involving 18 participants in order to draw and verify conclusions, presented in Chapter 5. To this end, I also employed a logical chain of evidence and ensured theoretical coherence by singling out themes and patterns emerging from the raw data (Miles and Huberman 1994). To present the raw data, I sorted results to identify and group similar patterns or issues in the responses given by participants, thus extracting meaningful narratives from the multiple cases. Looking for patterns enabled me to identify similarities within groups as well as differences across groups (Eisenhardt 1989). Finally, one of my main foci in the qualitative data analysis was to explore similarities and differences in individual participant responses and compare these results to findings in the extant literature.

Below is an outline of the answers to the study's research questions in the form of Themes. Thematic analysis was conducted on the raw qualitative data that was gleaned from each research guiding question's corresponding interview questions.

Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?

To answer this guiding question, I asked participants to describe what kind of PD they believe takes place in international schools based on their knowledge and experience. I also asked participants what types of PD learning activities they believed should be included and to describe two specific PD activities that teachers from their particular school engaged in within the past year. Interview questions 1, 1a and 1b correspond to this research guiding question.

Theme 1A: Schools send people to conferences and workshops or bring in content specialists.

Recent research on PD conducted in specific international schools such as in China (Lai et al. 2016), Israel (Yemini and Fulop 2014), Singapore (Carter and McNulty 2014), Thailand (Machin 2014) and Vietnam (Lalor and Abawi 2014) shows that school leaders advance teacher-learning activities that target multicultural teaching practices with goals of getting

teachers to engage in mutual learning and to adjust their work practices in line with the context of the particular international school. Participants used the words “learning community”, “learning environment” and “culture” to describe their international schools’ settings. Excerpts from the interview transcripts:

“There are many things going on internationally depending on what part of the world... Typically teachers attend conferences, take some courses (on line or face-to-face) or are asked to attend content-based workshops. It all depends on budget. This is becoming more of a problem as is the retention of teachers in international schools so the question is how much do you invest in a teacher who will only be at the school a couple of years.”
(Participant 1)

“PD is fairly varied in international schools. Typically there are two types; individual development and the organisation has goals and priorities. Educators are committed to doing both of these. There is a strong role played by associations such as NESAs, CEESAs, EARCOS, the Office of Overseas Schools, they are big supporters. The themes in the schools are content oriented. We have our local PD, for host country staff development which is multifaceted. It’s hard to get consultants here in but we usually get one or two a year and they work with our teachers in targeted areas. Our big challenge and our big thinking right now is how do we get our new teachers up to speed because of transitions in international schools... Our (expatriate) teachers stay 3–5 years so there is always a turnover and then we are always growing and changing and learning and how do we ensure that the new teachers coming in are able to be successful in our school based here in” (Participant 8)

“What happens here is that we have a PD budget, it’s probably about 2% of our budget... The leadership team, principals, psychologist, and business person and I partake (in the decision making). We are going to fund the things that (we believe) matter the most.”
(Participant 9)

“We are too small to have a PD coordinator or curriculum coordinator so... the principals do the curriculum coordination and I pretty much do the PD coordination but in conjunction with them in our leadership team meetings so we have already mapped out what we will target for next year. There is no other way we can be the way we are without PD being run the way it is here. It is more difficult for the smaller schools to do such a thing but the bigger schools do that.” (Participant 16)

All participants expressed the importance of PD in international schools and how their unique context calls for unique solutions on how to best develop PD activities for their teachers and staff. In the interviews, the “uniqueness” of each international school’s context was defined by the administrator according to host country and culture, ethnicity of the teachers and staff, high turnover of expatriate teachers, school size, budgetary concerns and the type of academic programme (IB, British or American curriculum). As seen, the questionnaire analysis indicates that most schools either follow the IB curriculum or their own curriculum, with the national curriculum coming in third. Further reports indicate that PD is a requirement for programmes such as IB and AP. This suggests perhaps that adoption of specific programmes such as the IB could ensure more support for PD. In my review of the seminal literature on teacher PD, both Guskey (1987) and Sparks and Hirsh (2000) agree that situation-specific circumstances in both classroom and school settings may make it difficult to implement the findings of researched practices for improved teacher and leadership actions (Guskey 1987). Moreover, the resources available for PD opportunities add to major differences in specific PD activities across the various school contexts and locations (Sparks and Hirsh 2000).

Theme 1B: Professional development activities in international schools should focus on ongoing activities such as project-based learning or teacher collaborative groups.

Because of the diverse nature of issues facing international schools in PD, all participants agreed that administrators must take the lead in defining the nature of PD in each of their school settings (Lalor and Abawi 2014). Throughout my discussions, I saw an overall belief emerge among the participants that PD activities that foster teacher collaboration can add to a positive culture and environment (Elmore 1995; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989)

for their respective international school. Participants agreed that PD must become an ongoing process to gain strength in training teachers (Garet et al. 2001) for the challenges faced in an international school environment. Participants used the words “collaboration”, “learning community” and “professional development activities” to describe the types of PD activities attended by teachers in their international schools. Excerpts from the interview transcripts:

“I think balance is important between the grass roots generated from desire of teachers and overarching school goals. Marry the teachers’ needs with the school needs. It must be collaborative—driven by shared goals and participation.” (Participant 18)

“If I had to choose two activities I would say the Action research initiative where all teachers and specialists are engaged throughout the year and the Collaborative Learning Community where teachers are given the choice to participate in CLC activities that eventually they can use in their classrooms. This gives them the opportunity to receive feedback and brainstorm with their colleagues about issues they are facing in the classroom in a non-threatening way. Ultimately teachers/counsellors know their needs but the (administrator) has the vision and the instructional leaders are in-between and should ensure understanding of these both ways.” (Participant 1)

“How do we measure impact? In each department we have a set of agreements in terms of what learning should look like and through the collaborative approach they all (teachers) get closer to what this should look like in the classroom. So, I see more and more consistency in pedagogy and rubric for assessment. Which becomes like this because of PD and through the agreements, and I see improvement in student learning (standardised tests). When we were less disciplined in terms of PD we had lower test scores. I don’t know if it is direct result now but I believe it is. We have higher test scores because of this.” (Participant 3)

“One activity we had our faculty engage in is Project Based learning with Suzie Bons. We built it in as a unit and had faculty engage in this, and now we are considering ways to

continue it next year so that it is not a one-time thing and it is sustainable. The second activity is the Advisory Programme focused on 'how to cultivate relationships between faculty and students'. This is based on the model from California called 'wild wood'. From Barrett. This is an advisory toolkit from the Wildwood Outreach Center." (Participant 15)

After hours of interviewing 18 international school administrators in schools around the globe and on each continent, it was obvious to me that there is no one clear path to PD activities for teachers and staff at international schools. All participants agreed that PD activities should be guided by best practice, yet this was not always the case in reality. Specific PD activities varied from school to school based mostly on school size and budgetary concerns. Quantitative analysis indicated that participants considered a wide range of activities to be PD.

Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision-making process for initiating teacher professional development?

To answer this guiding question, I asked participants to describe what should be the decision-making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in international schools, and who decides on what PD activities teachers in international schools engage in and why. Additionally, I asked the participants for examples of what they accomplish in these areas in their own international school context. From the interviews, Theme 2A emerged as a dominant theme and I noticed Themes 2B and 2C were split almost evenly amongst the remaining eight participants. Interview questions No. 2, 2a, 2b, 3, 3a and 3b correspond to this research guiding question.

Theme 2A: Decisions on what professional development to initiate and who goes should align with school-wide goals that have priority over individual teacher needs.

Studies on the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers, the focus is mostly on teachers in the USA. There is a gap in the literature regarding how expatriate teachers behave in classrooms that are culturally diverse. Consequently, there is little knowledge of how teachers and administrators, outside of their native countries, adapt in an

educational setting where the host country culture influences the organisational culture of their international school (Carter and McNulty 2014).

From the results of these interviews, it appears that international school administrators follow the precepts of their host country culture in terms of executing school governance, even in the area of teacher PD. While there is research showing that teachers' participation is affected by the particular content, structure and availability of in-service PD activities (Gumus 2013), I have not found any studies investigating the association between the availability of PD activities and international school leadership and host country culture. Participants consistently used the words "priorities", "learning priorities", "culture" and "culture of the school" to describe how they govern the dissemination of PD activities in their international school settings. Excerpts from the interview transcripts:

"We have put together here what is called the pillars of PD because what that does is lay out how I think PD should take place. I mean I think that a school needs to identify what its learning priorities are... We are an IB school so obviously we need to keep the IB training as a focus. We have a lot of English as second language learners here so we try to get all the teachers trained in working with English as second language learners, but again its based upon the learning priorities of the school rather than the learning priorities of the individual. We have been doing Professional Learning Communities."
(Participant 2)

"I think we recognised this kind of balance if you will, first of all being clear about what it is we were trying to accomplish as a school and helping people to assess their own skills as it relates to alignment about what the priorities are for the school coupled with recognising the individual (teacher)... There is a balance between those two things so when I say to you that we need to be strategic and organic, simultaneously I'm not trying to talk out of both sides of my mouth but I'm trying to be clear about explaining that there are certain initiatives that the school is trying to accomplish and in order for those initiatives to be moved successfully forward you have to have sufficient professional capacity to move those initiatives forward... While at the same time you have individual

teachers who are focused on specific things that they recognise, they need to learn and grow and we want to make sure that we will be responsive to those as well. I think it's about balancing those two things out and what's the key to that? Communication, communication, communication both ways.” (Participant 8)

“I think it would be more complex but with our very limited funds and I know that some of the things that we do in our small school are accomplished by some of my other colleagues in bigger NESAs schools, for example, if they are doing Adaptive schools they have the authors at the schools. We couldn't afford that. What we are doing meets our needs for the systemic and sustainable PD. That said, at the end of the year if funds remain in the PD budget for faculty, faculty can apply for grants for up to 650\$ to do a course, or accreditation, or they are working on a higher degree. But that's after the school's needs have been met in the targeted workshop.” (Participant 10)

“We decide on 10 competencies we want and then if the teachers could make a case that the PD meets their needs I approve it. They feel they need to spend (the money) and if they haven't, they panic to do so. Teachers must have trust that they chose wisely. They must consider how disruptive it will be school-wide when they leave. They have a form they fill out—monetary requests. HR checks it for money and then they come to me. I refuse it, I approve it or I question it.” (Participant 14)

Ten out of the 18 participants discussed their rationale of why international schools' goals have priority over individual teachers' needs in the area of PD. I was surprised and somewhat uneasy about how vehemently two of the participants insisted that teachers had to recognise that school goals have priority over PD activities. School size was not really an issue on school goals having priority over PD activities since each of these two participants came from one larger school and one smaller one. Let us note that the majority of international schools worldwide are located in collectivistic cultures, with a steep growth trajectory located in the Asia Pacific region (McNulty et al. 2013). In collectivistic countries (e.g., China, Ecuador and Taiwan), there is more of a focus on the nuclear and extended family's well-being than on that of the individual, and loyalty to a larger group

of people has higher priority over personal ambitions (Hofstede 2001). This appears to also hold true in educational settings in such cultures, with teachers placing greater value on group learning than on individual learning (Hofstede 2001).

Theme 2B: Decisions should be a collaborative process between teachers and administrators.

Administrators who supported that PD decision making should be a collaborative process between teachers and administrators were leaders focused on school and student growth and success. This group wanted to know the opportunities that teachers want in PD activities and believed that action/inquiry-based research can help nurture and promote reflective dialogue in teacher groups (Vanblaere and Devos 2015; Powell and Kusuma-Powell 2011). They had experience, from work at other domestic or international schools, implementing teacher-administrator collaborative processes. Additionally, these administrators were sensitive to international school teachers' varied professional needs, and they were dedicated to providing training for teachers to develop peer coaching and collaboration skills (Zhang 2015). Participants consistently used the words "collaborative", "collaboration" and "action research" to describe how they viewed the decision-making process for initiating teacher PD. Excerpts from the interviews:

"It should be a collaborative process. There should be protocols in place that allow teachers along with department chairs to identify personal/professional needs and align these with the needs and vision of the school. The collaboration should be between teachers/specialists/counsellors and department chairs and principals as well as the (administrator) of the school." (Participant 1)

"We have a sizeable budget (we are lucky) for PD so the Deputy Head makes the final call but done collaboratively. Teachers write PD proposals and then divisions/departments are funded. This is why we plan early." (Participant 3)

"I think that is a key, you gotta get your staff in and they can train other staff. The collaborative piece that we get from IB and we are not an IB school, we are just a school

that offers AP, trying to get them to understand that you are not teaching in isolation any more..... I'm not sure about answering your question other than just giving you more information that you probably heard from others that school improvement is trying to find out what is that bottom piece and trying to work back up but without blowing your standards for the school... It always comes to a balance between the school goals and teacher needs for training.” (Participant 17)

“I think it has to be an inclusive process of finding out what people think would be valuable for them and then some kind of filtering process to work out what’s viable, what is in budget, how to make it fair across the differing requests for different faculties or different sanctions within the school. So, I think it’s a two-phase process, the process of finding out what’s available, what people’s needs are, what they perceive to be the important things they want to have PD for. That should be as inclusive as possible but then the process of actually refining and selecting what will take place has to be a process of prioritising and that’s often the management, taking into account budget limitations and making sure it’s fair across the board because everybody will see their own needs but not necessarily the bigger picture, so it’s very inclusive and consulting in the first place and then very managerially led and prioritising in the second place.” (Participant 9)

Four out of the 18 participants strongly affirmed that PD decision making should be a collaborative process between teachers and administrators. There was strong agreement for collaboration between teachers and administrators regarding PD needs and decision making in the quantitative results as well, although there was also indication that such collaboration has room for improvement. It was also apparent to me that support of school-wide collaboration on PD decision making depended on the personal style and professional experiences of the administrators. Administrators who spoke about collaboration sounded passionate and committed to such a process. I found this to be true in spite of budgetary or business oversight concerns. I say this since it appeared that even those administrators dominated by school board rulings on budgetary constraints found and initiated continuous paths—formal and informal—for collaborative process through their international school context.

Theme 2C: Teachers should determine individual needs, discuss with principals and then propose to the heads of schools.

Administrators who supported that PD decision making should be teacher-driven were leaders who had been given greater power by school boards than, say, in a school that was school board-dominated. This group of administrators was more in favour of “critical professional development” rather than viewing teachers simply as passive disseminators who have to learn ways of implementing (Bates et al. 2010). Their goal was for teachers to be professional, active and intellectual. Also, they supported teachers actively taking part in their own development and learning, focusing on content supporting teachers’ professional growth and their ability to meet their students’ ongoing needs (Picower 2015). Their aim was to create a “safe space”, as one participant noted, where teachers can take the risk of expressing their gaps in knowledge or practice (Wilson and Berne 1999). These administrators believed that teacher-driven PD was one pathway to “cultivating global citizens” (Participant 17). Participants consistently used the words “teacher needs” and “action research” to describe how they viewed the decision-making process for initiating teacher PD as being teacher-controlled. Excerpts from the interviews:

“I’m really not involved at all in all that anymore. I mean there was a time when I was pretty actively involved, probably more in getting the system structured and developed but now those decisions really take place in a very collaborative essential kind of way between our Director of Learning, our divisional leadership team, both principals and associate principals as well as our coaches giving feedback, so it’s pretty collaborative. I mean we are fortunate that we have the financial resources that we have to give to PD and so we don’t find ourselves having to say ‘no’ very often and our Board really has been fantastic, our Board really understands that we have to make an investment for the PD of our faculty they want us to be a lighthouse in the Middle East and so they want us to be out there in every sense of the word, they want us to be kind of carrying our fair share of opening up the school campus and opening up the classrooms to things that are going on inand so we are fortunate to have the level of support. I was just looking at the budget and talking with our Director of Learning. We will probably end the year with almost 150,000\$ in our

PD budget and it's not that we are saying 'no' to people, it's just that we made a significant commitment financially and (teachers) have the opportunity to do the things that they want to do.” (Participant 8)

“If I don't have the training for the teachers and if they aren't at the top of their field and continuously learning, (students will not benefit). It's really dependent on the teacher and on their background to deliver the programme that they expect. I have been in the school 26 years, 10 years I have been head. I was the secondary school principal, secondary school assistant principal; I was middle school principal. I've been on the other side; I was a teaching principal so I am very aware of what is involved, also my academic background is in clinical reading for supporting instruction so I'm very aware how important training is for people and as I said my complete... my passion for PD is what led me to devote a lot of hours to the NESB Board because I feel that that is the best way for so many of our schools to really do that.” (Participant 10)

“Teachers could pretty much use the money they had however they wanted. We agreed that if we were to make a sustained change in the classroom it was going to be on the strength of our PD, so we centralised the process where all requests went through the district office, our Director of Curriculum. But, probably more importantly we added quite a bit of money to the district office to support the school so that if you were doing the type of PD that we wanted you to do in both the content and the type of activity we made money a non-issue and we were able to support 100% anyone who wanted to do the PD that met the district goals or was just good PD, so we had to define what good PD looked like and we spent the money behind it and we were able to support it 100%. So the only conflict was when people wanted to go to Thailand for their annual conference and we said 'well we just can't support you 100% like we did in the past' and that is a big change for us.”(Participant 12)

Four out of the 18 participants agreed that teachers' decisions about PD should be the drivers as to how PD activities are structured in their international school. I saw the dominance of the administrator's personal style as a prerequisite for this kind of “laissez-

faire” leadership style. I also noticed that administrators who supported the notion that teachers in international schools should make the final decisions on PD activities worked at British curriculum or AP programme schools in the Middle East or certain parts of Asia where budgets and opportunities for PD are plentiful.

Q3: How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for the assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?

To answer this guiding question, I asked participants to describe how PD activities should be assessed and evaluated. Subsequently, I asked participants to describe the methods used in their particular international school to assess and evaluate PD activities and if their school had specific benchmarks or standards by which to measure the impact of PD activities. Interview questions No. 4, 4a, 4b and 4c correspond to this guiding question.

Theme 3A: Teachers who engage in professional development share with others in the school their professional development-based learning on a formal and informal basis.

All PD systems, both formal and informal, need to be flexible and capable of responding to teachers’ changing needs (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995). Also, teachers in international schools have to be at the centre of change (Devono and Price 2012; DuFour and Marzano 2011). However, it seems that this study’s participants felt the pressure from their work environment to deal with other administrative issues and a situation had evolved where teachers formed the structures and arrangements for discussion and exchanges with their peers about PD activities. Most felt that they had to keep working on developing an assessment and evaluation process and that such a process is important. I was surprised that two participants actually rationalised this deficit in their administrative processes and found reasons as to why keeping this status of informality is beneficial for their teachers. Participants consistently used the words “random” and “conversations” to describe how they viewed the decision-making process for initiating teacher PD as being teacher-controlled. Excerpts from the interviews:

“There definitely needs to be a way to evaluate and assess PD. One of the things we did along with the big initiatives is to rework our supervision and evaluation structure so we

created what we call the individual professional growth plan. So, every teacher uses the same checklist and we ask them to catalogue the PD they are doing, what impact it has in the classroom, applying evidence through their student work or through their own self-reflection or lesson plans or artefacts that show progress. So, it's categorised around the two big goals: literacy and technology, so the teacher will write about the course they took or they will write about the work they did with the consultant and they will show us how it affected their lesson plan, they will show us some examples of student work. This is the first year we did it so we basically suspended the traditional narrative that drove everyone insane and put in this which is much more tangible, much more a collection of the good stuff that they were doing. And by and large that has been very positive. We are making some adjustments to the instrument but it's very, very focused in the work we are doing at the school rather than just a general referendum on how they are doing. I think the teachers have appreciated this because it's gotten rid of the dog and pony observation method.” (Participant 12)

“Some PD activities, for example sabbaticals, change the whole way teachers think, it recharges them. It is very hard to measure. On the other end specific activities, learn iMovie to produce videos for example. In the States we created three apps to promote dialogue among teachers. At the end there was a strong sense among faculty that there were more random conversations about practice—non-evaluative but growth-oriented. The nature of dialogue changes. It is hard to measure.” (Participant 18)

The assessment and evaluation process for teacher PD activities in international schools was the only issue in the interview protocol where all administrators had a unanimous response: even in the most progressive and financially stable international schools represented in the study's sample, there was no formal assessment and evaluation process for teacher PD. I believe this was one of the more significant findings of this study. 7 out of the 18 participants stated that it was up to the teachers to find a means to share their PD experience with their peers. This could be accomplished on a formal basis (e.g., staff meetings) but appeared to be done more on an informal basis (conversations among teachers).

Theme 3B: There is a survey method in place in the form of a questionnaire for information gathering, but there is no significant follow-up for post-professional development evaluation.

I believe that participants were not ready to “destabilise” this system and move to a more precise or meaningful assessment and evaluation process for PD activities. It appeared to me that, for the most part, assessment and evaluation processes for PD activities were almost an afterthought for these participants. There is also no requirement instituted by the school board or at any other management level of their specific international school to require a meaningful assessment and evaluation of PD activities. Participants consistently used the words “questionnaires”, “data” and “information” to describe how they viewed the decision-making process for initiating teacher PD as being teacher-controlled. Excerpts from the interviews:

“There should be some kind of evaluation process as well as bringing things into the school for others to learn, not so much as a school-wide PowerPoint presentation but perhaps getting together in small groups to relay what they have learned to other colleagues of similar needs. We have a questionnaire that everyone fills out once they come back from a PD experience. It includes questions like ‘what have you learned?’, ‘how was it useful?’ and ‘would you recommend it to others?’ It’s an open-ended questionnaire and is available for others to see. If the activity comes highly recommended then we will consider it again. If not, we won’t. If overall it was a positive experience, then there is an expectation that they will feed it back to the faculty, not in a school-wide presentation but perhaps just in their specific departments.” (Participant 16)

“We are working on that. There is a lot of engagement from CLCs. They set the benchmarks on the PD. There is a rubric, we all must speak the same language and consider how will we know if it is a better school. We send surveys and get a lot of information, valuable information. Although for me it’s not enough because it is skewed. The hard part is the need to answer the assessment piece. We do some of this through observation: walking into the hallways and classrooms, look to see if behaviour is

appropriate, if there is buy-in to what we are doing, if there is a balance for students and if we are indeed cultivating global citizens.” (Participant 17)

Five out of the 18 participants identified that their school did have a survey method in place to gather data upon a teacher’s return from a PD activity. However, these participants all stated that no significant evaluation of the survey data was accomplished at their international school. It appeared that several of the participants were satisfied with the present set of “evaluation and assessment” processes in place for PD activities. I did mention to four of these five participants that self-report information as data can be unreliable and that, on its own, it can present a very different sense of adult learning when not followed up by classroom observation (Ebert-May et al. 2011). Among these four participants there did not seem to be much of a reaction to this reliability issue of self-reported data.

Theme 3C: There is no adequate post-assessment and evaluation process for professional development.

To ensure that PD does lead to improve student learning, a first step is to incorporate into teacher PD the features of effective learning that have been identified (Desimone 2011). There appears to be no connection between this idea and how PD is assessed and evaluated by the 18 participants in this sample. All administrators represented in this sample did not seem to have any strategic planning in place to ensure that they use appropriate assessment and evaluation tools to evaluate teachers’ learning from the PD that their international schools offered them. Participants consistently used the words “difficult” and “not/no/none” to describe their experiences of no institutionalised system of a post-assessment and evaluation process for PD. Excerpts from the interviews:

“Well, sustainable is really difficult in our schools. Our schools are really transient, which makes a lot of those things harder to measure but I do think that you can gather data on the kinds of PD that have been going on in the school, in particular here, we’ve been supporting the readers and writers workshop model for a couple of years and then you can connect that with test scores or you can connect it with writing sample scoring and

hopefully you will be able to demonstrate an improvement in writing facility and skills from the kids. I think the other data that you can gather again is how many people went out, how many people brought back, what was the shape of that sharing, was it grade level or was it in a larger divisional-level presentation and they share that in our celebrations of teaching and so you can talk about that.” (Participant 13)

“There is not a current assessment in place but I think it’s very possible. We are not there yet but getting there. Staff must give a good rationale for the PD. Strategic goals should be measurable and PD should be one of them—i.e., to develop a literacy programme you need the right PD. You should see this in the scores, in the implementation, in the buy-in for teachers. So, if it’s ESL you should see the results, the same goes for science. It requires administration support, peer-review focus and that it is holistic.” (Participant 14)

“Assessment and evaluation is not easy unless it is an ongoing initiative. The Action research project will provide for us some data that will address this issue. There is continuous reflection and adjustment by the teacher in the classroom, feedback from colleagues and quasi administrators, so we hope to see some good results here and to institutionalise a process.” (Participant 1)

Six out of the 18 participants offered little rationale as to why there was no post-assessment and evaluation process for PD. A couple did cite that there were budgetary constraints, time constraints, and a lack of professional expertise at their school to develop, pilot and offer ongoing supervision for a formalised assessment and evaluation process for PD. Although it is critical to align PD goals with a school’s vision and strategic goals, in most school contexts evaluation processes are at best still superficial and at worst non-existent; the process is more like one of observing and documenting than it is assessment and evaluation (Reeves 2010; Guskey 2000). School leaders can find the assessment of PD programmes especially challenging (Bredeson 2002), which appeared to be just the case for this study’s participants.

Q4: How do administrators in international schools view the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?

To answer this guiding question, I asked participants to describe which part of their international school budget is allocated for PD. Additionally, I inquired as to who is specifically involved in how the PD budget in their school is calculated, and what entailed the decision-making process on how PD funds were allocated in their school. Interview questions No. 5, 5a and 5b correspond to this research guiding question.

Theme 4A: There is a standard 2% of an international school's operating budget allocated for teacher professional development activities.

Administrator-teacher collaboration to assess PD needs and involving teachers in deliberations regarding resource allocation for such activities can make a positive contribution to the school culture and also efforts aimed at sustainability (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009; Cranston 2009), yet it appears this is not the case in the international schools represented by the participants in this study. Excerpts from the interviews:

“Two percent of our school budget is allocated to PD.” (Participant 1)

“PD is 2% of operating budget. This is allocated to PD and it goes up every year.” (Participant 4)

“I work with the Finance Director and the Board Financial Affairs Committee, there is also Board policy. So it's written into policy that it is 2% of our budget.” (Participant 10)

The standard reply from 14 out of the 18 participants was that 2% of the school budget was allocated for PD activities at their international school. Effectively allocating a budget for PD activities can prove an overwhelming task, even for highly qualified school administrators. In this capacity, they are often pressed to convince their school board of the need for PD and at the same time be creative in allocating budget and finding ways to create a school culture that offers many and varied PD activities.

Theme 4B: The school board approves a professional development budget.

Along with the allocation of resources, administrators also need to be creative to find resources that will support their efforts. This requires both knowledge and skills so as to ensure positive responses from their school boards. Administrators also need to make sure teachers consistently have enough time for PD activities during the school day, achieving this by creating a culture that is conducive to such mindsets (Tallerico 2005; Drago-Severson 2004). From this study's sample, 6 out of the 18 participants did seek out other means to move beyond their allocated budget as long as these actions, like developing professional learning communities, did not require financial funding or take the teacher out of the regularly scheduled classroom. Participants consistently used the words "board" and "decide" to describe their international schools' processes for budget approval of PD activities. Excerpts from the interviews:

"We present it to the Board of Directors and they approve it. We cut back this year and are doing strategic planning." (Participant 5)

"There was a huge budget; over 1 million dollars for PD which got cut greatly to 300,000\$. The Director and Board decide the budget." (Participant 7)

"I make decisions on it but it's basically approved (by the Board)." (Participant 16)

"The (Board of Directors) decide. I don't know what the budget is here (in my old school it was 72,000\$ and I had control). We expect here when people are hired that they will stay a few years and we are looking at bringing in people cheaper and for less cost." (Participant 17)

Across all the international schools that had a budget for PD activities, international school administrators in this study stated their budget was approved by a school board or some form of a management team owning or overseeing their school. Four participants reported they did not have the final word on budget allocation for PD and that management teams

could easily alter the financial figures without seeking feedback or consulting with the administrator.

Theme 4C: The administrator decides how the budget is allocated.

Participants noted their difficulty in balancing educational needs and commercial effectiveness, essentially calling for them to be both educator and manager. Two participants felt they were just functioning day by day and felt disappointed about the pressures of how attuned they had to be to their school owners' commercial interests. One participant stated that he was already on a job search for his next position due to this ongoing issue. Participants consistently used the words "business", "commercial", "budget" and "decide" to describe their international schools' processes for budget approval of PD activities. Excerpts from the interviews:

"The Director of Teaching and Learning oversees the budget. The leadership team, principals, psychologist, business person, and I decide. We are going to fund the things that matter the most." (Participant 4)

"I (make the decision) with the Finance Director and the Board Financial Affairs Committee, there is also Board policy." (Participant 10)

"We do not just divide money to everyone who wants to go. We have about 180–200,000\$ allocated for PD and I usually decide who and where once the proposal is made to me by teachers." (Participant 15)

Budget allocation is a strong theme in the changing landscape of international schools today: there is a wider range of provision, heightened awareness about gaps in quality control, and concerns regarding both teacher recruitment and their training (Bunnell 2014). In international schools where a school board or management team had allocated funds for PD activities, all but two could make a final decision on the distribution of funds and the teacher or department that could use them.

I sensed that those administrators with the final say on how the PD budget was spent felt empowered as leaders by the trust shown to them by the school's management team. Those administrators that had no final allocation power sounded to me rather disappointed and even bitter about how concerns related to business overshadowed educational needs. As such, it is logical that issues such as financial integrity, commercialisation and searching for profit are assuming just as great importance as those of education and students in international school leadership discourses (Hayden and Thompson 2011). During data collection for this study, administrators conveyed to me at length that this "for-profit" paradigm introduces a potentially uneasy situation for them as educators (Machin 2014).

4.2. Summary

In studying the views of administrators in international schools about how PD is planned, implemented, allocated and resourced, 90 questionnaires were collected. Some responses were invalid or incomplete, resulting in a sample size for individual items ranging from 74 to 79. Results indicate that participants consider PD to include a wide range of activities. Regarding PD practice, 60 participants indicated that it was a requirement by the school for all teachers, 15 indicated it was a requirement for IB teachers only, and 10 indicated that it was required for AP teachers only. Furthermore, no significant difference was found between what the participants believe is happening in their school and what should happen. The results of the questionnaire analysis suggest the importance teachers and administrators place on working together to determine PD needs and there was strong agreement on teachers being involved in assessing PD effectiveness. The observations and conclusions drawn from the quantitative research provided evidence that guided the selection of topics and areas that needed deeper understanding and inquiry during the interview phase that followed.

Interview results indicated the emergence of the following themes as reported by participants: schools send people to conferences and workshops or bring in content specialists; PD activities in international schools should focus on ongoing activities such as project-based learning or teacher collaborative groups; decisions on what PD to initiate

and who goes should align with school-wide goals that have priority over individual teacher needs; decisions should be a collaborative process between teachers and administrators; teachers should determine individual needs, discuss with principals and then propose to the heads of schools; teachers who engage in PD share with others in the school their PD-based learning on a formal and informal basis; there is a survey method in place for information gathering, but there is no significant follow-up for post-PD evaluation; there is no adequate post-assessment and evaluation process for PD; there is a standard 2% of an international school's operating budget allocated for teacher PD activities; the school board approves a PD budget and the administrator decides how the budget is allocated.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

I embarked on this research, because the administrative positions I hold in an international school requires me to think about what constitutes best practices for teachers and ways to accomplish and sustain such practice. PD seems to be the venue through which teachers most often seek to obtain the tools to work optimally in the international school arena. The complexity of international schools is actually a direct challenge to the goal of incorporating best practices: diverse cultures co-mingle and are encompassed within one school; the teacher population is transient; and different learning and cultural styles make core values in philosophy and teaching hard to align. To be effective, therefore, PD in international schools must be carefully considered and designed. It cannot simply be left to whatever an easily attended professional conference has to offer.

A carefully designed PD programme starts with understanding administrator views regarding PD. These administrators have decision making power, and their thinking, philosophy, and values are often the only processes that guide the development of professional programmes. This study investigated administrator orientation to teacher PD in the ways outlined below. The following chapter will examine and recap the thesis study, indicate the main methods used, discuss the findings and their implications and suggest areas for further research.

5.2. Question and Methodology

Inquiry about PD in international schools led to the present research question: “What are the views of administrators on how professional development is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced in international schools?” and subsequent guiding questions. Using a mixed methods approach, I was able to collect and process data and consider views on the research topic from more than one perspective, quantitative and qualitative. Themes

emerging from the analysis provided valuable information on international administrator views on how PD is planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced.

5.3. Summary of Findings

The first phase of the data collection process involved a quantitative questionnaire that provided indicative information about the demographics of the sample population and their perceptions. In view of the collected demographics and the number of qualified questionnaires (74–79), I conclude that the sample population is representative of the target population and sample validation has been sufficient to support the conclusions made regarding PD plans in international schools.

Among the survey findings were need for teacher and administrator collaboration in determining the PD needs of international schools (quantitative and qualitative); feedback regarding the effectiveness of PD activities should be provided by both administrators and teachers (quantitative); resources were not adequate enough for effective implementation of PD initiatives (quantitative and qualitative). There was strong evidence for the appropriateness of the research design—combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, as in comparison of the two some of the themes (relating to Q1 and Q2) revealed by the qualitative analysis were identified by the quantitative part of the research while others (relating to Q3 and Q4) were not captured.

5.4. Limitations of the Present Study

First, there is a predominance of male subjects in this study, and there is really no way to know whether gender is an influence on the views and practices used by administrators in international schools when implementing PD activities or programmes. Further investigation could consider the number of female administrators in international schools to determine if such posts have a balance between male and female leaders or whether present results reflect a type of bias in international schools in favour of male

administrators as opposed to female administrators and whether views differ between males and females.

Second, there is also a limited statistical analysis performed on the quantitative data gathered in this study. An extended statistical analysis is recommended for future studies that would include a detailed processing of administrator perceptions regarding what is done and what should be done with each demographic variable. This greater detail in quantitative analysis will likely reveal the potential influences of gender, years or experience, cultural backgrounds, and curriculum practices, to name a few categories.

Because this study supports the importance of collaboration between administrators and teachers in the creation of a PD plan, future studies will also need an instrument that captures the development needs of schools from the perspective of both the school administrator and teacher. In addition to allowing for a comparative descriptive approach to the PD needs of international schools, such an instrument will also allow benchmarking initiatives that will permit the comparison of school professional programmes across the world.

Third, while efforts were made to include a diverse population in the study sample, the sample may not be representative of the whole population, because only 74 to 79 administrators responded. Given the number of international school administrators worldwide, the current sample was rather small and one cannot hope to generalise to the relevant population. For this study, convenience and purposive sampling was conducted rather than random sampling, which, if used, could allow for better representation of the population to be studied. In addition, responses to the questionnaire and interview questions were voluntary, which may have limited access to extreme views in the represented sample or supporting those who really had something to say.

These types of questions were not addressed by the current study. Furthermore, while authority is reported to rest with administrators regarding budget allocation for PD, we don't know enough about how much authority administrators are willing to relinquish.

Another area not considered in this study involves sustainability of PD programmes in times of transition. When a new administrator comes to a school and has a different approach to PD, does that interrupt sustainability? What processes could be put in place to make sure that sustainability is supported.

Finally, my own work in an international school and my predisposed ideas about PD may have contributed to researcher bias and must be considered within the context of this study.

5.5. Implications and Discussion of the Study

5.5.1. Implications of the study

The way information is collected determines findings, conclusions and implications, and relationship between these concepts. To conclude in relation to these concepts, thematic categories were used. Emergence of themes manifested through examination of the language used in the narratives. To view data from more than one perspective and thus assure triangulation (Denscombe 2007), data from the questionnaire, interviews and my own field notes of participants were used. Implications of the study are specific to this sample and some of the relevant data provided information exclusive to this study. The four sub-questions of this investigation were the foundation for developing the implications of the study that follows.

Q1: How do administrators in international schools describe the nature of professional development in international schools?

Based on responses, administrators in international schools regard PD to be important. However, the “individuality” of each international school context requires unique approaches to guarantee optimal PD activities. The information collected shows there is no one right way to PD for teachers and staff at international schools, and that despite wide consensus on what needs to be done, reality differs. Thus, PD must become a continuous process to have optimal results in training teachers for the challenges facing an international school environment.

PD activities among international schools vary greatly, based mostly on school size and budget. However, the study indicates the significance of PD activities that promote teacher collaboration as a positive addition to culture and environment. Administrators should lead defining the type of PD for their respective school settings.

Findings are in accordance with research regarding PD in specific international schools (China, Israel, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam), where leaders, amongst other practices, aspire to get teachers to fine-tune their work practices according to the context of their particular international school.

Q2: How do administrators in international schools describe the decision-making process for initiating teacher professional development?

Why is it that international schools' goals have priority over individual teachers' needs in the area of PD? Prior research findings on worldwide international schools, located in collectivistic cultures, and many in the Asia Pacific region, indicate that there is more focus in collectivistic cultures on loyalty to the 'group' and group priority over personal aspirations, even in educational settings.

Study results show that international school administrators follow the principles of their host country culture in executing school governance. Meanwhile, personal style and professional experience is significant in administrator support of school-wide collaboration on PD. Despite budget constraints, committing to collaborative processes, while focusing on school and student growth and success, is significant in initiating such processes.

Giving administrators power to support teacher-driven decision making regarding PD activities, also encourages teachers to actively participate in their own development and education. Focusing on supporting teachers' professional growth enables ability to meet their students' needs.

Q3: How do administrators in international schools describe the driving force for the assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?

Study results indicate this to be the primary weakness overall: none of the international schools in the sample had a process for assessment and evaluation of PD. This is a significant finding and may show that smaller, for-profit school, with limited resources, as well as larger schools with plentiful resources have not adequately considered the benefits of such a process.

Sharing PD practice, in some schools, was left to the teacher. They did so formally, through staff meetings or more so informally, through casual conversations with other teachers. This could be the result of administrator felt pressure to focus on other issues. However, the importance of understanding teacher needs and supporting teachers to meet these needs has been highlighted by research.

There seems to be no significant follow-up through class observation or evaluation even when there is data collection from teachers regarding PD. This lack of follow-through thwarts long-term benefits from planning, implantation and resourcing PD activities. This lack in assessment and evaluation also weakens prospects of aligning PD goals with the strategic goals and vision of the school so as to ensure improved student learning.

Q4: How do administrators in international schools describe the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?

Standard budget allocation for PD reported by administrators was 2%. Collaboration between teachers and administrators may prove the best way to resource the budget. Teacher involvement in budget allocation and resourcing may contribute to a positive school culture as well as sustainability. However, this international school study does not support such convictions.

Administrators hold the responsibility for being creative in discovering PD resources and ensuring school board support for such efforts. Guaranteeing that PD funds are used efficiently and making sure such activities do not disrupt teacher classroom time is significant.

As international schools change constantly final budget allocation decisions rest with administrators and as such they may feel more empowered and motivated to balance educational requirements with commercial needs.

5.5.2. Discussion and conclusions

The main contribution of this study is to provide nuanced understanding of how administrators in international schools view PD planning, implementation, evaluation and resourcing. It also illustrates the uncertainty about PD in international schools among members of the international community. However, there is indication from the participants that decisions regarding PD should be made collaboratively between teachers and administrators for better understanding of PD needs and resource allocation. Informing the international community about the need to develop processes aligned to school goals and individual professional goals for resourcing PD is an important contribution. The overwhelming indication that PD is important in the international school arena because of the complexity of international schools, including diverse cultures and need to teach from a common philosophical stance an international curriculum, indicates the support needed from research in order for administrators to endorse PD funding and allocation. Better understanding of PD needs in international schools can lead to providing better training for teachers who are trained in national systems to teach an international curriculum but also to better adjust to cultural diversity of an international school. Through PD teachers can be assisted to understand the promotion of an ‘international education’ and ‘international mindedness’ and the values these include. Most administrators indicated that what they believe should be happening in their respective schools regarding PD is actually happening. However, this could be due to lack of understanding of PD needs although there seems to be ‘freedom’ in international schools to be creative about PD activities because international schools, for the most part, are not bound by national bureaucratic regulations.

Administrators have decision-making power in international schools regarding budget allocation and they also have comprehensive knowledge of school-wide needs, therefore making uniformed decisions about PD can be a waste of resources and once these decisions are made teachers must abide by such decisions, possibly adding to tension between

teachers and administrators. Furthermore, typically, PD is what is given to teachers. Teachers in most schools are given an amount of money to spend on PD and they are sent to various venues to reap the benefits; what if PD became a collaborative creative process within the school between teachers and administrators in creating and identifying opportunities for best practice based on assessed needs? Along these lines, it is significant to create processes for sustainability of best practice; teachers doing good work and being validated for their work may choose to stay longer in a particular international school. Creating processes for both allocation and assessment of PD is both necessary and difficult, as was noted by a number of administrators; thus, each school must define for itself the school needs, strengths and weaknesses, and determine what makes sense for that school within that context as well as the context of an international setting. Recommendations regarding assessment and evaluation could also be provided from accrediting bodies regarding PD. Evaluation by certified evaluators using a defined, research-based model could provide systematic, valuable practice. Replication studies are recommended across international schools to broaden the sample size to expand research and make comparisons.

Administrators of international schools agree that teacher PD is significant. If teachers in international schools are to promote lifelong learning culturally, intellectually and practically, they must be part of a community of educators. Teachers should be given a voice to see PD as their responsibility so that there is buy-in and they engage in the process toward improved student results. This redefines people's roles in the school; teachers have the expertise to refine and translate data, improve practice, critique one another's teaching strategies and do so in a safe environment that they create. Furthermore, considering the provision of PD for teachers prior to assuming an international post could prove significant for both adjustment and teaching purposes.

The current study addressed PD in international schools by considering the role of administrators as the driving force for PD. Considering teacher collaboration is not a new idea, but putting this in the international school context has provided ground for new research in the area of international school administrators and their view of PD. My personal journey throughout this process has been a mixture of exciting discoveries and

frustrations related to the process of undertaking this research. Coincidentally, as previously noted, the international school where I work has undergone a new accreditation protocol process within the last three years and during the time when said research was well underway. As one of the co-coordinators of the process, I was able to see up close the shaping of an institutional culture and the benefits of teacher- administrator collaborations. Despite opportunities for a variety of PD opportunities within and outside of the school, I believe that the Action Research Inquiry process that took place school wide was, by far, one of the most enriching PD activities developed and reflections from teachers, administrators and learning support personnel corroborate my beliefs. The complexities of an international school, as previously discussed, certainly played a role in this endeavour. A strategic planning team, consisting of representatives from all stakeholders, came together to define an overarching question and guiding questions in line with our school's mission and vision. Upon presentation of the process to the faculty and staff, immediately evident was the level of commitment by each potential participant. Teachers/counsellors/learning specialists and administrators indicated varying levels of commitment based on years of teaching experience, new to the country or veterans, level of understanding of what lay ahead, time constraints and personal insecurities about being exposed were some of the factors. The leadership approach was a decisive factor in how the process proceeded. The school administrator recognized the need to support the process and develop or refine processes that would strengthen commitment to the new institutional objectives and permeate school culture. Distributive leadership was in line with the school philosophy thus, a coordinator and two co-coordinators were assigned to lead the process with experience in curriculum, administration, support services and accreditation protocols. It was also important that each of these people had been at the school a number of years, having established credibility. As teachers and learning support specialists began identifying their own individual questions related to the overarching question to research, it became evident that they would need guidance through the research process, thus a research specialist was appointed to work with faculty through this process both individually and in groups. Furthermore, to address this issue of personal insecurities and feelings of being judged and evaluated continuously, a learning community coordinator was placed in charge of establishing protocols and group meetings for faculty

to discuss progress or lack of and to problem solve. Such processes provided faculty with a safe place to have discussions about best practice and revise their own practice accordingly. Guidance for engaging in personal and group reflection was provided and opportunities for faculty to meet with administrators for further guidance and support. I witnessed people's perplexities, resistance, excitement, frustrations, curiosity, fear, doubt and even adamant refusal to participate, for two years. The leadership however, systematically and unwaveringly proceeded carefully chipping away at challenges, problem solving and making time to listen and discuss issues with individuals and groups as they came up. By the third year, something magical happened, the excitement seemed to overtake the fear and doubt and individuals and groups began sharing more openly preparing for an exhibition of learning which was to take place for the accreditation officers, the national and international community and all stakeholders. The discourse being used in all presentations, workshops, poster sessions and group discussions seemed to overlap; people from each discipline were saying the same thing from different perspectives and reflecting both the short term and long term goals as they related to the mission. Another interesting phenomenon was that test scores went up, particularly IB and AP scores were the best they had been in years. Was this directly related to the Action Research experience? No such direct cause-effect claims can be made at this time but it is a question to investigate. Reflective feedback from faculty indicated significant personal and professional growth and a renewed excitement in the profession, whether new or veteran. Having traversed both experiences within the last three years; the Action Research process in the school and the current study, I am convinced that professional development is vital to the success of educational institutions and particularly significant to international schools due to the complexities previously addressed. I firstly intend to share the current findings with the participants of the study and then will proceed to attempt to share it with the international school community via conferences such as ECIS, NESA, AAIE and WISE. I shall also make parts of the study available through publications to include international school journals and magazines. Finally, I believe accrediting and certification organizations might find the current findings useful to perhaps, consider PD an area to be formally included in accreditation requirements as well as establishing guidelines and, where appropriate, criteria for international schools to follow. Rather, I would support the

development of guidelines for international schools to develop their own criteria relevant to the particular context and culture in which they operate.

5.6. Recommendations for Further Research

The current study suggests the need for further research. Having conducted such study single-handedly at a geographical distance from participants presents limitations such as inability to observe PD processes in place at each international school. A team of researchers funded to conduct such research on site would be ideal and could be a significant contribution toward creating processes to determine individual and school needs within particular institutions and align such needs with school goals and visions so as to appropriately allocate PD activities accordingly. In fact, surveying teachers and administrators in international schools as to what extent PD activities align to school goals and vision would be a singular area to examine.

Further research is also necessary to examine international schoolteacher views on PD to see how these are similar or different from those of administrators. It would also be important to survey teachers who have left a school to determine if PD was an issue as well as teachers who stay to determine if PD plays a significant role in their decision.

It may be significant to categorise schools according to profit and non-profit and to survey these schools with regard to allocation of PD activities, funding, and decision-making. There could easily be differences simply due to a school's profit status.

Ideally, further study would include a larger sample, more representative of the population being studied, and would possibly include more women administrators to determine if gender makes a significant difference. Additionally, surveying professional organisations such as the European Council of International Schools or Near East South Asia to determine how they do professional needs analysis might prove useful.

There are several auxiliary questions to be considered in future work:

- What constitutes effective professional development models and when is enough, enough?
- Can professional development be too much; too many activities to assimilate may be important.
- Would conducting a field study in each international school provide valuable information that may not be available from reporting information?

Finally, based on current and potential research mentioned, creating a model to assess and evaluate PD activity effectiveness could prove valuable to international schools. Institutionalising such practices would serve schools well.

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APPENDICES

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**APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR ADMINISTRATORS (TO
INCLUDE ONLY SECONDARY SCHOOLS MS/HS)**

Please respond to the demographic data items by checking the answer that best describes you.

1. Gender of Respondent:

- (1) Male (2) Female

2. Years of Teaching Experience (including only the years actually taught):

- (1) 5 years or less (2) 6-15 years (3) 16-25 years (4) 26 years
or more

3. Years of Administration Experience

- (1) 5 years or less (2) 6-15 years (3) 16-25 years (4) 26 years
or more

4. Years in current position at this school

- (1) 5 years or less (2) 6-15 years (3) 16-25 years (4) 26 years
or more

5. Location of current school:

- (1) Europe (2) Asia (3) Africa (4) Middle East (5) North
America
- (6) South America

6. Enrolment of Students in School (Middle School and High School together):

- (1) less than 1,000 students (2) 1,000 students (3) 1,001-2,000 students
- (4) 2,001-3,000 or less students (5) 3,001 students or more

7. My school uses the following curriculum:

- (1) National curriculum of any country (2) International Baccalaureate
diploma
- (3) International Baccalaureate and Middle Years Program (4) IGCSE

(5) School's own curriculum (6) Other Please specify

8. My School uses multiple curricula (Middle School/High School). Please Specify.

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Peggy Pelonis and I am a doctoral student at the University of Bath in the United Kingdom.

I am conducting a thesis study involving a survey designed to explore the views of administrators (Heads of Schools, Principals) in secondary international schools in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and the Middle East on how professional development is and should be planned, implemented, evaluated and resourced. The survey should take approximately twenty minutes to complete and your participation in this study will be handled with the strictest confidentiality (Code of Good Ethics and Research Integrity, University of Bath 2014). Results of the study could be beneficial to you as the administrator in gaining a deeper understanding of how your colleagues in other international schools are leading their staff in the area of professional development.

The results of this on-line survey will be shared with the examiners and supervisors at the University of Bath and will be published eventually as part of the requirements of the Doctor of Education degree. All identifying information will be kept strictly confidential. Once the date of the survey has been collected and analyzed, I will invite ten of you to participate in an in-depth interview regarding your school.

There are minimal risks involved in taking the survey and these are limited to stress or discomfort. Should you however, experience any stress or discomfort please feel free to skip any questions or to discontinue the survey at any time.

Should you have any questions please contact me at: pelonisp@acs.gr or +306944635203

Should you have any concerns about the study's conduct or about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the investigator's supervisor at the University of Bath, Dr. Mary Hayden m.c.hayden@bath.ac.uk

If you agree with the above statement and wish to proceed, please tick the box below.

Thank you!

**APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATOR VIEWS IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS**

Please respond to these questions in relation to secondary schools Middle/High (ages 12-18)

Please choose the definition or definitions that best describe your view of what Professional Development is generally (not only in your school):

10. Which of the following do you consider to be professional development?
- a. Graduate Courses
 - b. Conferences with content specific topics
 - c. Content experts coming into the school to train teachers
 - d. Courses for Certification renewal
 - e. Peer support from colleagues
 - f. International Baccalaureate workshops
 - g. Advanced Placement Workshops
 - h. Other Please explain _____

Please choose the professional development type(s) that applies to your school.

11. Which of the below apply to your school?
- a. Graduate Courses
 - b. Conferences with content specific topics
 - c. Content experts coming into the school to train teachers
 - d. Courses for Certification renewal
 - e. Peer support from colleagues
 - f. International Baccalaureate workshops
 - g. Advanced Placement Workshops
 - h. Other Please explain _____

Please choose the item(s) below that best describe conditions in your school regarding professional development:

12. Professional Development in my school is
- a. Required by the school for all teachers
 - b. Required by the school for IB teachers
 - c. Required by the school for Advanced Placement teachers
 - d. optional but highly encouraged
 - e. optional and encouraged when absolutely necessary

Please rate how much you agree or disagree with each statement as it relates to your school:

strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), not applicable (NA)

In my school:

		SA Strongly agree	A Agree	D Disagree	SD Strongly Disagree	NA Not Applicable
4.	As the school's senior administrator (Head, Principal) I determine professional development needs for teachers					
5.	As the school's senior administrator (Head, Principal) I should determine professional development needs for teachers					
6.	Teachers work with me the administrator to determine the professional development needs of the school					
7.	Teachers should collaborate with administrators in determining the professional development needs of the school					
8.	Teachers determine their own professional development needs					
9.	Teachers should determine their own professional development needs					
10.	As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I assess professional development effectiveness					
11.	As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I should assess professional development effectiveness					
12.	Teachers are involved in assessing professional development effectiveness					
13.	Teachers should be involved in assessing professional development effectiveness					
14.	As the school administrator I decide which teachers participate in professional development					
15.	As the school administrator I should decide which teachers participate in professional development					
16.	Teachers are involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development					
17.	Teachers should be involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development					
18.	Investing in professional development is based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution					
19.	Investing in professional development should be based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution					
20.	All professional development is funded by the school					
21.	All professional development should be funded by the school					

22.	Teachers are expected to fund at least some of their own professional development					
23.	Teachers should be expected to fund at least some of their own professional development					
24.	There are adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development					
25.	There should be adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development					

26. Please elaborate with respect to resources and professional development

27. Please use the space below for any additional comments and/or recommendations on the current state of professional development in your school and if there is room for improvement please state how:

28. I would like to:

1. Receive the survey results 2. Be interviewed via Skype/Phone 3. None of the above

29. Name of School

30. Contact Information

APPENDIX D: SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Participant 13, Director. Kenya

Interview: June 15, 2015. 12:00 noon. Greek time (19:22 min)

SKYPE, audio recording and notes

Question number	Interview Question, Follow-up Questions, and Probes
-----------------	---

As a follow up to the survey you took regarding Administrator views on Professional development (PD) I would like to follow up with some questions that will help me understand PD processes in your school as well as your views on how these should be done. The questions should take 20-30 minutes and all identifying information will be strictly confidential. I will also be taping our session as well as taking notes and will transcribe the pertinent information.

1. Based on your knowledge and experience what kind of PD do you believe takes place in international schools; those schools of which you are aware?
(revised question based on pilot feedback)
 - a. What types of learning activities do you believe should be included in PD at international schools?
 - b. Could you describe two specific PD activities that teachers from your school engaged in this year?

1. *Generally I think the international school sector handles the whole area of PD pretty well. Perhaps that's because they feel a little bit distant from wherever the homeland of the curriculum they offer is so they make more of an effort to engage with PD opportunities and I think the teachers in international schools have learned to value PD opportunities more than perhaps their equivalent in the various government systems around the world. So, I would say generally it's the strength of international schools.*
 - a. *We are part of the Association of International Schools or Africa (AISA). They run an extensive PD opportunity at a conference each October and a good number of our staff go and attend there.*
 - b. *Then of course the exam board, we use Cambridge International Exam (CIE) and we use Edexcel which used to be the old London board and both of those boards offer both on line and face to face regular in service*

opportunities and in service opportunities for staff and indeed we host the one for Kenya each September so that's teachers from maybe 30 or 40 schools all offering Cambridge examinations within East Africa would come to that event and its offered in a range of subjects and depending each year which subjects are offered. So there are two examples.

I think PD is like a piece of string. You can never have enough piece of string. I think there are always new and interesting opportunities for PD, one area that is a good example of that internationally is the whole focus by organisations like CIS and others on child protection and duty of care issues in the last year or so and that makes for a whole new range of PD opportunities so I think as education itself evolves you are going to see always new and different opportunities for staff to develop themselves professionally.

2. What should be the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in international schools?
 - a. Who should decide on what PD activities teachers in internationals schools engage in and why?
 - b. Who should decide which teachers in internationals schools attend specific PD activities and why?

I think it has to be an inclusive process of finding out what people think would be valuable for them and then some kind of filtering process to work out what's viable, what is in budget, how to make it fair across the differing requests for different faculties or different sanctions within the school. So, I think it's a two phase process, the process of finding out what's available, what people's needs are, what they perceive to be the important things they want to have PD for. That should be as inclusive as possible but then the process of actually refining and selecting what will take place has to be a process of prioritising and that's often the management, taking into account budget limitations and making sure it's fair across the board because everybody will see their own needs but not necessarily the bigger picture so it's very inclusive and... consulting in the first place and then very managerially led and prioritising in the second place.

In my school things take place pretty much as I have described. Sections of the school and faculty of the school are asked to identify what they think will be useful and appropriate PD opportunities. Anyone can come forward with any proposal for PD and then the whole school management team would try and prioritize fairly across the school what we can manage to do in a particular year

taking into account the budget for PD. The process is quite healthy so it allows a lot to take place.

3. What is the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in your international school?
 - a. Who decides on what PD activities teachers in your international school engage in and why?
 - b. Who decides which teachers in your international school attend specific PD activities and why?

There is a formal process in terms of how you would put it forward, it must go through... so if I'm an individual teacher and find something on line that I'd like to do or a course they'd like to take, they must take it through head of department, the head of faculty, the head of section of the school so that everybody is aware of what you are putting forward. It's not that they would approve or not approve it but they have to be aware and the actual format in which it is presented will vary because sometimes it's a print out of an online opportunity with a covering letter, sometimes it's a whole list of things for a particular faculty. The exams office deal directly with the ones that deal directly with the examination board, the IT department is always coming forward with different proposals and then all that is collected by the management team and then they try to allocate it as fairly as they could.

4. What should be the driving force for assessment and evaluation of PD activities for teachers in international schools?
 - a. Can you describe how the PD activities in international schools should be assessed and evaluated?
 - b. Can you describe how the methods used in your international school to assess and evaluate PD activities?
 - c. Can you describe the specific benchmarks or standards by which PD activities in your international school are assessed and evaluated?

Good question and I think you almost answered it yourself. It's one of the most difficult areas to quantify. If a staff member is asking to do a more significant programme of study beyond conference workshop or something like that we do have a match funding programme for staff who wish to undertake further studies so if they want to do a degree programme or a post graduate course of some kind where it involves significant time, the schools' policy is match funding for that so we pay 50% so for those ones are concerned part of their proposal for funding

would be to indicate how it will enhance their contribution to the school. In that instance yes the management does look at do we really see the connection between what they want to study and what would be of use or advantage to the wider school community. Because the staff knows that that is going to be one of the criteria they tend to be pretty sensible about what they propose. For the shorter term attendance to courses or, you know, an online course or attendance to the conference workshop, again it really is looked upon as most of the ones that are put forth are from organisations or agencies well known to us so it would already be built into that process to know whether there is validity in terms of the school. Where if it's not we might go back and ask if there is no clarity on that issue. And then the question of trying to assess formally how much impact or value it has after the course was done is the one that's far more difficult because the reality is that it is very difficult to know what they were already doing and what has changed particularly often if it's simply a questionnaire in the picture they will, of course, say it was of great value and that they learned enormously and that they are going to use it every day in the classroom and sometimes that's very true and other times its far more difficult to quantify. I think it's a very good area for someone to come up with some more guidelines of how maybe that could be achieved because it's a pretty tough one to quantify.

5. What part of your international school budget is allocated for PD?
 - a. Who is specifically involved in how this budget is spent on PD in your international schools?
 - b. What decision making process is involved in how you (or your management team) allocate funds for PD in your international schools?

We have a specific budget allocated. For Council of International Schools you have to be able to show that there is a defined item for PD and they like to see that it's a healthy budget. We are very fortunate here that as members of.... I think one of the things that school boards don't always fully understand but it's true, the more organisations you are a part of as a school, the more likely there will be PD opportunities and undertakings. So we are very fortunate in that we have our CIS accreditation, we are a round square school which provides enormous opportunities for PD, the G20 group of schools is another one so each of the different organisations we are part of as well as the examination board we are using provide more and more PD opportunities.

The overriding figure for the PD budget is a standard part of the budget process which would be undertaken by myself, my deputy director and our business manager. Then the detail of how that pie is cut up each year amongst the different

needs of the school, the different faculty, the different levels, that would be a wider process of decision making about the whole management team. So the top line figure, the budget figure tends to be a pretty healthy number and then the discussion as to how that will be carved up is a far more lengthy process.

6. Do you have any additional experiences or insights pertaining to the nature of PD in international schools that you wish to share before we conclude?

That is a good question too. I really see PD as a journey for any school. You never arrive. You are always on that journey and I actually like to see proposals with new and different ideas of what could be included in PD opportunities. It's such a wide ranging... it covers so many different facets of the operation of the school so Saturday for instance, 20 of the staff did an upgrade PD course on their first aid skills and it's so good to see so many different opportunities for staff to widen and further their understanding and knowledge, the difficult part in Africa is that sometimes you would want more face to face opportunities whereas we tend to rely quite a bit on online opportunities and that's not a bad thing but I think there is great value in face to face opportunities as well. So, yeah that's probably what I would say about the PD opportunities in the school. I know that staff really does genuinely appreciate the opportunities they get. If the system is seen to be... what's the right word... it is a genuinely filtering system, in other words, the schools I think that do PD poorly is where each teacher is given an amount of money for the year and told 'that's your PD money go away and do something'. I'm very against that concept because I think it leads to a lot of people doing something for the sake of doing it with no genuine interest or commitment to it and it can become very perfunctory and not very meaningful, whereas having it as something people put forth.... their proposals, their interests, their ideas I think it makes it a lot more meaningful a process.

**APPENDIX E: THE RELATION OF GUIDING QUESTIONS TO
QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

Guiding Question	Questionnaire Item	Interview Question
<p>Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?</p>	<p>(1) Which of the following do you consider to be professional development? a. Graduate Courses b. Conferences with content specific topics c. Content experts coming into the school to train teachers d. Courses for certification renewal e. Peer support from colleagues f. International Baccalaureate workshops g. Advanced Placement workshops h. Other (2) Which of the below apply to your school: a. Graduate courses b. Conferences with content specific topics c. Content experts coming into the school to train teachers d. Courses for certification renewal e. Peer support from colleagues f. International Baccalaureate workshops g. Advanced Placement workshops h. Other (3) Professional Development in my school is: a. Required by the school for all teachers b. Required by the school for IB teachers c. Required by the school for AP teachers d. Optional but highly encouraged e. Optional and encouraged when absolutely necessary</p>	<p>1. Based on your knowledge and experience what kind of PD do you believe takes place in international schools (those schools of which you are aware?) a. What types of learning activities do you believe should be included in PD at international schools? b. Could you describe two specific PD activities that teachers from your school engaged in this year?</p>
<p>Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision making process for initiating teacher professional development?</p>	<p>(4) As the school's senior administrator (Head, Principal) I determine professional development needs for teachers (5) As the school's senior administrator (Head, Principal) I should determine professional development needs for teachers (6) Teachers work with me the administrator to determine the professional development needs of the school</p>	<p>2. What should be the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in international schools? a. Who should decide on what PD activities teachers in international schools engage in and why? b. Who should decide which teachers in</p>

	<p>(7) Teachers should collaborate with administrators in determining the PD needs of the school</p> <p>(8) Teachers determine their own professional development needs</p> <p>(9) Teachers should determine their own professional development needs</p> <p>(14) As the school administrator I decide which teachers participate in professional development</p> <p>(15) As the school administrator I should decide which teachers participate in professional development</p> <p>(16) Teachers are involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development</p> <p>(17) Teachers should be involved in deciding which teachers participate in professional development</p>	<p>international schools attend specific PD activities and why?</p> <p>3. What is the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in your international school?</p> <p>a. Who decides on what PD activities teachers in your international school engage in and why?</p> <p>b. Who decides which teachers in your international school attend specific PD activities and why?</p>
<p>Q3: How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?</p>	<p>(10) As the school administrator (Head, Principal), I assess professional development effectiveness</p> <p>(11) As the school administrator (Head, Principal) I should assess professional development effectiveness</p> <p>(12) Teachers are involved in assessing professional development effectiveness</p> <p>(13) Teachers should be involved in assessing professional development effectiveness</p>	<p>4. What should be the driving force for assessment and evaluation of PD activities for teachers in international schools?</p> <p>a. Can you describe how the PD activities in international schools should be assessed and evaluated?</p> <p>b. Can you describe the methods used in your international school to assess and evaluate PD activities?</p> <p>c. Can you describe the specific benchmarks and standards by which PD activities in your international school are assessed and evaluated?</p>
<p>Q4: How do administrators in international schools view</p>	<p>(18) Investing in professional development is based on the</p>	<p>5. What part of your international school budget is allocated for PD?</p>

<p>the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?</p>	<p>number of years a teacher has been within my institution (19) Investing in professional development should be based on the number of years a teacher has been within my institution (20) All professional development is funded by the school (21) All professional development should be funded by the school (22) Teachers are expected to fund at least some of their own professional development (23) Teachers should be expected to fund at least some of their own professional development (24) There are adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development (25) There should be adequate resources in my school to ensure effective implementation of professional development</p>	<p>a. Who is specifically involved in how this budget is spent on PD in your international school? b. What decision making process is involved in how you (or your management team) allocate funds for PD in your international school?</p>
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APPENDIX F: FULL TEXT OF THE GUIDING QUESTION NARRATIVES

Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?

International schools are becoming a rapidly growing commodity and they are quickly multiplying across the globe. Cited in Bunnell (2014) are the following numbers: “by 2022 international schools will expand to 11,331... students will increase to 6.2 million... And the field will require approximately 23,000 teachers each year for the next decade” (p.4–5). Teachers as well as administrators require increasing support particularly when proximity does not allow for frequent participation in professional development activities organised by international organisations (Hayden 2006). In order to ascertain which professional development activities are best suited however, school administrators are called upon to clearly understand and define the culture of the institution. Moreover, for best results in best practices school administrators will be better off eliciting the support of teachers (Richards 2002). Clearly, for skills transfer to take place in the classroom, attending one-time activities is insufficient. Professional development requires time for planning with a clearly defined purpose and goals as well as continuous support within the school (Reeves 2010; Hopkins 2003; Guskey 2000).

Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision-making process for initiating teacher professional development?

In order to promote effective professional development activities within the specific school it is important for school administrators to not only understand the particular school culture but to also base decisions on research-based evidence of professional development best practices about which activities to promote on research. Focusing on research-supported strategies will improve student learning and avoid decisions based on current trends (Reeves 2006; Harwell 2003; Guskey 2000). Collaborating with teachers to set goals and define strategies for working toward these goals is imperative. It is the school administrator’s responsibility to create a safe environment conducive to learning and to support researched strategies that promote learning for students as well as adults. Information and skills applied collectively can be more effective in student learning (Hattie

2012; Harris et al. 2003; Hawley and Valli 1999). I concur with Sergioivanni (2005) who stresses that “without this collective intelligence (i.e., the sum of all individual’s knowledge in a school system), it is doubtful that closing the achievement gap and resolving other intractable problems will ever become more than wishful thinking” (p.117). Senge (2006) reminds us of the importance of the idea of “dialogue”; a concept dating back to Classical Greece. Engaging in dialogue with teachers allows school administrators to exceed individual views toward gaining new insights. Collaborative decisions can thus contribute toward a more positive school culture and an environment more conducive to learning.

***Q3:** How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for the assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?*

Professional development must be an intentional process aimed at facilitating improvement in an institution. In order for such change to take place the efficacy of professional development must be continuously evaluated. There is little known however, generally as well as particularly in international schools, regarding best practices for evaluating professional development. Evaluation processes are at best superficial, at worst non-existent and more closely resemble observation–documentation rather than assessment and evaluation (Reeves 2010; Guskey 2000). Assessing professional development programmes can be particularly challenging to administrators (Bredeson 2002) because assessment of teacher professional development is still in an infancy phase. Aligning professional development goals with the school vision and strategic goals is imperative. As Sparks (1997) emphasises, the most successful type of PD is that with a goal to improve student learning while focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the specific school.

***Q4:** How do administrators in international schools view the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?*

Allocating budget effectively for professional development activities can be a daunting task. Often, school administrators are called on to convince school boards of the necessity for professional development as well as to be creative in both budget allocation and finding ways to construct a school culture rich with professional development activities. Collaborating with teachers to assess professional development needs and engaging

teachers in the decision-making process for allocation of resources can add positively to the school culture and contribute toward sustainability (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009; Cranston 2009). In addition to allocating resources, school leaders must be skilful in locating resources to support their efforts. This requires knowledge in addition to skill in order to elicit the cooperation of school boards. Additionally, ensuring ample time during the school day for teachers to be engaged in professional development activities continuously by producing a culture conducive to such mindsets is the responsibility of school administrators (Tallerico 2005; Drago-Severson 2004).

**APPENDIX G: PROVENANCE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE GUIDING
QUESTIONS**

GUIDING Question	Provenance	Potential Importance
Q1: How do administrators in international schools view the nature of professional development in international schools?	Bunnell 2014; Hayden 2006; Richards 2002; Guskey 2000; Reeves 2010; Hopkins 2003	Administrators are considered essential in initiating and navigating change in schools. Lack of understanding of professional development effectiveness (knowledge and skills) can impede proper guidance and support and ultimately institutional change and improvement
Q2: How do administrators in international schools view the decision making process for initiating teacher professional development?	Reeves 2006; Guskey 2000; Harwell 2003; Hattie 2012; Harris et. al. 2003; Hawley & Valli 1999; Sergiovanni 2005; Senge 2006	Unilateral, top down, decisions by administrators in international schools regarding professional development needs and initiatives may be decisions isolated from classroom needs. Such resulting professional development activities may be less effective and sustainable and may contribute negatively to school culture.
Q3: How do administrators in international schools view the driving force for assessment and evaluation process for teacher professional development?	Guskey 2000; Reeves 2010; Bredeson & Johansen 2002; Sparks 1997	Without a clear understanding and guidelines for assessment and evaluation processes of professional development as it aligns to schools goals, assessment can be shallow and meaningless without appropriate evidence of efficacy and sustainability.
Q4: How do administrators in international schools view the resource allocation process for teacher professional development?	Drago-Severson 2004; Tallerico 2005; Cranston 2009; Drago-Severson 2009; 2013	Budget restraints call for leaders who are innovative, creative and knowledgeable regarding professional development and its effectiveness. Weaknesses in these areas may lead to allocation of funds into activities that are simply popular without sustainable results.

**APPENDIX H: LIST OF COUNTRIES OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
INTERVIEWS**

City/Country	Title
Qatar	Head of School
Germany	Head of School
Israel	Superintendent
Nicaragua	Middle School Principal
Greece	President
Venezuela	Superintendent
Indonesia	Middle School Principal
India	Head of School
Colombia	Middle School Principal
Saudi Arabia	Superintendent
Colombia	Middle School Principal
UAE	Superintendent
Kenya	Director
Pakistan	Superintendent
Austria	Head of School
Saudi Arabia	Superintendent
Egypt	Superintendent
Travelling high school	Head of School
Switzerland	Upper School Principal
China	Director

APPENDIX I: SUMMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERVIEWS

Interviewee	Title	School	City/ Country	Date/ time of interview	Duration of interview	Type of interview
1 PILOT	Head of School	1	Qatar	June 1, 2015 11:00 a.m. Athens time	32:22 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
2 PILOT	Head of School	2	Germany	June 1, 2015 5:00 p.m. Athens time	25:57 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
3	Super-intendent	3	Israel	June 17, 2015 11:00 a.m. Athens time	25:02min	Skype (recording failed) and hand written notes
4	MS Principal	4	Nicaragua	June 2, 2015 4:00 p.m. Athens time	46:34 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
5	President	5	Greece	June 25, 2015 11:00 a.m. Athens time	31:12 min	Face to face, recorded and hand written notes
6	Super-intendent	6	Venezuela	June 3, 2015 4:30 p.m. Athens time	16:45 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
7	MS Principal	7	Indonesia	June 9, 2015 9:28 a.m. Athens time	21:32 min	Phone Interview (Skype failed to connect) and hand written notes
8	Head of School	8	India	June 15, 2015 5:00 p.m. Athens time	29:33 min	Phone interview (Skype failed to connect) and hand written notes
9	MS Principal	9	Colombia	June 24, 2015 3:30 p.m. Athens time	19:03 min	Skype (recording failed) and hand written notes
10	Super-intendent	10	Saudi Arabia	June 15, 2015 9:00 p.m. Athens time	23:18 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
11	MS Principal	11	Colombia	June 16, 2015 3:23 p.m. Athens time	22:05 min	Phone Interview (could not maintain Skype connection) and hand written notes
12	Super-intendent	12	UAE	June 12, 2015 4:00 p.m. Athens time	33:29 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
13	Director	13	Kenya	June 15, 2015 12:00 p.m. Athens time	19:22 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes

14	Super-intendent	14	Pakistan	June 15, 2015 8:30 a.m. Athens time	24:16 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
15	Head of School	15	Austria	June 22, 2015 3:00 p.m. Athens time	24:21 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
16	Super-intendent	16	Saudi Arabia	June 16, 2015 9:03 a.m. Athens time	15:10 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
17	Super-intendent	17	Egypt	June 15, 2015 3:00 p.m. Athens time	12:52 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes
18	Head of School	18	Travelling high school	June 12, 2015 9:00 a.m. Athens time	32:00 min	Face to face interview, recording failed. Hand written notes.
19	Upper School Principal	19	Switzerland	June 8, 2015 2:00 p.m. Athens time	22:08 min	Skype (unsuccessful recording) and hand written notes.
20	Director	20	China	June 25, 2015 10:00 p.m. Athens time	15:42 min	Skype (recorded) and hand written notes

**APPENDIX J: GUIDE FOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, FOLLOW-UP
QUESTIONS AND PROBES**

Question number	Interview Question, Follow-up Questions, and Probes
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As a follow up to the survey you took regarding administrator views on professional development (PD) I would like to follow up with some questions that will help me understand PD processes in your school as well as your views on how these should be done. The questions should take 20-30 minutes and all identifying information will be strictly confidential. I will also be taping our session as well taking notes and will transcribe only the pertinent information.

1. Based on your knowledge and experience what kind of PD do you believe takes place in international schools; those schools of which you are aware?
(revised question based on pilot feedback)
 - a. What types of learning activities do you believe should be included in PD at international schools?
 - b. Could you describe two specific PD activities that teachers from your school engaged in this year?

2. What should be the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in international schools?
 - a. Who should decide on what PD activities teachers in international schools engage in and why?
 - b. Who should decide which teachers in international schools attend specific PD activities and why?

3. What is the decision making process for initiating a PD activity for teachers in your international school?
 - a. Who decides on what PD activities teachers in your international school engage in and why?
 - b. Who decides which teachers in your international school attend specific PD activities and why?

4. What should be the driving force for assessment and evaluation of PD activities for teachers in international schools?
 - a. Can you describe how the PD activities in international schools should be assessed and evaluated?
 - b. Can you describe the methods used in your international school to assess and evaluate PD activities?
 - c. Can you describe the specific benchmarks or standards by which PD activities in your international school are assessed and evaluated?

5. What part of your international school budget is allocated for PD?
 - a. Who is specifically involved in how this budget is spent on PD in your international school?
 - b. What decision making process is involved in how you (or your management team) allocate funds for PD in your international school?

6. Do you have any additional experiences or insights pertaining to the nature of PD in international schools that you wish to share before we conclude?

APPENDIX K: QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTION DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

Interview Question #1 was as follows: “Based on your knowledge and experience what kind of PD do you believe takes place in international schools; those schools of which you are aware?” This question is used to explore the participant’s awareness, knowledge and experience regarding professional development that takes place in international schools. Indeed, according to the elementary and secondary school literature, administrators, as instructional leaders, are considered essential in initiating and navigating change in schools (Yager et al. 2012; Zepeda 2011; Glickman et al. 2009; Glanz 2005). In order for true change to take place within the classroom there must be a clear understanding of how the use of knowledge and skills could be guided and supported (Guskey and Yoon 2009; Hargreaves 2009). It is very important for leaders interested in improving the organisation and navigating change to be active learners themselves according to Fullan (2010). Further, according to Reeves (2010), effective professional development is not decided upon by the label, such as Professional Learning Communities, for example, but rather by how it relates to student and teacher needs, how rigorous it is, whether it is consistently delivered to teachers and whether “it provides opportunities for application, practice, reflection, and reinforcement” (p.23). This research purports to reveal administrator views on the nature of professional development in international schools; specifically, how professional development is planned, implemented and allocated.

Question 1a was as follows: “What types of learning activities do you believe should be included in professional development at international schools?” This question explores the knowledge that administrators possess regarding the latest research about what is considered effective professional development in international schools as well as how this addresses the needs of teachers. School leaders must also make certain that the most up-to-date information is reflected in professional development activities and is available to teachers. The latest research must also be the foundation of any professional development activities that aim to alter educational mindsets and improve student performance (Leech and Fulton 2008; Fullan 2007; Tallericco 2005). Professional development is therefore a

process that promotes ongoing learning and ongoing usage of knowledge and skills (Guskey 2003, 2000; Darling-Hammond 1997; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989). It is important for professional development to be focused and closely related to curriculum, educational needs and ongoing growth in order for instruction as well as student achievement to improve. However, once the professional activity is over, transference within the classroom becomes challenging (Glickman et al. 2009; Hargreaves 2007; Joyce and Showers 2002). Answers to this question provided further information on the type of professional development that administrators consider effective in international schools.

Question 1b was as follows: “Could you describe two specific professional development activities that teachers from your school engaged in this year?” This question explored the type of professional development activities that teachers engaged in the specific international school. Literature indicates that when teacher needs are addressed through professional development, effective learning takes place. In order for this type of learning to be successful and sustainable it is necessary that the adult learner is involved in the learning process as well as in the planning and implementation of learning activities (Tennant and Pogson 1995). What constitutes effective, quality professional development and is consistent with the theoretical framework of adult learning theory is the necessity of continuous, quality professional development demanding of teachers to be lifelong learners rather than simply grouping teachers with colleagues and seemingly naming these “learning communities” (Roberts and Pruitt 2008; DuFour 2004; Eleonora 2003; Hiebert et al. 2002; Hord 1998). This question was used to assess which professional development activities took place within the school and whether these activities align with what the current research considers effective, sustainable practice. The question was used to receive further information on the nature of professional development that teachers engaged in within the specific international school.

Interview Question #2 was as follows: “What should be the decision-making process for initiating a professional development activity for teachers in international schools?” This question was used to determine what administrators believe should be the decision-making process regarding teacher professional development. School districts in the USA have

assumed the responsibility over the years of offering opportunities for teachers to learn new skills (Guskey 2000). In order to effectively decide how professional development programmes should be implemented, administrators have a significant role to play (Pedersen et al. 2010). Administrators must be in a position to lead ongoing school improvement programmes and best practices, particularly in light of the fact that there is great emphasis on results-based instructional practice. Leaders must ensure that schools stay abreast of best practices in education and that these are closely linked to accreditation (Tallerico 2012). The answers to this question helped assess the involvement of administrators in initiating professional development activities within the school. This question addressed the goal of understanding administrator views on decision making regarding professional development activities in international schools.

Question 2a was as follows: “Who should decide on what professional development activities teachers in international schools engage in and why?” This question looks at who administrators believe should be part of the decision-making process regarding professional development in international schools. “Many conventional forms of professional development are seen as too top down and too isolated from school and classroom realities to have much impact on practice” (Guskey 2000, p.3). Creating processes that encourage professional development activities via conferences and conversations with colleagues who maintain focus on school improvement and best student outcomes are ways that administrators can spread the word about the seriousness of their efforts (Payne and Wolfson 2000). Also, encouragement of teachers to share among themselves so that continuous learning is promoted and schools can be based on the specific school culture (DuFour and Berkey 1995) is one way that school leaders can be role models. Finding avenues to promote growth and distribute leadership is the best type of role modelling (Price and Moolenaar 2015; Payne and Wolfson 2000). This question was used to determine whether decisions regarding professional development activities were unilateral or collaborative.

Question 2b was as follows: “Who should decide which teachers in international schools attend specific professional development activities and why?” This question looked at

whether there were teachers involved in deciding which teachers attend specific professional development activities or whether it was an administrator decision. It is imperative to offer a place where teachers can exchange ideas and share practices with colleagues daily in respectful ways, yet this, according to Sparks (2007), is one of the “most underused sources of professional learning and instructional improvement” (p.1). Still, considering such an approach can have many benefits and can create sustainability (Cranston 2009). On the contrary, administrators must be adequately prepared for effective implementation and this requires that leaders take part in their own professional development. Yet, proper preparation for school leaders is not common (Sparks 2009, 2003; Drago-Severson 2004). This question was used to determine whether there were teachers involved in the decision-making process to determine which teachers attend professional development activities and whether needs are addressed hierarchically.

Interview Question #3 was as follows: “What is the decision-making process for initiating a professional development activity for teachers in your international school?” This question looked at whether there was a process in place for initiating teacher professional development activities. The extant literature cites that for a programme to reach its goals there must be collaborative decision making and harmony between teacher and school leadership on the issue of professional development (Miles 1993). Working relationships between teachers and administrators should be based on clarity of goals for organisational improvement for such efforts to produce the desired goal (Crandall and Loucks 1983). Administrators tend to lean on traditional models of professional development that tend to not be wholly collaborative in nature. In doing so, administrators are apt to incite competition among teachers rather than collaboration. This can result in fierce competition among individuals, unwarranted organisational stress and feelings of isolation among teachers (Powell 2013; Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Hawley and Valli 1999). The question addresses the goal of determining whether there is a process for decision making that is aligned with school and individual teacher needs.

Question 3a was as follows: “Who decides on what professional development activities teachers in your international school engage in and why?” This question was used to

determine if teachers are involved in identifying their needs and are part of the decision-making process on what professional development activities to attend. In order to adequately understand teacher needs, plan professional development activities and work effectively, cooperation between administrators and teachers is necessary (Bredeson 2000). Additionally, DuFour et al. (2006) stated that “if adult learning in schools is truly to become professional development, educators must commit to the collective pursuit of best practice” (p.28). The variables defining agreement in teacher and administrator attitudes regarding professional development can be easily operationalised, assessed and modified for best practices and can be adapted to numerous school cultures and settings. Such research then brings to light the question of whether the results can be used within the school structure and how they can be connected to overall school improvement. To meet this goal, administrative policies and practice must align with those of teachers in order for professional development activities to align themselves with teaching goals and student achievement (Elmore 2002). This question was used to determine whether there was collaboration between administrators and teachers in determining which professional development activities teachers engage in and whether these align with school goals.

Question 3b was as follows: “Who decides which teachers in your international school attend specific professional development activities and why?” This question explores whether there is a process for determining which teachers attend professional development activities and at what point do they do so. Meaningful staff development implementation encourages the assistance of teachers to meet their individual goals and define their deeper purpose via modelling, coaching and like support (Glickman et al. 2009). The collaborative engagement of administrators is essential as decisions regarding time and money in relation to professional development activities are in their hands (Sandholtz and Scribner 2006; Elmore 2002). Administrators must become actively engaged in supporting this new cultural mindset and letting go of control over teacher learning (Elmore 2002; Little 1993). This question was used to determine how professional development activities were allocated and whether individual teacher needs were considered when decisions were made regarding who attends professional development activities.

Interview Question #4 was as follows: “What should be the driving force for assessment and evaluation of professional development activities for teachers in international schools?” This question was used to determine which criteria for professional development assessment administrators consider important. According to Guskey (2000), one reason that evaluating professional development has become so important is because professional development is currently important in order to guide change and improvement in education. Assessing professional development programmes can be particularly challenging to school leaders (Bredeson and Johansson 2002) because assessment of teacher professional development is still in weak phases. This question was used to determine what administrators of international schools believe assessment and evaluation of professional development should be based on.

Question 4a was as follows: “Can you describe how the professional development activities in international schools should be assessed and evaluated?” This question was used to determine what evaluation and assessment of professional development in this particular international school was based on. Common assessment methods to date include mainly surveys that have no follow up of teacher classroom activities that follow (Reeves 2010; Killion 2008; Bredeson 2000). This can be alarming but is considered in the works of Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), the more recent work of Killion (2008), Reeves (2010), DuFour and Marzano (2011) and others in the field who outline and provide guides of what such assessment should be about. Guskey (2000) suggests that professional development assessment and evaluation should begin backwards from the end. Rather than reviewing relevant literature for specific elements that are important we should consider specific efforts that have brought about successful results. This, according to Guskey (2000), “involves quantitative and qualitative analysis of multiple case studies” (p.35). This question was used to determine what administrators of international schools use as criteria for assessing and evaluating teacher professional development.

Question 4b was as follows: “Can you describe the methods used in your international school to assess and evaluate professional development activities?” This question was used to explore the method used to assess and evaluate professional development activities.

Successful assessment includes a well thought through plan involving observation and follow-up, detection of individual teacher needs, and availability of support for teachers to seek and receive knowledge where necessary. This contributes to meaningful assessment and data collection (Killion 2008; Bredeson and Johansson 2000; Sparks and Loucks-Horsley 1989) addressing the question of whether professional development is effective. Conversely, school leaders may come up against negative reactions of how teachers see and participate in professional development if there is no preparation (Yates 2007). Nevertheless, according to Hattie (2012), administrators in schools must be significantly involved in assessing the impact of professional development. This question was used to assess whether international school administrators had a method in place to assess and evaluate teacher professional development, and if so, what that method looked like. This question intended to address the goal of understanding assessment and evaluation in the particular international school.

Question 4c was as follows: “Can you describe the specific benchmarks or standards by which professional development activities in your international school are assessed and evaluated?” This question was used to explore the presence or absence of specific criteria for evaluating professional development. According to Guskey (2000), professional development activities are rarely evaluated, if at all. Instead, there seems to be only documentation of lists of the various activities that took place in schools or were attended by teachers. When evaluations take place they tend to be very shallow and do not probe deep enough. Guskey (2000) further contended that professional development activities should be aligned with school goals and student outcomes; “with explicit goals set forth, it is much easier to determine not only what professional development activities are likely to be appropriate but also what assessment methods are best for gathering pertinent evaluation evidence” (p.245). This question provided further information on whether professional development activities are evaluated based on specific benchmarks or standards or whether evaluation is more surface and brief.

Interview Question #5 was as follows: “What part of your international school budget is allocated for professional development?” This question was used to determine how much

of the school budget was allocated for professional development in the specific international school. In order to ensure that professional development is both available and sustainable, administrators must have adequate skills to not only properly allocate resources but also to find resources when there are budget restraints or insufficient funding (Drago-Severson 2004). Being champions of professional development activities for teachers is a school leader's responsibility and this may involve discussions with school boards and adding professional development activities within the school schedule in order to support and encourage teacher involvement (Tallerico 2005). This question was used to determine funding available for professional development activities in international schools and perhaps assess the importance placed on professional development by the specific school.

Question 5a was as follows: “Who is specifically involved in how this budget is spent on professional development in your international school?” This question was used to explore whether budget allocation for professional development was an administrator's decision only. While providing opportunities for ongoing professional development can be challenging due to budget restraints, school leaders can find ways around this by being creative and innovative and by finding resources so as to support teachers in their work, encouraging teachers to continue their work instead of having to move on because of low or inadequate salaries (Cranston 2009). This question was used to assess whether budget allocation for professional development was a collaborative or unilateral decision-making process.

Question 5b was as follows: “What decision-making process is involved in how you or your management team allocate funds for professional development in your international school?” This question explored the process involved in making decisions regarding budget allocation for professional development. Working collaboratively with teachers, school leaders can decide about budget allocation, and by including teachers in a cooperative decision-making process the road is paved toward sustainability (Drago-Severson 2013, 2009). This question was used to determine whether there is a

collaborative process for allocating professional development funds in international schools.

Interview Question #6 was as follows: “Do you have any additional experience or insights pertaining to the nature of professional development in international schools that you wish to share?” This question was used to allow the participant to add any further information on the purpose of the study that they considered relevant or important.