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International Schooling: A Sociocultural Study

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by

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Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

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International Schools have proliferated in recent years, particularly in the Middle East and Asia. Initially, International Schools either catered for a globally mobile community or provided an education that promoted international mindedness. In contemporary, twenty-first century, increasingly International Schools are being identified with schools that adopt an English language curriculum in a nation where English is not the first language. Furthermore, the commercialisation of International Schools through operating for-profit or ownership by transnational companies has become a common phenomenon.

Despite their growth, little is known about reasons for growth of International Schools, particularly ‘British-style’ schools, the purpose of for-profit schools and their impact on the various stakeholders of an International School. This thesis is an exploration of the field of International Schooling, particularly that of a British-style, for-profit institution. The focus of the study choice-making, and experiences of school leaders, teachers, parents and pupils, and how

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the school sought a competitive advantage. Bourdieu's thinking tools capital, *habitus*, and field were used to understand the complex nature of International Schooling.

This was an ethno-case study of a British-style, for-profit school in Kuwait. Main data sources were interviews and surveys collected from teachers, school leaders, parents and pupils. Further documentary analysis, and a field journal were used to corroborate the data. Major findings showed that choices made were related to relative positions in space and aspirations for a better future. 'Britishness' was a commodity that parents and teachers sought after. Further analysis of the field revealed that the value of 'Britishness' is an embodied understanding of the dominance of English as a language specifically, and of British values generally. Furthermore, the for-profit purpose of the school creates tensions that permeate the school's culture and creates pressure on the staff to maintain their competitive edge by maintaining their reputation. The findings contribute to an in-depth understanding of International Schooling and implications for practitioners from lessons learned in the field.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name:	Lina Khalil
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Title of thesis:	International Schooling: A Sociocultural study
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I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University; Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated; Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed; Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work; I have acknowledged all main sources of help; Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself; None of this work has been published before submission.

Signature:		Date:	June 6, 2019
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Abbreviations

BSME	British Schools of the Middle East
BSO	British Schools Overseas
CAIE	Cambridge Assessment International Education
CIS	Council of International Schools
COBIS	Council of British International Schools
ECIS	European Council of International Schools
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council (Includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates)
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organisation
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
ISA	Independent Schools Association
ISC	Independent Schools Consultancy
ISI	Independent Schools Inspectorate
NARIC	National Agency for the Recognition and Comparison of International Qualifications and Skills
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
TCK	Third Child Kid
TES	The Educational Supplement

Chapter 1 International Schooling: a sociocultural study

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the knowledge of an under-researched and little understood *field* of International Schooling; specifically, the ‘for-profit’ school. This study is significant in that it provides in-depth understanding of experiences of various stakeholders in a for-profit International School and the reasons for the growth of International Schooling. I have used Pierre Bourdieu’s¹ ‘thinking tools’ - *capital*, *habitus*, and *field*² - to guide the study.

This was an ethno-case study of one International School in Kuwait, Beacon Light School (BLS). Data was collected using interviews, surveys, and supported by documentary analysis and field journals. This study contributes to our knowledge of choice-making within International Schools in a region of the world that has not been studied previously. Furthermore, it adds to our understanding of practice within and between International Schools seeking competitive advantage.

This chapter starts off by providing a brief overview of the problem situated in the broader context of International Schooling literature. Then I present the research purpose and questions, followed by a brief discussion of the methodology and methods used.

¹ Pierre Bourdieu was born in a small village in the Pyrenees, France in 1930. He studied philosophy in the École Normale Supérieure under Louis Althusser. He died in Paris in 2002.

² Some of Bourdieu’s major contribution to theory is his novel use of the concepts capital, habitus and field. Wacquant (1992) succinctly defines the three concepts and encapsulates their relationship in the following phrase: “A field consists of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital), while habitus consists of a set of historical relations “deposited” within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action” P. 16. Chapter four provides an in-depth discussion of his use of the concepts.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

My interest in International Schooling stems from my own professional experience. I was a school leader in an International School and during my tenure, we faced issues pertaining to expatriate teacher retention, which was affecting the quality of teaching and learning. Initially, having embarked on the PhD, a brief literature review revealed that the issue of turnover in International Schooling was addressed before (Benson, 2011; Mancuso, Roberts, & White, 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009), but there were issues pertaining to methodology in that previous work particularly in relation to defining the *field* of International Schooling itself (Bunnell, 2014).

There seems to be an understanding that International Schools originally started off with the purpose of delivering an education to promote global peace, and has since transformed into a service provider for a ‘rising middle-class’ in developing countries, aspiring to a better future for their children (Hayden, 2011). Chapter Two provides a detailed discussion of the history of International Schooling and the *field*’s challenges with definition. Since 2005, there have only been a few empirical studies that have asked why parents choose International Schools and this is particularly true in the Middle East (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010).

Most International Schools use the English language as their main language of instruction (ISC, 2018). According to Tate (2016), the increasing number of English language International Schools confirms the global dominance of English, yet, in empirical studies, there is a “silence of the nation state” (p. 27), particularly the impact of domination of English on the native language and on identity (Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Rydenvald, 2015; Sears, 2012).

The demand for English-medium International Schools has led to an increase in demand for native English speakers on staff (Canterford, 2003) and an increase in competition between International Schools for quality teachers (ISC, 2018; Masudi, 2016), which exacerbates the

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issue of high teacher turnover. One empirical study concluded that International Schools could resolve the issue by recruiting and training *local* staff (Slough-Kuss, 2014). Empirical studies on International Schools seem to start from the premise that English is important and do not ask why this has become important and why local educational settings in host countries are viewed as inferior.

I have found that there is also a significant increase in *British-style* schools worldwide (Bunnell, 2014), which has led to the proliferation of British Schools Overseas (BSO) and the demand for UK trained teachers. Indeed, the Department of Education (DfE) has noted the importance of BSOs for the growth of the UK economy (Beaufoy et al., 2013), though there is little known about reasons of their growth.

1.2 Research purpose and questions

There seems to be a general lack of understanding of International Schooling, particularly of the for-profit International School. The purpose of this study stemmed from a gap in the literature that aligned with Waterson (2016) statement suggesting there is little known about the “motivation, business model, modus operandi and impact” (p. 193) of a for-profit International School from a stakeholder perspective. I particularly focused on the motivation and impact of choosing and experiencing a for-profit International School by various stakeholders. The assumption is that International Schooling is a *field* and the various stakeholders in the *field* seek to gain *capital*. This study sought to understand what type of *capital* was of value to the participants in this particular *field*. Furthermore, the purpose was to understand the ‘modus operandi’ of the school, and what *capital* did it use to achieve it. The research questions that were used to drive the research were:

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1. How do teachers, school leaders and parents make their choices of selecting an International School?
2. What type of *capital* do stakeholders (parents, graduating pupils, teachers and school leaders) at an International School value and what types do they *not* value?
3. How does an International School use its accumulated *capital* to gain advantage within the *field* of International Schools?

1.3 Overview of methodology

I have suggested that International Schooling is a contested context particularly due an issue of defining borders. Rather than defining borders and categories, Hayden (2011) suggested that International Schools are better described as transnational spaces. Bunnell (2014) who views International Schooling as a *field* further affirmed this. Pierre Bourdieu, a French philosopher and sociologist, used the concept *field* and social space. I hence use Bourdieu's *field* theory as a theoretical framework, evoking concepts of *field*, *capital*, and *habitus*. I argue in chapter four that a Bourdieusian theoretical framework not only provides the tool of unearthing the complexities and the mundane aspect of life in an International School, it also provides tools to analyse why practices are thus from a historical, social, cultural, political and economic stance.

The research design adopted was a case study design of one school in Kuwait. A case study was most suited to the purpose of the study because it allows in-depth understanding of the practices of the stakeholders and the school itself. Furthermore, a case study allowed me the flexibility to refine the instruments on site as issue presented themselves of relevance to the study. Data was mainly collected through semi-structured interviews, surveys and supported with documentary analysis. Interview and survey participants included year 13 pupils, parents of

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secondary students, secondary teachers (both local and expatriate), school leaders, human resource manager and public relation manager.

Interview and survey data were uploaded to Nvivo® which was used more as an organisational tool. The data was initially coded according to Bourdieu's concepts. A second phase of analysis converted the codes into themes that told a narrative answering the research questions. Furthermore, using a Bourdieusian *field* analysis, participant motivations and experiences were understood as related to their positions in space. Hence, the data was further analysed to present a map of the *field* by depicting the positions participants occupy in space according to the capital they have. Finally, what is deemed of value was related to the wider context of *fields* of power that have influence on the *field* of International Schooling and the various players in the *field*.

1.4 Researcher positionality

This study is distinguished from much educational research on International Schooling because of the positionality of the researcher. I was a student, a teacher and a school leader of two different International Schools. At the time of the study, I was a researcher and not a practitioner. I acknowledge that my positions in both *fields* could have introduced bias into this study based on my subjective experiences. However, rather than 'bracketing' these subjectivities and ignoring them afterwards, I have objectified them using the same tools of analysis I used in the study. Using Bourdieu's *field* analysis tools, I analyse my relationship to the participants in this study, my position in the *field* of education, and my connections in the *field*. I present the analysis in a narrative form according to my own interpretation of the data. However, I also

invite the reader to read the analysis as an intellectual conversation that I invite them to challenge or affirm my assertions.

1.5 Thesis organisation

Chapter two of this thesis sets the scene for the study. I provide a brief history of the development of International Schools, and I present the rationale for choosing Kuwait as a location for this study in particular.

Chapter three describes what the literature has reported about International Schools. I use a systematic literature review of empirical studies since 2005 to date. Three major themes emerge from the literature review: experiences of various stakeholders, the question of identity and purpose, and choice. I conclude chapter three with strengths and limitations of the literature on International Schools and positioning my study within the literature.

Chapter four introduces the research questions in light of the context of the study and the literature on International Schools. In this chapter, I argue for the need of a socio-cultural approach to the study and a Bourdieusian *field* theory in particular. I outline Bourdieu's *field* theory, his conceptual tools and their implications for both ontological and epistemological framing of the study.

I present the research plan in chapter five. I explain what a case study entails and how it has been used to illuminate educational studies in particular. I explain in detail the data collection methods and analysis in light of ontological and epistemological concerns set out in chapter four. The tools and samples of the analysis charts will be found in Appendix B and C.

A narrative analysis of the data are presented in chapters six and seven. Chapter six tells the story of how the various stakeholders made their choice of an International School. Chapter

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seven analyses the capital the school invested in to gain a competitive advantage. In both chapters six and seven, I highlight *capital* that is of relevance to the *field* of International Schooling. I also demonstrate how the *capital* deemed of most value relates to the positions occupied by the various stakeholders in the *field*. Chapter eight analyses how the *field* of International Schooling is influenced by various *fields* of power, and how that in turn impacts what type(s) of capital are of most value.

Finally, chapter eight summarises the research questions and findings. I bring forth the limitations of the study. I then, highlight the implications of the study to theory and practice on International Schooling and present my recommendations.

1.6 Reading the thesis

In reading this thesis, please note that I have italicised the Bourdieusian concepts such as *field*, *capital*, and *habitus*. This was done to distinguish between Bourdieu's use of the concepts and others who have used the same terms. Since Bourdieu's methodology is relational, any concept evokes a theoretical relation with the others. Furthermore, International Schooling and International Schools are capitalised: International Schooling (IS) to show the significance of the object of study.

Chapter 2 Historical context of International Schooling

Synopsis

Boundary setting of International Schools has been and remains a challenge to this day. To address this concern, I begin by delineating a brief history of the field of International Schooling. I describe various definitions and provide possible rationales of growth using globalisation and capitalism as a framework. I then describe the spread of International Schools in the Middle East and I present Kuwait as a microcosm for the field of International Schooling. I conclude the chapter with my positionality with respect to the object of research: the field of International Schooling.

2.0 Introduction

The beginnings of International Schools are subject to question. It is argued that the International College in Spring Grove, London, was the first International School. Established in 1866, it was inspired and funded by the International Education Society. The school's curriculum focused on science and modern languages rather than Latin which was still taught at the time. However, the founding fathers of the school hoped that through an international education, peace and scientific prosperity would ensue. Similar projects were founded in Boston, and Germany (Sylvester, 2007). Unfortunately, war would soon ensue.

In the aftermath of the First World War, the League of Nations established in Geneva. Their *raison d'être* being the purveyor of world peace with education seen as an important vehicle. Founded in 1923, The International School of Geneva, was founded. Rather than creating a curriculum for peace, the school catered for an international body of children of

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League of Nations employees. The Yokohoma International School, founded in Japan in 1930, similarly catered for an international pupil community (Sylvester, 2007).

Another reason for the growth of International Schools was the linked to multinational and transnational companies (Dolby & Rahman, 2008). For example, the Dutch Oil Company (now called the Shell company) established schools for children of its employees in the respective countries they were operating in. A point of departure of this type of International School, as compared to the International College, is the lack of emphasis on an international education for peace.

In the 1950s, International Schools were widespread enough to warrant an organisation, the International School Associates (ISA), established in Geneva. The ISA went on to develop the International Baccalaureate® (IB) diploma in 1964 and the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) in 1968. The underlying philosophy of the IB® is creating a peaceful world “through intercultural understanding and respect.” (IBO, 2018). The IBO use the terms intercultural understanding and international-mindedness interchangeably. They define international-mindedness as a mindset “characterized by an openness to the world and a recognition of our deep interconnectedness to others.” (IBO, 2017, p. 2). In order to achieve an openness, the IBO argues that pupils need to understand and be exposed to other cultures. Figure 2.1 depicts a brief timeline of International Schooling.

According to this rudimentary history, two distinct typologies of International Schools emerge. On the one hand, there are schools that promote intercultural understanding and international mindedness, or ideological International Schools. On the other are schools that adopt a national curriculum but serve an international body of pupils or serve a pragmatic

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purpose. Not all International Schools fit neatly into one of those categories. Hayden (2006) suggested it is best to view these typologies as two ends of a spectrum.

International Schools witnessed the most growth in Europe, but quickly spread to other parts, particularly in Asia and the Middle East (Bunnell, Fertig, & James, 2016; Dolby & Rahman, 2008). This was explained as a rising middle class, particularly in China and India, and the new-found wealth in oil producing countries in the Middle East. These schools do not fit on the ideological/pragmatic spectrum. These schools typically cater for local children, teaching is in English and often operate for-profit (Bunnell et al., 2016). Bunnell et al. (2016) suggest a three-typology classification of International Schools: Type A is the ideal school with an international-education purpose. Type B is the pragmatic type, that caters for an international student body. Type C is less-defined. This presented a further challenge to researchers who want to study the phenomenon of International Schooling: the lack of clear boundaries.

International Schools have developed language of their own (Walker, 2003). For example, International Schools are ‘accredited’ rather than ‘inspected’. Accrediting and governing bodies such as IBO, and the Council of International Schools (CIS) create their own rules and norms.

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Figure 2.1 Brief timeline of international schooling

2.1 Wind of change: globalisation and capitalism

Globalisation is a major force behind the spread of International Schools, as is the notion of the world being more open to cultural and economic exchange. I want to pause here to point out that globalisation is a highly contested term. Academics and lay-people will define it differently, and each according to their worldview. For some, it means a unification of culture and societies, to include trade and education. For others, it means colonialism dressed in ‘sheep’s clothing’ (Scholte, 2008), particularly since many International Schools use English as their language of instruction. Globalisation, whether perceived as a force of culture unification or global imperialism, or otherwise, has had an impact on the evolution and characterisation of International Schooling.

International Schools as conveyors of world peace could be viewed as a positive outcome of globalisation (Hayden, 2011). Some argue that globalisation is equated with the widespread capitalism (Bunnell, 2014; Hayden, 2011) with all its concomitant problems and inequalities - and as such - International Schools are such a manifestation. Transnational companies typically use English as a language of communication. It is indeed the language used for business, travel and employment worldwide (Hayden, 2006), the so-called “lingua franca” of globalisation (Lauder, 2007). With many International Schools claiming to prepare students for an ever-changing, fast-evolving world, most International Schools provide English as a language of instruction.

Schools generally have always gone to great lengths to distinguish themselves from commercial organisations with for-profit motives, but there are many boundary crossings. For example, educational management theories are adapted from business models. International Schools, especially for-profit ones, find it more difficult to make that distinction and the

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correlation with business institutions more visible. That raises the concern that such schools give priority to profit over educative purposes. The assumption is that International Schools could operate like a free market with competition driving schools to maintain quality. However, this assumes that parents are able to make informed decisions on the quality of education provided. International Schools are generally left to their own devices with no external accountability (Hayden & Thompson, 2008; Waterson, 2015) and they do not necessarily have to disclose information pertaining to attainment or other quality assurance issues.

Another manifestation of the rise of neo-liberal capitalism is the widespread of transnational companies and conglomerates and this too has spilled over to International Schools. Some transnational companies own and run International Schools; for example: Nord Anglia and Global Education Management Systems (GEMS) (Waterson, 2015). Table 2.1 shows examples of such transnational companies and the numbers of schools they owned in 2015, and currently in 2018. The International School business is a lucrative one it seems. Forbes (2018) lists Sunny Varkey, the owner of GEMS, as worth 2.7 billion US\$. The business of International Schooling has also proved to be “recession proof” (Waterson, 2015).

Table 2.1 Number of schools owned by educational transnational companies from 2015-2017

Transnational company	Number of schools 2015	Number of schools 2018	Percentage increase
GEMS Education (Dubai)	71	250	252%
Nord Anglia (Hong Kong)	28	55	96%
Cognita (UK)	65	68	4%
Bellevue Education (UK)	11	15	36%
Taaleem (Dubai)	9	10	11%
SABIS (Lebanon)	34	56	64%

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Traditionally, charging fees for private schooling was acceptable, as with the UK's famous ancient 'Public Schools', but providing education for-profit has always been frowned upon. Critics argue against schools being institutions run for profit, claiming that the two worlds are diametrically opposed and cannot be reconciled. Teachers and managers in International Schools often cite among the reasons for leaving their positions in International Schools the for-profit nature of the school and the implications that this has on their professional life (Benson, 2011; James & Sheppard, 2014; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

On the other hand, there are those that claim that schools, even non-profit ones, could and should learn lessons from the business sector, especially in decentralised systems where public schools often have to secure funding and resources for the school external to government support. This is particularly pertinent to International Schools. All International School need to make a profit from their revenue (student fees) because most do not receive financial support from governments. International Schools have much to share with businesses because they have to market themselves to attract parents; their survival is linked to their fiscal health.

2.2 The *field* of International Schooling: Issues with boundaries

For the purpose of this study, I define International Schools as that used by the ISC (International School Consultancy):

“an International School as any school that uses an English-speaking curriculum in a non-English speaking country, or if it is an English-speaking country, then the school uses a different curriculum to the national one, and is international in nature” (ISC, 2018).

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Although, the definition is problematic because it seems biased towards English-speaking schools, it is used by one of the leading intelligence companies on International Schools, the ISC. This definition further reinforces the value given to the English language in the proliferation of International Schools worldwide. In practice, this is how International Schools are perceived. For example, studies pertaining to parent choice often cite English as their main reason to enrolling their children whether they are in Japan, Israel, or in Brazil (MacKenzie, 2010; Mackenzie, Hayden, & Thompson, 2003).

The significance of the English language is not exclusive to International Schools. In most nations where English is not the first language, teaching and learning English is of utmost importance (Potter & Hayden, 2004), particularly because it is the lingua franca, the language of banking and commerce. While communicating in English is important for business, it is also seen as a source of distinction. If one speaks as well, with no accent, you have ‘added value’ (Al-Rubaie, 2010). It could also be the reason for resentment and segregations within societies, as Rydenvald (2015) describes such phenomenon ‘elite bilingualism’. International Schools are sites where children whose first language is not English, will become proficient in English, so much so, that it would be difficult to discern them from a non-native.

2.3 The stakeholders

The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) define two types of stakeholders in a school: internal and external. Internal stakeholders are those that interact directly with producing and consuming the product (support staff, pupils, teachers and management), whereas external stakeholders are those that have interest but do not interact directly (parents, charities, religious bodies, governing bodies). With respect to an International School, the literature is

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strewn with descriptors of these stakeholders in order to distinguish between the different types of schools. To illustrate, in section 2.3 I described how increasingly International Schools are catering for local families. However, 'local' could have various meanings. Local is often conflated with a national of the host country. Teachers are also often labelled as expatriate or overseas or local. Local teachers do not necessarily mean nationals of the country. For example, teachers in Kuwait could be on a 'local' contract (translates into a lower salary and less benefits than an overseas contract) are usually non-Kuwaiti and are considered expatriates by the Government, hence, they are entitled to paying taxes which 'local' Kuwaitis are not entitled to.

Those who have used globalisation as a framework for understanding International Schooling have imposed a certain view of the pupil in an International School. Terms such as Third Child Kid (TCK), global nomad, and global citizen has been commonly used in International School literature (Bates, 2013; Bates, 2012; Brunold-Conesa, 2011; Fanning & Burns, 2017; Matthewman, 2011; Mclachlan, 2007; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Straffon, 2003; Wilkins, 2013; Wright, Lee, Tang, Chak, & Tsui, 2016).

TCK was a term first used by sociologist couple Ruth Hill and John Useem in Michigan State university. They relocated with their children to India in the 1950s. They observed that amongst families, and particularly children, that they tend to occupy a third culture space: not entirely their passport country, nor the host country's (Useem & Cottrell, 1996). This is in contrast with a global nomad who occupies a social space that transcends nation borders and is more universal in nature, without necessarily having to physically travel. A global nomad, depicts people who physically travel a lot, particularly during their younger years because of parent jobs (McCaig, 1994, p. 32). A common theme amongst these terms is that such children

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are more aware of different culture. As International Schools seem to cater for a more sedentary pupil body, the latter present one of their missions as to nurture 'global citizens'.

It is easy to take such terms for granted either because of their frequent use in everyday language, such as 'local' or because of their seemingly recognizable use of terms such as 'global nomad'. However, the way these terms are defined have important consequences for research.

2.4 A brief history of International Schools in the Persian Gulf Council Countries

The aim in this section is not provide a history lesson of the region, rather, highlight significant events that shaped the growing interests in the region with respect to International Schools and hence their proliferation:

The Persian Gulf Council consists of the following, oil-rich countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. A century ago, all of these countries but Oman did not exist as sovereign nation states. Much of what is now known as the Middle East were part of different Arab and Muslim caliphates. Then they came under the rule of the Ottoman Empire between the 15th and late 19th to early 20th century, where the entire region – The Middle East and North Africa – were considered as 'protectorates' of either the British or the French.

Up to the discovery of oil, the Persian Gulf countries consisted of nomadic Bedouin tribes. Those living directly along the Persian Gulf relied on fishing, trading and pearl-diving as a way of living. Over time, alliances were forged, and particular tribes consolidated their power over certain regions. The upmost important alliance that formed was between leaders and the British. For example, Mubarak Al Sabah, assumed power over a region, now known to be

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Kuwait, feared Ottoman influence and signed upon a ‘protectorate’ treaty in 1899. Similar patterns occurred amongst different tribe chiefs in the region.

With the discovery of oil, the British benefited economically. Britain had its own oil company, the then Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) excavate for oil to receive concessions, while the rest of the profit went to the ruling families at the time who redistributed the wealth amongst its people. What this meant was there was a lot of British presence at the time. After gaining independence, the Gulf states slowly deferred their alliances, particularly with respect to defence to the United States.

The Gulf states were established as ‘rentier states’³. By the 1970s, most Gulf countries were benefiting from the wealth accrued from oil sale revenue and sought to transform their nations to meet modern standards through building of financial, health, public services and educational institutions. Citizens did not have to pay tax, and governments provided free healthcare and education. They also received income from the state and loans to build homes on government awarded land.

Since they were nascent nations, the states relied on importing both physical goods and human labour to help develop their nations. Due to increasing expatriate populations, there was a demand for schooling for the children of these families, hence the inception of the first International Schools in the region. Increasingly however, was the enrolling children by national citizens in the fee-paying International Schools as more viewed their children with a better education than the free-government schools (Alqahtani, 2014).

³ A rentier state is a concept adapted from Marx to identify a nation that receives much of its income from natural resources such as oil (Beblawi 1990 in Schwarz, 2008)

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The ISC reports that number of International Schools in the Middle East have skyrocketed to a high of 9,306 schools in January 2018. An 8% increase since December 2016, and a 260% increase since 2000. The ISC purports that increased competition to western universities and better paying jobs have driven parents to invest in International Schools (ISC, 2018).

2.5 Kuwait as a microcosm of International Schools

Kuwait is an oil-rich country in the Arabian (or Persian) Gulf. Kuwait officially declared independence from the British protectorate in 1961. The people who inhabited the lands were mostly nomadic tribes. By the 19th century a few tribes settled there and lived off sea-faring and pearl-diving. The de-facto leading tribe at the time were the Al-Sabah family.

The discovery of oil changed Kuwait dramatically, as it did the countries nearby. Due to the presence of British personnel and other expatriates, the first private, “international” school, The English School, welcomed expatriate students in 1953 (Bunnell, 2014), long before Kuwait declared independence. The first bilingual ‘international’ school in Kuwait opened in the 1970s. Its mission was provide the ‘best of two worlds’: the Arabic and the English. Private citizens owned such schools, mostly Kuwaiti. To this day, non-Kuwaitis may not own their own businesses in Kuwait; they need a Kuwaiti as a partner.

When Kuwaiti oil was nationalised, the wealth generated from oil production developed Kuwait’s first institutions, namely healthcare and education. Interestingly, both sectors were staffed by expatriates: typically Egyptian doctors and Palestinian teachers and hence a two-tiered social system in Kuwait consisting of Kuwaitis who experienced full benefits of the welfare system (free education and health care) and expatriates who do not enjoy the full benefits (Casey, 2007).

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Literacy in Kuwait exceeds 80 percent in both males and females which highlights the importance of education for both genders, an issue that persists in some Muslim countries (Casey, 2007).

Despite efforts by Kuwait to limit expatriate nationals so that no nationality constitutes more than 10% of Kuwaitis, the percentage of expatriates remains high in comparison to Kuwaiti nationals. Since expatriate children are not permitted to attend the public schools, they had to attend fee-paying private schools. International Schools adopting a British or American curriculum were examples of such schools.

Towards the end of the 20th century, International Schools attracted more Kuwaiti families (Alqahtani, 2014). As rich rentier state, Kuwait offered its nationals generous allowances to study in universities abroad. To qualify to study abroad, particularly in the US and the UK (the most popular destinations) Kuwaiti pupils need to demonstrate English proficiency not only to secure university admissions but also student visas. While public schools do teach English as a second language, pupils who graduate from an International School are more proficient in English.

These countries have seen rapid expansion of the International School market despite recent slumps in oil prices. Many of the International Schools operate for-profit and cater for a more local community⁴, as opposed to global nomads. These factors contribute to the appropriateness of selecting Kuwait as a location for my study. Furthermore, it will provide an understand motives behind parents investing financially in such a school despite shrinking economies and the absence of hard evidence that correlates attending an International School to

⁴ Local in this context meaning people living in the area for extended period of time

better paying jobs. The fact that International Schools first opened in Kuwait indicates a more established market for the study.

2.6 The need for further studies to understand the *field* of International Schooling

International Schools have proliferated in numbers. Academic research has not picked up the pace and remains limited. Earlier in this chapter, I explained the difficulty in defining boundaries of International Schools and their stakeholders. Furthermore, access to such a school for research purposes is restricted which is why they have remained a “well-kept secret” (Hayden & Thompson, 2008, p. 9). While it is fairly straightforward in the UK for example to access information via websites pertaining to numbers of schools, population demographics and other performance indicators, the same does not apply to International Schools. The ISC conducts research and collects data pertaining to the International School market worldwide, will provide the information at a cost.

Researchers in the field of International Schools tend to be few and scope of research is limited (Bunnell, 2014; Dolby & Rahman, 2008). According to Dolby and Rahman (2008), there were three lines of empirical research on International Schools:

- History of International Schools to include the debate of international education vs. International Schooling, the impact of language (second language, bilingualism, multilingualism) on student identity and the impact that may have on education
- Experiences of students as globally mobile students or Third Culture Kids. However, this is noted as a particular interest to researchers involved because they themselves were such children who went to International Schools
- International mindedness vs. pragmatic purpose of International Schools (p. 689 – 693)

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As part of my literature review, I used a systematic literature review on empirical research pertaining to International Schools since 2005. Not much has changed to the list above. There is however a marked interest in teacher retention, recruitment, and how International School leadership can improve this.

Researching International Schools is beleaguered with ontological concerns that have methodological implications. Since boundaries of International Schoolings are not defined, attempting to access a representative sample is difficult if not impossible. Therefore, quantitative methods such as surveys subject to reliability, validity and generalisability issues due to varied respondents and varying contexts (Cambridge, 2007). A lack of common terminology to describe International Schools and their stakeholders exacerbates attempts at attributing clarity to International School studies.

The community of International School researchers is small. Names such as Hayden, Thompson, Bunnell, Lee, Hallinger, Walker and Bates are frequently quoted on studies on International Schools. These researchers are invested heavily in International School education because they are themselves practitioners. This is seen as a strength of International School research because it is closely related to practice in a world where the divide between research and practice is much contested (Dolby & Rahman, 2008). However, Dolby and Rahman also point out that since it is such a limited circle of researchers, the impact of such research on theory of International Schools remains weak.

Given the above challenges and lack of understanding of “what goes on” in a for-profit in an International School (Bunnell, 2014) warrants further research. Many of the academic literature on International Schools has suggested the need for further in-depth studies and

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reassessment the boundaries of International Schooling (Bunnell, 2014; Dolby & Rahman, 2008; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

Bunnell (2014) suggests that using the term ‘field’ to describe International Schooling as a useful starting point to resolve concerns of defining the boundaries of International Schooling. Bunnell uses the concept ‘field’ as used by the French sociologist/anthropologist Philippe Bourdieu. Bourdieu studied different fields such as education, art and literature, as well as peoples in countries like Algeria and his hometown in Bearn, France. His approach to studying a field is relevant to the purpose of this study simply put because he provides tools to understand a field in depth regardless of the varied backgrounds of the people within the study. Indeed, a Bourdieusian approach understands that any field has its history and trajectory. It also maintains a reflexive approach in order to highlight taken-for granted assumptions and the relationship of the researcher with the researched. I will further expand on Bourdieu’s methodology and advantages of using it in chapter 4.

2.7 My relationship to the *field* of International Schooling

Dolby and Rahman (2008) pointed out that many researchers of International Schools were themselves students at such institutions. This applied to me; I was a student myself in an International School, before attending the American University of Beirut and returning to teach in another International School. I was recruited by an international school in Kuwait as a science teacher. My contract was a local contract as opposed to being overseas. Despite being a non-Kuwaiti, I was not eligible for an overseas contract because I was already a resident of the country. A local contract meant a lower salary to an overseas one, and less benefits. The school I worked in was conscious of the disparities in salaries and in an effort to ameliorate this they

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offered local teachers who taught in English an extra bilingual stipend. Although I received a higher salary than a local teacher did, it was still less than that of an overseas hired teacher.

Professional demands and appraisals of teachers were the same regardless of contract.

After nine years teaching and a Masters in educational leadership, I was promoted to the position of deputy principal. My contract was subsequently changed to an overseas one. I received all the benefits of the overseas teacher: home and transport allowance, return ticket to my home country, full health insurance as well as an increased salary.

I attended a for-profit school and I worked for a non-profit one. My youngest brother at the time, 15 years younger, attended my old International School. I acted as his 'pseudo' parent, attending all his parent meetings and monitoring his education. During my lifetime, I had assumed various roles in the field of International Schooling. I therefore disclose that at the time of my PhD study, I was motivated partly by my personal and professional interests to explore this field further.

During the last few years of my tenure as a deputy principal, many International Schools in Kuwait were facing a challenges of increased overseas teacher turnover and tough competition in recruitment. School managers discussed such concerns in events such as the NESA (Near East South Asa Council of Overseas Schools) fall leadership conference (NESA, 2013). Even when a school academic year started with the school fully staffed, at least two teachers would break their contracts within the first few months or not return after the annual winter holidays. Many new teaching staff struggled to teach effectively. All these issues were jeopardizing teaching quality. In some circumstances, we had to let go teachers during the three-month grace period because of teaching quality.

Embarking on this PhD study may have stemmed from a practical impetus, I have occupied various positions and roles within the field. To analyse the data and present the findings in a reliable manner, I had to objectify my position with respect to the different actions of the research process by bringing my subjective experiences to the forefront.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I have briefly described the history of International Schools. I have explained growth of International Schools from a globalisation and capitalist, neo-liberal stance. Despite the proliferation of what defines an International School, I provide a definition that is relevant to this thesis.

I have set the context for the location of the study. I describe how the Middle East is currently one of the regions where International Schools have noted the most growth. I also argue for the suitability of Kuwait as a location for the study. Finally, I gave a brief outline of my personal and professional relationship to International Schools. (In chapter five, I will describe how I problematize this relationship with respect to the data collection and analysis)

Chapter 3 Literature Review

Synopsis

The literature on International Schools is limited in quantity, and authors. Empirical studies on International Schools reflect a similar situation. Empirical studies in the field of International Schooling from 2005 to 2018 could be organised in three categories: general and professional experiences of stakeholders, choice of school made by teachers and/or parents selecting the school or university choices made by pupils, the impact of International Schooling on identity and development of intercultural awareness. Despite the paucity of research, I discuss lessons learned from the literature and situate my study within it.

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide a literature review of International Schooling. To do this I undertook a systematic literature review from 2005 to 2018 in peer-reviewed journals published by Emerald Insight, Sage Publications and Taylor and Francis using the key term ‘International School’. Within the field of International Schooling, since 2005, there have been 57 empirical studies in peer-reviewed journals (see table 3.1). In the review, I do not include studies pertaining to International Baccalaureate (IB) schools that are irrelevant to my study.

I organised the literature into three categories:

1. Experience of stakeholders, both general and professional
2. Choice-making: either by teachers and parents of International School or pupils at International Schools of university
3. The question of identity and purpose of International Schooling

I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the literature. I then situate my study within the literature.

As a reminder, this study is a socio-cultural one inspired by Bourdieu, but in this chapter, I do not address an educational literature review using only Bourdieu's conceptual tools. (I introduce his theoretical framework and how his tools have been used in educational research in chapter four of this thesis.) This chapter offers a review of what has been said about International Schools.

Table 3.1 List of empirical studies on International Schooling since 2005

Main stakeholder in study	Journal of Research in International Education	COMPARE	Other
Students	(Baker & Kanan, 2005; Belal, 2017; Deveney, 2005; Dunne & Edwards, 2010; Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Fanning & Burns, 2017; Frangie, 2017; Kanan & Baker, 2006; Murdock, Hirt, & Ferring, 2014; Picton, 2017; Robottom & Norhaidah, 2008; Rydenvald, 2015; Wilkins, 2013; Young, 2016; Yue Zhang & McGrath, 2009)	(Kadiwal & Rind, 2013; Tran & Pham, 2016)	
Parents	(Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2009, 2010; McLachlan, 2007)		
Administrators	(Bates, 2013; Benson, 2011; Bunnell, 2005; Machin, 2014; Roberts & Mancuso, 2014; Tamatea, 2008)		(James & Sheppard, 2014)
Teachers	(Bailey, 2015a; Chandler, 2010; Deveney, 2007; Dunne		

Main stakeholder in study	Journal of Research in International Education	COMPARE	Other
	& Edwards, 2010; Hirsch, 2017; Hrycak, 2015; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roskell, 2013; Savva, 2013, 2015; Yue Zhang & McGrath, 2009; Zilber, 2005)		
International Baccalaureate	(Bunnell, 2008b; M. Halicioglu, 2008; Hallinger, Lee, & Walker, 2011; Kauffman, 2005; Lineham, 2013; Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010; Wright et al., 2016)		
Other	(Englezou & Fragkouli, 2014; Fryer, 2009; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008; Jabal, 2013; Pearce, 2011; Pletser, 2017; Sears, 2011, 2012; Sunder, 2013; Sunder, 2016; Tarry, 2011)	(Sperandio, Hobson, Douglas, & Pruitt, 2009)	

3.1 Experience

Many studies focused around the experiences of different groups of stakeholders in International Schools. From a pedagogical perspective, the role of culture and how that may impact perceptions of learning, and professional experiences of staff.

3.1.1 Pupils.

Societies are increasingly multi-cultural and diverse. However, cultural differences are more pronounced in International Schools, whether it is due to an adopted curriculum, teachers from a different from a different country and so on. Commentaries are widespread of cultures having different attitudes towards teaching and learning. For example, the Chinese teaching Math to mastery, the Finnish high value of education and educators. Such stereotypes could easily be taken for granted. In International Schools, teachers who often come from one country to teach in another, will probably have a different perception and experience from a teacher living in the country. Deveney (2005) investigated teacher's perception, if any, of the effect of Thai culture on Thai students in an International School in Thailand. Teachers were not Thai but primarily from the UK with a few from North America, Australia and New Zealand. Deveney reported that teachers perceived student learning behaviours, which was seen to be influenced by their culture, to have an impact on student learning. Many teachers involved in the study revealed that they manipulated students' behaviours to fit their own worldview of what is deemed appropriate learning behaviours. For example, Thai students were perceived to be passive learners and teachers encouraged more participation to change that, but Deveney noted that these behaviours are rooted in teachers' own 'western' culture. Deveney suggests that

teachers in International Schools need to be ‘culturally responsive’ in order to create the necessary environment to allow more successful teaching and learning.

From other view-point, Zhang and McGrath (2009) investigated Chinese pupil perceptions and attitudes towards teachers, both Chinese and non-Chinese in their IB boarding school. This study was based on the assumption that student-teacher relationships impact the learning process and hence impact the quality of intellectual and social *capital* produced. Zhang and McGrath described pupil perceptions using mirrors as a metaphor. Chinese teachers being concave, they belittled them with their comments whereas non-Chinese teachers were more convex, they led them to have a more positive self-image. Nevertheless, Chinese students saw merit in both types of teachers: Chinese teachers did spend more of their own time outside of school time caring for students, which non-Chinese teachers did not.

Both Deveney’s and Zhang and McGrath’s studies claim that local culture could impact pedagogic behaviours amongst teachers and learners. However, it has been argued elsewhere that the use of culture to explain such differences reinforces existing prejudices. Any difference between groups of people should be seen as an ‘intergroup encounter’ no different than any other group like a group of friends (Van Oord, 2008). Despite Van Oord’s rejection of the use of culture as a lens to explain difference, Zhang and McGrath claim that it is in fact Van Oord who legitimises the use of culture as a lens to identify pedagogic differences.

3.1.2 Teachers who are also parents.

Little is known about parents who are also teachers in International Schools and their experiences in International Schools. Zilber (2005) attempted to close the gap in research. Through a qualitative study, Zilber stated that teachers who are parents of children at the same

International School, consider this physical proximity as being advantageous because it was practical and in some cases when this was a first experience for the children, the parents are there for support. On the other hand, their children could be treated unfairly due to perception of being favoured either from other teachers, students or parents. Private conversations at home become overwhelmingly about school. Child-rearing and teaching their children independence could also prove to be problematic. Zilber interviewed two focus groups of a total of 23 and had discussions with 80 teachers in three forums at an International School conference. Zilber did not make clear what the teacher's nationality were and what they taught to make possible any comparison with other studies if there were. However, it raised the question whether or not International Schools have certain structural *capital* to ensure a positive experience for both teachers who are parents and their children but not showing favouritism towards the latter.

A common attribute of many International Schools is the transient nature of the families. The impact of relocation and transience on the emotional and social well-being of families was considered by Maclahan (2007). 46 families from 17 different nationalities were interviewed. These families all had children ages 13-14 attending an International School in England. Maclahan uncovered four themes amongst the families:

- guilty parents and grieving children
- strengthening and restructuring family roles which often meant the mother staying at home to support the children and their activities in school
- managing independence, cohesiveness and parenting of Internationally Mobile children (Mclachlan, 2007).

Children had different coping strategies based on their perceived introverted or extroverted nature. Extroverts apparently were more prone to thriving in a mobile life. This study

took place in the UK which brings the question of transferability of the results of the study to students of International Schools in other countries. Equally, it could be argued that with the proliferation of the internet and social media, many children are experiencing diminishing boundaries. However, the diversity of nationalities (17 nationalities from five different continents) involved in McLachlan's study make its conclusions noteworthy; families can have differing backgrounds but when it came to child welfare there are commonalities.

3.1.3 Teachers.

All the studies included in the systematic research studying teacher experience, exclusively examined that of an expatriate teacher, with one notable exception (Yue Zhang & McGrath, 2009). Furthermore, Canterford (2003) revealed that most of these 'expatriate' teachers are overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon (mostly British or American), which many of the studies demonstrate. From the outset, there is a bias of the academic research towards expatriate teachers, and hence, little is known about local teacher experience.

A common crisis in the UK and North America are deteriorating teacher working conditions. For many teachers in these countries, teaching overseas in International Schools worldwide provides a solution to their problems. Coulter and Abney (2009) compared degrees of burnout amongst Canadian teachers teaching in International Schools and those teaching in Canada. Basing their study on a definition of 'burnout' by Abell and Sewell (1999), Coulter and Abney directly quote "Prolonged stress associated with the gradual erosion of important technical, psychological and social resources can result in burnout" (2009, p. 106). The study was a quantitative one using the Burnout Test Form 1 – Revised adopted from Jerabeck (2001) (Coulter & Abney, 2009) which was a 35 ranking questions along four criteria: emotional

exhaustion, detachment/dehumanisation of clients, general exhaustion and feeling overwhelmed. This questionnaire was taken from the website www.queendom.com which has a plethora of self-tests such as aptitude and wellness. There are two burnout tests: one for the service industry and one for non-service industry. The assumption is that teaching is part of the former. The test does not clarify who would be considered the client in the case of the teacher, it could be argued that in an International School both the pupil and the parent are the clients. With 44 teachers in International Schools and 61 teachers in Canada, the authors concluded that teachers in Canada experienced statistically more significant burnout than teachers in International Schools regardless of age, gender, level of education and years in the profession (Coulter & Abney, 2009). They attributed higher burnout in Canada due to increasing workloads, exhaustion and a feeling of dehumanization. No further information was provided with respect to International School location. Coulter and Abney recommend future studies use a 'teacher-suited' tool for measuring burnout and a bigger sample, however, they felt confident based on their results to advocate for teachers who feel burned out in Canada to not abandon the teaching profession but to teach in International Schools.

A study by Roskell in 2013 in a British International School in South East Asia had a dramatically different finding to Coulter and Abney (2009). In an ethnographic study, Roskell interviewed 12 teachers over the course of one academic year at different intervals: 2 weeks then four, eight, and ten-month intervals. Roskell sought to understand their experiences with respect to cross-cultural transition from two perspectives: psychological and socio-cultural. Roskell argued strongly against the use of quantitative methods to study culture-shock, particularly for trying to capture emotions in retrospect. According to Roskell, teachers initially experienced euphoria which by month eight fizzled out. Teachers were complaining of their lives socially and

professionally, specifically their relationship with the school leader who they feared hindered their professional efficiency. However, Roskell differentiated between teachers who adjusted to the host-country and the workplace: they do not necessarily correlate especially with teachers who compare their current teaching practice to that back home in the UK. Some teachers were not aware that the school was a for-profit school and were dismayed at the working conditions thus. Returning back to the UK was considered as a safety net, however, many feared they would not be able to find jobs back home because of lack of professional development at the school. By the end of the study, seven out of the twelve teachers expressed their wish to leave the school. Roskell suggested that International School leaders allow teachers time to reconcile their feelings of loss during transitions. Indeed, contrasting results to Coulter and Abney (2009).

While burnout and cross-cultural transition can occur at any workplace, one feature of some International Schools is the hyper-mobility of pupils. Hacoheh (2012) investigated how such turnover impacts teachers at an International School. Hacoheh interviewed eight teachers in four International Schools in the UK. Teachers implied that newly relocated children into any school (whether it is homogeneous or not) will experience challenges and teachers have to be proactive in allowing students to transition successfully. A supportive community including the school head and other teachers was perceived as empowering teachers into supporting such students.

In 2016, a report claimed the UK facing a 'brain drain crisis'⁵ with teachers choosing to teach abroad. Hrycak (2015) sought to understand what teachers' perceptions were of International Schools. Hrycak posted an online survey on the Times Education Supplement

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/feb/26/uk-schools-suffering-as-new-teachers-flock-abroad-warns-chief-inspector>

(TES).⁶ 87 teachers responded who were mainly British, but there were some Americans, Australians, New Zealand, Canadian, South African and Dutch. Selected randomly, Hrycak then interviewed one teacher who had no experience teaching in International Schools, one with one year or less teaching experience in an International School and one teacher with two or more years teaching experience in International Schools. These teachers were selected randomly. Hrycak wanted to answer the following questions: How visible is the International School market to teachers? How do teachers perceive teaching internationally? Do the perceptions of teachers teaching in International Schools match those of teachers who work in their home country?

Hrycak stated that the majority of teachers teaching in their home country were aware of the variety of options of teaching in International Schools. Teachers seemed to be motivated to teach for their desire to work with children, whether they are teaching in International Schools or in their own home countries. Teachers teaching in their home country mentioned the following advantages of teaching at home: good working conditions and rewarding staff relationships. However, they experienced the following disadvantages: increasing government intervention and a decline in education standards with increasing stress due to excessive targets to be met. Teachers teaching overseas portrayed different experiences. Teachers in International Schools remember their home countries teaching experience as being humiliating due to bullying, being overworked and stressed. The same teachers believe that teaching in International Schools is less bureaucratic and provide better salaries. On the flipside, they acknowledge that they have less

⁶ TES is a weekly UK publication, although aimed primarily for teachers in the UK, it also serves as a platform for international school advertisements

job-security, they often having to deal with indulged children, poor school management and underqualified staff. All the while they are away from their families and lack their support.

Hrycak implies that teacher preparation programmes in countries such as the UK, should prepare teachers to teaching in International Schools since so many are leaving but meanwhile allowing them a way to re-enter the teaching pool back home if they choose to return (Hrycak, 2015). This is similar to fears described by teachers involved in Roskell's (2013) study who expressed fear of not being able to find jobs upon their return back home. Whilst the intellectual *capital* of teachers in countries such as the UK seem to be transferring to International Schools, it has not translated to an increase in intellectual *capital* in International Schools as reflected in studies pertaining to International School teacher turnover and retention.

Unlike national countries, there are is no one census made available to the wider community to know specific numbers of teacher turnover and retention in International Schools. Two significant studies in terms of sample populations attempted to measure these numbers and isolate causes (Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

Odland and Ruzicka (2009) distributed a questionnaire containing 20 close-ended and two open-ended questions to 281 teachers teaching in International Schools. These teachers were accessed through the CIS database (Council for International Schools). The study's focus was to reveal influential factors leading teachers to leave at the end of their first contract at an International School. Teachers involved in the study had to be expatriate who have chosen to not renew their first contract at the school they are at or who have done so previously. The study concluded the major reasons teachers decided to leave were lack of communication between teachers and senior management team and faculty, lack of support from senior management, degree of teacher involvement in decision-making and personal circumstances. Open-ended

questions allowed teachers to voice concern regarding to the for-profit nature of schools, dissatisfaction of working with local colleagues, misrepresentation during recruitment and contractual issues (expatriates receive a much higher salary than locals and some teachers expressed strong views against this).

The method used by was explicated in a PhD study by one of the authors (Odland, 2008). Out of the twenty questions, ten were derived from literature pertaining to turnover in schools in the US or the UK. Only two were relevant to International Schools. The tool was scrutinised by five experts in the field of International Schooling. This consolidates that it is common practice to borrow theories and methods derived from the 'west' mainly the US and the UK and apply in any International School context (Dimmock & Walker, 2000; Sperandio et al., 2009). Furthermore, there were terminology discrepancies, for example, the participant had to identify three typologies of ownership: privately-owned, not for-profit and multinational corporation owned. In reality, an International School could be all three.

Mancuso et al. (2010) shortly recreated Odland's study but using a different tool, teacher sampling pool. They also expanded their scope to question reasons behind teachers choosing to remain in their International School post. The online survey used was modified from a tool developed by the National Center for Educational Studies in the US called the Schools and Staffing survey (SASS), and the Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS). The modified survey was named the International Teacher Mobile Survey, was not attached in the article, neither was it disclosed how many items it contained. The original SASS contained 75 questions! The sample included 191 teachers staying on and 57 leaving. Teachers were mostly Anglo-Saxon (American, Canadian, British, Australian, New-Zealanders working in school members of the Near East South Asia Council of Overseas School (NESA) which at the time comprised of 40 schools.

Mancuso et al. received responses from teachers at 22 schools out of the 40 which is a bigger turnout than Odland and Ruzicka's study where the population only represented 9% of the teachers in the CIS database at the time. Mancuso et al. posit their large sampling and powerful statistical tests as strengths of their study.

The study concluded that there were three significant factors impacting teachers leaving their position at an International School: satisfaction with salary, supportive leadership and involvement in decision making. Middle-aged teachers were more mobile as opposed to studies in the US which showed more mobility with teachers who are either younger or older. According to Mancuso et al. (2010), the schools' for-profit status had no statistical significance on a teacher's decision to leave which contradicts Odland and Ruzicka's findings. Even though Mancuso et al.'s (2010) study controlled for school size and type of ownership, the ITMS does not account for the nuanced complexities that could be at play in the school. For example, Caffyn (2010) has suggested that International Schools are spaces where micro-politics is at play. The large turnover of teaching staff, the different nationalities, and the competitive stance, makes it difficult for International Schools to provide for a more supportive type of leadership Caffyn (ibid.) argues.

Chandler (2010) criticised Odland and Ruzicka's approach because it leaves out location as a factor impacting teachers' retention and recruitment decisions. Chandler concluded a weak link between location satisfaction and retention. Location was perceived as important for recruitment purposes (Chandler, 2010). However, with a sample of only 26 teachers, such a quantitative study hardly has statistical significance to make any generalisations about importance of location as a factor in teacher retention and recruitment.

3.1.4 International School leadership

Schools that have stable tenure of leadership display a stability that impacts teacher retention and the quality of teaching and learning (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). Benson explored International School chief administrator tenure and factors impacting their decisions to leave the school they were working at. In 2011, Benson sent an online survey to 575 International Schools to which 165 responded and completed followed by 8 follow-up interviews. The average tenure of chief administrators who took part in the survey was 3.7 years. According to an NFER report, the UK retains on average 90% of its headteachers⁷. Although headteachers are not equivalent to chief administrators, they are similar in that they are both senior management positions in schools. Chief administrators attributed their reasons to leaving is mostly due to micro-management from the board of directors and the regular member change in the board.

Findings to a similar study contradicted Benson's findings. Implications of ownership of an International School and the profit nature was explored by James and Sheppard in 2014. They surveyed 145 administrators in International Schools and interviewed thirteen. Only eight administrators expressed concerns with perpetual changes of the board of governors. They expressed that these changes impacted their ability to plan strategically. However, administrators in this particular study expressed more autonomy with respect to managing the school regardless if the school was for-profit or non-profit (James & Sheppard, 2014). Whereas in Benson's study, chief administrators expressed feeling stress put forth by the board to ensure the school is making a financial profit. According to James and Sheppard (2014), school ownership was either

⁷ <https://www.nfer.ac.uk/about-nfer/media-and-events/headteacher-retention-a-growing-concern-according-to-new-research/>

private or community based, however, this does not account for the rise of transnational companies that own, or are partners with International School (Hayden, 2011; Waterson, 2015).

The James and Sheppard (2014) and Benson (2011) studies should be compared with caution. James and Sheppard had no way to distinguish whether the administration staff completing the surveys were heads of schools, principals or head teachers. The different positions held by each different administrator could impact interpretation of their results. School heads maybe in more direct contact with boards but headteachers not. Benson's study (2011) only involved chief administrators. International School studies should be transparent about what each term means and who are involved in the study as to avoid confusion.

Another finding from Benson's study that was significant is the average tenure of chief administrators in Middle East countries was three years, much lower than the average of 3.7 in all regions and that as deemed sufficient by Hargreaves and Fink (2006) in Canada and the US which is five to seven (Pont et al., 2008).

In 2011, the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) sponsored a study with a specific purpose to understand the role of training provision provided by COBIS to teaching assistants (Tarry, 2011). 26 questionnaires were completed by headteachers in British International Schools followed by a focus group interview with 14 headteachers. The headteachers noted that each school had different needs due to varying contexts and implied that teacher assistant training needs to be flexible. The schools involved in the study acknowledge that they mostly hired teaching assistants with no formal training. However, they alluded that teachers with proper training in International School context would actually contribute to better marketing of International Schools. They would be more suited to meet the needs of the parents, their customers. The article mentioned the University of Northampton as such a university in the

UK that provides training for teacher assistants in an International School context that promotes international teaching and learning strategies; it seemed as though Tarry and COBIS used the study as a platform to promote such a programme.

Tarry's (2011) study looked at what sort of qualities administrators looked for in teaching assistants, but what intellectual *capital* do International Schools look for in a school leader? Commonly International Schools are composed of a diverse body of staff and/or students. Caffyn questioned how leaders can manage such a diverse population (Caffyn, 2011). One study showed a significant positive relationship between cultural intelligence and a higher level of transformational leadership and such leaders are thus more able to manage effectively in a multicultural environment (Keung & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2013). This implies that International Schools, especially ones with a diverse population should aim at hiring leaders that have a certain intellectual *capital*: cultural intelligence.

To reveal what attributes International Schools value in a school leader, Roberts and Mancuso (2014) analysed job advertisements for International School leaders posted in a recruiting agency, International Searchers at Search Associates, a recruiting agency used by International Schools. Using a time-frame from 2006 to 2012, Roberts and Mancuso analysed the qualities of leaders sought after by International Schools. Of 84 job advertisements from six continents, schools around the globe seem to have a consistently stable and high demand for managerial, instructional and collaborative leaders. Roberts and Mancuso further noted that job descriptions matched 43% of the 22 transformational leadership qualities as posited by Bass and Avolio (1994) in particular inspirational motivators who express individualized consideration. This reaffirms a previous conclusion that the same authors arrived at in 2010 where in a study on

teacher retention in International Schools, they believed that transformational leadership is one that will improve teacher retention (Mancuso et al., 2010).

3.2 The question of identity and purpose

Closely related to experience of stakeholders is the wider question of the purpose of International Schooling. Although initially International Schools were associated with either delivering an ‘international education’ or catering for expatriate children; this may not be the case today. However, some researchers were interested in understanding the impact of such a purpose on pupils, how a school can achieve such a purpose, be it through the curriculum or the pedagogical practices, and how well do International Schools achieve what they purport to with respect to developing ‘international mindednesses’.

3.2.1 International mindedness, intercultural awareness and pupil identity.

On the ideological end of the spectrum, International Schools have been charged with the mission of delivering a curriculum that develops international mindedness: or “‘international *capital*” (Young, 2016) that is deemed necessary for 21st century students to raise global awareness (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). According to the evidence provided by the studies in this review, there seems to be little to no impact of International Schooling on developing ‘international-mindedness’.

What constitutes international-mindedness is contested which creates an issue for those who try to measure it. To mediate this issue, Baker and Kanan (2005) created a survey instrument to measure ‘international mindedness’ based on Hayden et al.’s (2000) conception of what International Schools entail. They grouped these constructs into three groups: awareness of

other cultures, cultural tolerance and universal affiliation. Comparing students in different types (public, private international and public magnet science) schools in Qatar to identify whether schools proclaiming to be international do indeed create a significant impact to public, national schools. The researchers found no significant difference between the different cohorts of students. Attending an International School for Qataris students apparently makes no significant difference in bringing about 'international-mindedness'. Baker and Kanan hypothesize this is so because of the diverse nature of the population of Qatar composed largely of expatriates.

The instrument was developed from a theoretical background, written by authors who are mainly based in the UK, hence it is not necessary that what is deemed 'international minded' in the UK the same in Qatar. The constructs were then translated to Arabic, further introducing error in translation. The test was administered twice, with a one-week gap. The students could have remembered the constructs since the gap was not that large and hence the reliability coefficient was 0.81 which could have inflated the sense of confidence in the instrument. If the same instrument is used by other researchers in other contexts, this could contribute possibly to more confidence in the instrument.

Wilkinson and Hayden (2010) took a slightly different approach to Baker and Kanan (2005) in that they measured whether or not IB schools imparted a change in international attitude amongst their students. Wilkinson and Hayden developed their questionnaire based on the IBO mission which although emphasizes intercultural understanding as one of its overarching objectives.⁸ Wilkinson and Hayden, administered the questionnaire twice to 659 students in IB schools in seven countries (Lesotho, South Africa, Zambia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore and

⁸ <http://www.ibo.org/about-the-ib/mission/>

India); first after students started their Diploma Programme and then 15 months later. There was only a small positive movement in attitude which seems to signify that IB schools have little impact on students' attitudes. Wilkinson and Hayden define attitudes as the "sum total of what a person holds to be true and correct about any given situation." (Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010). Wilkinson and Hayden's definition of attitude assumes that such a concept can be measured which has been debated (Gawronski, 2007). The evidence from both studies insinuate that International Schools that regardless of the purpose they have little to no impact on developing 'international mindedness'.

Kanan and Baker (2006) used the results of their 2005 study to publish results pertaining to the impact of schooling on student's identities. Comparing the different cohorts (International Schools vs. public schools), there were no significant differences with respect to national identity, in fact, pupils used personal traits to describe their identity rather than national or more universal traits. Pupils in Kanan and Baker's study are not 'globally mobile' in the sense that their families travel for work. However, given their affluent backgrounds, Qatari pupils were described as well-travelled whether they attended international or public schools, which the authors suggested contributed to the heightened cultural awareness of the latter.

In an International School, the curriculum can be used to achieve international mindedness such as proclaimed by the IB. In a critical ethnography case study in three International Schools in Brunei and Malaysia, Tamatea (2008) asked the question of how the curriculum can respond to cultural diversity and achieve international mindedness. Whilst Tamatea could not determine whether international mindedness was achieved amongst the school's students, they did seem to develop more reflexivity about their state of being. Tamatea observed that staff were teaching *about* difference and diversity rather than *through*

difference and diversity, whilst implying that teachers should be practicing the latter. Tamatea asserts that teaching a ‘liberal-humanist’ curriculum is the next best thing that International Schools in both Brunei and Malaysia have to allow reflexive practice in an otherwise constrained culture. It was not apparent however what Tamatea means by a ‘liberal-humanist’ curriculum.

Sears (2011) on the other hand focused on students in International Schools who are from a more mobile background. In two published papers, Sears answered the question of how being globally mobile implicated a student’s identity, and how do second language speakers of English negotiate their identity (Sears, 2012). Although the study does not identify the country, most students do come from backgrounds where their families have moved amongst various countries and English is their second language. Sears (2011, 2012) also took a more interpretive approach in methodology than Kanan and Baker (2005, 2006) whose approach was more positivistic. Data was collected in the form of interviews from 48 students, 12 parents and 16 teachers and administrators. Sears (2011) concluded that students feel comfortable in an International School setting because most children have the similar experience of moving around. Students constructed multiple identities to help cope with the constant transitioning but this is often accompanied with a struggle of the notion of home (Sears, 2011).

This difference in identity can lead to confusion and frustration as was shown by two studies in International Schools in Nigeria (Emenike & Plowright, 2017) and Qatar (Frangie, 2017). Students appear to receive mixed messages from home and school, and they tend to behave one way in at home and another at school. According to Young’s abstract published in the JRIE, pupils in the school have gained ‘international *capital*’ certain competencies due to their global-mobile lifestyle that the pupils are conscious of and feel empowered by it because it

affords them the freedom to pursue their own goals. The pupils are not confused or feel fragmented as suggested earlier.

In a similar vein, Pearce (2011) did a similar study in two American schools in the Netherlands to investigate how students were able to acquire new identities reflected by acquired values and norms through cultural influences. Whereas Sears (2011, 2012) defined identity as a social construct, Pearce (2011) viewed identity formation from a biological perspective which is more innate. Pearce's sample of students was notably smaller than Sear's (2011, 2012); eight students. Pearce interviewed these students three times in one year. Pearce's findings were similar to Baker and Kanan's (2006) study in that students often identified themselves according to their national heritage but maintained a 'mosaic' of identities (Pearce, 2011) rather than 'multiple' identities (Sears, 2011). The mosaic identity is reflected by the students displaying internal values consistent with their parents but overtly conforming to values held by school.

Pearce (2011) also observed strong peer identification amongst students in International Schools. However, given the small sample, this conclusion cannot be generalised to students in all International Schools. Sears (2012) in fact elaborated how proficiency in English language could lead to stereotyping in an International Schools and cliques forming where certain students were excluded. This is further confirmed by Jabal (2013) in Hong Kong where marginalization was evident in social areas in the school such as the playground and cafeteria and Rydenvald (2015) in Sweden where students who are proficient in more than one language form an 'elite' group where English is most predominant. Young (2017) who also studied the impact of a globally mobile lifestyle on pupils in an International School in Belgium contradicts depictions of fragmented identities amongst the pupils.

The impact of International Schools' language medium and mobile nature of students has an impact on student's identity. Pearce (2011) suggested pupils in International Schools require different teaching and learning skills to a national school, particularly that of promoting 'international-mindedness'. However, this can lead to the paradox of whilst promoting global values, this can lead to a neglect of national characteristics and the additional question of global value based on whose culture as some commentators observe this as an attempt to impose Western culture on developing countries (Bates, 2012; Wylie, 2011).

Another pattern emerging is impact of International Schooling on national identity. The studies conducted in Europe concluded that pupils feel empowered by their global lifestyle and strongly identified with their national country. Whereas pupils in countries such as Nigeria and Qatar had contradictory experiences at home and at school, with pupils often frowning upon their own culture. Such findings illuminate the often contradictory experiences of pupils in International Schools. However, no study follows up how such '*capital*' they have accumulated or the issue of identity on their transition to university.

3.2.2 International mindedness and the role of the teacher.

If International Schools are to develop international mindedness, a salient question would be the extent of 'international-mindedness' of International School teachers. With students, studies discussed earlier have not been conclusive but have shown little significant change due to International Schooling. Two studies have attempted to tackle a similar conception with respect to teachers (Deveney, 2007; Savva, 2013).

In 2007, Deveney asked how well prepared do teachers in International Schools feel themselves to be to teach in intercultural diverse classrooms with a focus on initial teacher

training and subsequently how responsive they are to cultural differences (this study was an extrapolation of the 2005 study described earlier). Deveney indicated that teachers do not necessarily develop intercultural awareness from course training and instead develop it more effectively on the job. This is in direct contrast to the call for schools to look for teachers who believe that teachers teaching in International Schools should have some form of training in intercultural awareness (Levy, 2007; Snowball, 2007).

Savva (2015) checked whether the assumption that teachers who have experiences abroad as an exchange student would be better prepared to teach back home with a more global perspective is correct. On par with Deveney's (2007) study, Savva claims that to develop intercultural awareness it is best to partner with an International School and have teachers work there for a while. Savva believes that North American teachers are less fortunate than their counter European teachers with respect to traveling; Europeans travel more and are more immersed in other cultures. However, Deveney (2007) and Roskell (2013) have showed that even European teachers struggles with teaching in International Schools.

One issue comes to the forefront is the use of terminology such as intercultural awareness and understanding, international education and mindedness. Authors suggest that these qualities are desirable in prospective candidates for International Schools (Joslin, 2002; Savva, 2013). Not only are they seen as more likely to have a smoother transition from a local context to an international one (Joslin, Savva), their values are also more aligned with an international-mindedness approach of some International Schools (Joslin) such as International Baccalaureate schools.

However, "intercultural understanding was often conflated with international education" (Wylie, 2011) which Wylie argues should not be the case because culture is an ideological and

political construct and should not be on par with education. Similarly, Hill (2012) argues that intercultural awareness is merely a cognitive stage and is subordinate to understanding implying that International Schools should strive for intercultural understanding and not merely awareness amongst its students and staff (Hill, 2006).

Literature pertaining to International Schools can confuse the reader as to what do International Schools strive for: intercultural awareness or understanding; international education or mindedness; all of which have differing definitions. For example, Bates suggests that IB schools for intercultural awareness (Bates, 2011) whereas, Bunnell, Fertig and James (2016) suggest that IB schools strive for intercultural understanding where they equate it with international-mindedness (Bunnell et al., 2016). Studies pertaining to these concepts must define their terms clearly and make sure that terms are not used interchangeably as to not allude to their equal footing.

3.2.3 The role of curriculum.

International Schools often adopt national curricula, such as the English National Curriculum, and extra-curricular accoutrements such as the Duke of Edinburgh award developed in the UK or the National Honour Society developed in the US. The impact of adoption of International Schools of Western programmes was investigated through two case studies: one teacher-led programme developed in the US and adopted in an International School in Columbia and a character education programme also developed in the US and adopted in an International School in Kuwait (Sperandio et al., 2009). In both cases, schools adopted the policies due to practical reasons; there was no need to reinvent the wheel. However, in both cases, the policies were met with resistance from the staff because they were at odd with the local culture.

Sperandio et al. suggest that if the adoption of programmes was to achieve globalisation, the approach was erroneous. True globalisation is achieved through the adaptation of policies to the needs of the local, cultural environment (Sperandio et al., 2009). There is the argument however, that globalisation through education should not be a goal (Wylie, 2011) and could in fact lead to further fragmentation and social inequality (Caffyn, 2011). Sunder (2016) reported that efforts at creating a curriculum to meet the needs of an IB school was met with challenges: namely time constraints and staff expertise.

3.2.4 Engagement with the wider community.

International Schools often have a different ethos to national schools. For example, it may promote equal rights regardless of gender or sexuality in a country where women are subordinated and homosexuality is prosecuted. This poses a challenge for International Schools, particularly schools whose aims is to reach out to the local community to nurture ‘international-mindedness’ amongst their pupils. This latter view is argued by some as a way to exploit education to serve hegemonic, capitalistic interests of the West (Wylie, 2011). It has been suggested however, that local communities can provide essential resources that International Schools can capitalise on (Hayden, 2006).

Public relations (PR) is portrayed as one method that an International School can use to reach out to the local community. Bunnell (2005) surveyed 34 International Schools exploring the nature of their PR activity. 17 public relation personnel were interviewed and a further 17 completed a postal survey. 11 of the participants were also heads of school. 90% of the participants were American and 8% were British. Half of the participants expressed little formal contact with their local communities. Any interactions were limited to data collection (mostly in

the form of surveys), press releases, advertisements, local government liaison, and community service. Limited budgets, unrealistic expectations, lack of training and isolation of the International School were among the reasons of minimal interactions. Many expressed the perception that the local community misunderstood the school. Additionally, Bunnell pointed out that much of the public relation activities were not to reach out to the community to strengthen social relations but more marketing to attract more students.

Dunne and Edwards (2010) interviewed 15 senior students and 11 staff in two International Schools in the Philippines. These interviews revealed a pessimistic view: most students in the International Schools were not fully engaged with their wider community. This was attributed to their 'elite statuses'. It was suggested this could possibly change if students were to engage in community service (Dunne & Edwards, 2010).

In IB schools this is institutionalised through the Civic, Activity and Service (CAS) component. According to Belal's (2017) study, students engaged in community activities because it was a requirement but did not achieve the intended result of helping promote 'international mindedness'. In fact, in an earlier study by Dunne and Edwards (2010) in two International Schools in the Philippines, students participated in helping the community but retained their sense of superiority with respect to the local community.

Often, the divide between students and the local community is physical. Some International Schools are part of gated communities (Caffyn, 2010; Meyer, 2017; Picton, 2017). The physical barrier hinders contact between students in International Schools and the local community. The local community become the 'distant other' (Meyer, 2017) and leads to a culture of differentiation: 'us' versus 'them'. According to Meyer, such gated communities impedes

efforts of International Schools who aim to promote ‘global citizenship’. These studies also leave out the question of the local community’s experience of International Schools if any.

3.3 Choice

The concept of choice is relevant to International Schools. Parents ‘choose’ to enrol their children in such a school, a British teacher ‘chooses’ to leave the UK to teach in a British school in Dubai, an International School student has to make a ‘choice’ of which university to attend in the world, schools have to select teachers that help them achieve their goals. I have already outlined in section 3.2.3 choices made by teachers. In this section, I review literature pertaining to parent choice of International Schools and pupils of universities. From the outset, there is a clear dearth of studies addressing parent choice and experiences compared to that of teachers (Anglo-Saxon). In this review, there were only four studies.

3.3.1 Choice of school: parents.

Although much literature speaks of why parents choose International Schools, not many recent empirical studies were actually done to show this. A study that took place in Israel in 2007, shows that parents choose International Schools over public schools because they provide a better curriculum alternative to local schools (Ezra, 2007). Additionally, International Schools were seen to provide a safer environment for their children than public schools, be it physically and emotionally, since teachers in International Schools were seen as more supportive. English as a language of instruction or the desire to send their children abroad was not a priority. However, compared to parents from different countries, the *capital* most valued by parents in choosing an International School differed. In comparing studies from Argentina, Israel, Japan,

Singapore and Switzerland, MacKenzie (2009, 2010) prioritised parent choice of International Schools accordingly: learning English, International Schools provide a safer environment for their children's well-being, better curriculum alternative to the local option, smaller class sized and ultimate hope for their children to do exams that enable them to gain entrance to universities abroad. It is important to note that the parents involved in these studies are local parents, i.e. nationals of the countries they reside in, and hence have the option of enrolling their children in national schools. The scope of such studies remains small and not recent. The International School field has changed since 2010.

3.3.2 Choice of university.

Two studies have incorporated student choice with respect to destination universities. The first, Kanan and Baker (2006) used their results from 2005 to map university destinations and career aspirations of students from different types of schools (public, magnet and international). The second study asked students attending only International Schools for their university destination (Wilkins, 2013). Results from Wilkins' study cannot be compared to that of Kanan and Baker's (2005). The time lapse from 2005 to 2013 is large and many changes to the local and international contexts have occurred. Sampling populations in both studies were also different; Kanan and Baker's sample were national students only (Qatari). Wilkins's study involved expatriate children only.

The majority of Qatari students in Kanan and Baker's (2005, 2006) study chose to study in universities in Qatar but with a foreign affiliation (often an American or British university). This was attributed to increasing difficulties in obtaining visas. Since the study was back in

2005. The Middle East has continued to experience political tensions and confrontations, but this has not dampened the surge for more International Schools in the region.

Wilkins (2013) study used a mixed method design unlike Baker and Kanan's (2005) which was purely quantitative. Wilkins used both a survey (108 students) and interviewed 19 students. Wilkins reported that student's choice whether or not to stay in the UAE to complete their higher studies or abroad depended widely on where they wanted to go back to work. Students who did choose to go abroad determined their university choices based on university rankings, whereas those who stayed in the UAE made their pick of university depending on reputation. Although this study could not be generalised to the entire International School student population, Wilkins argued that the results could be used to inform universities abroad that are competing for international students.

3.4 Strengths and limitations

Empirical studies in International Schools displayed a variety of research designs. This helps inform future researchers with interest in International Schools to possibilities and challenges using the different research designs. Of the studies mentioned above, 17 were mixed method designs either using multiple methods and/or multiple sources to provide more robust data especially when dealing with often small samples (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

Another strength is reflected by how some studies build on one another (Cox, 2012; Kellett, 2015; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). This has led to either reaffirming earlier conclusions or reveal further factors. However, there is the danger of propagation of error.

In any kind of empirical study, generalising to a wider population is problematic, even with the most rigorous study. There are too many variables to control for starters. Even if that is

assumed to be controlled, quantitative studies that assume association or correlation cannot claim causation. Many of the quantitative studies pertaining to International Schools, only represented a cross-section of schools, with the most recent done seven years ago (Baker & Kanan, 2005; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

None of the studies can be truly representative of all International Schools. Some studies involve schools in a particular region such as Asia (Bailey, 2015a; Deveney, 2005, 2007; Fryer, 2009; Jabal, 2013; Lee, Hallinger, & Walker, 2012b; Machin, 2014; Mancuso et al., 2010; Roskell, 2013) or Europe (Caffyn, 2010; Rydenvald, 2015; Zilber, 2005) and fewer still in the Middle East (Baker & Kanan, 2005; Kanan & Baker, 2006; Wilkins, 2013).

Most studies usually involve just one stakeholder and often do not relate findings to the school's context. It has been argued that school context is of particular importance to an empirical study, and more so for International Schools because of the different variables at play that would be difficult to control in a quantitative study (Allan, 2007).

Most of the empirical studies adopting a positivistic stance had small sample populations which contributes to issues mentioned above of generalisability and being truly representative of International Schools. This could be reflective of limited accessibility to International Schools. Two of the researchers however were part of the school administration of the school that the study in question took place (Bailey, 2015a; Deveney, 2005, 2007; Roskell, 2013; Young, 2016) which could have impacted the genuineness of the responses of participants but could have meant easy access. Both Roskell (2013) and Young (2017) have acknowledged their positionality with respect to their research, for example, Roskell had concerns over mirroring participant frustrations with the school leader. Others have gained access to informants such as teachers through gatekeepers of databases such as the CIS (Odland, 2008), NESA (Mancuso et al., 2010)

and Search Associates (Roberts & Mancuso, 2014). Although databases allow greater access, it does not necessarily mean access to a representative sample and will also mean sacrificing deeper understanding of the field, particularly that between macro structures such as the notion of globalisation and the micro experience.

The use of statistical studies could be problematic in an International School context. Firstly, the validity of the tool used is contested due to a variety of reasons, such as different languages and understandings of participants. Secondly, using statistical studies implies objectivity, or attempts at eliminating subjectivity. In an International School context, who develops the tools for study is of equal importance as the context. “There is no neutral question” (Bourdieu, Chamboredon, & Passeron, 1991, p. 41), this statement has not been considered enough in International School research. Concepts are borrowed and used in surveys and questionnaires without questioning their origins, or historical, social or political.

3.5 Locating this study within the literature

It has been argued that studies involving International Schools need to use an ethnographic, case study design because little is known about what goes in an International School, their classrooms (Cambridge, 2007). Additionally, such a design should consider the voices and subjects of the participants and understanding power relationships which could be masked in other designs which only cover the surface (Allan, 2007). Some empirical studies that have used cross-sectional, quantitative methods on International Schools have called for the use of in-depth, qualitative methods to explore nuanced variables that could have impact on phenomena such as teacher turnover (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

Furthermore, a gap that has been consistent throughout the studies was the evaluation of experiences of expatriate teachers, which in most cases were Anglo-Saxons. Local teacher and local community experiences were limited or non-existent. Studies exploring expatriate teacher experiences were geared at improving teacher retention and recruitment, reducing the issue to a simple cause and effect: improve salaries and create supportive leadership and teacher retention will improve. This simple equation breaks down in the real world. There is also a lack of studies on parents, their experiences, motivations and backgrounds.

There needs to be a holistic understanding of the nature of practice in International Schools through involving more stakeholders. More depth rather than breadth which risks rendering a study invalid because of the varying contexts. There also seems to be a lack of voice of 'local' teachers. Additionally, only one study actually alludes to managers experience in for-profit schools, no study provides an in-depth understanding of experiences of stakeholders in a for-profit school.

A unique feature of this study was the adoption of Bourdieu's approach to social research (chapter four elaborates on this approach). Although some Bourdieusian concepts such *capital*, and *habitus* have been referenced in International School literature (Bunnell, 2016a; Young, 2016), this study framed the entire research around an understanding of International Schooling as a *field*.⁹ According to Thompson (2012) a Bourdieusian methodology buys a researcher three main advantages: an ontological orientation, a commitment to rigour and a reflexive stance. These were pertinent to my study because I needed an ontological orientation that is social and relational. International Schooling was originated as a social construct. Additionally, how

⁹ Recall that *field* evokes Bourdieu's other concepts of *capital* and *habitus*.

different people interact in society depends on their relative positions in space. A study that is based on contested constructs would benefit from a commitment to rigour and a constant questioning of actions. Finally, what I know, how I know it and what will I use the knowledge I gain for, are all essential questions to produce a research that makes visible the researcher's role while not making the study about the researcher.

Finally, my study stemmed from practice but theory (socio-cultural) informed it, and it also informs theory (on International Schools). I deliberately wanted to reconcile theory and practice, and a Bourdieusian framework gave me the tools to do so. Practitioners in International Schools are not always aware of the language used by academics pertaining to International Schools. One example was where a study investigating preparedness of a school in teaching TCKs, the participants involved were not familiar with the term (Bates, 2013).

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I engaged with what the literature has said on International Schools. I used a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed journals and ended up with 57 studies (see Table 3.1). I delineated three threads amongst the literature:

1. experiences of stakeholders be it personal or professional
2. the ideological purpose of International Schools and impact on identity, engagement with the wider community and the role of curriculum and teaching
3. choice: be it choice of school, teaching staff, or university choices made by pupils

Based on the literature since 2005 on stakeholders in International Schools the following assumptions could be made: there is little evidence to show International Schools imparting 'international-mindedness' on pupils. Context and culture have been used to explain differing

pedagogic and learning experiences amongst staff and students in International Schools. Pupils in International Schools often identify with their national home country (particularly pupils in Europe) but maintain multiple or ‘mosaic’ identities which has been observed to impact their peer identification and stereotyping. Pupils choosing to study in universities abroad base their decisions on reputation but visa restrictions to students from countries in the Middle East could be a hindrance to applying to western, English-speaking countries.

There seems to be a reluctance to engage on the part of International Schools with the wider local community and many in fact form their own enclaves. Parents are often motivated to enrol their children in English-speaking International Schools because they are seen as a gateway to universities abroad. Teacher experiences in International Schools vary but most studies allude to teachers would prefer to stay in International Schools that provide satisfactory financial compensation and supportive leadership especially from the heads of school rather than school headteachers with issues reported amongst teachers arise due to lack of trust between expatriate and locally hired teachers. School administrators face unique challenges especially that of balancing roles of educator and business manager as well as the feeling of being micromanaged by the board. Some International Schools look for managerial, instructional leaders who are inspirational motivators and express individualised consideration.

Main strengths of the literature on International Schools is that they help practitioners understand the context better as well as contribute to the theory. Practical issues with research are evident, especially pertaining to following a reliability and validity doctrine where breadth is sought after but this threatens the reliability and validity of the tools, not to mention if one takes into consideration that many of the researchers are from a different background of those studied.

However, much work is still needed to address the gaps, mainly understanding practice in for-profit schools and incorporating voices of local teachers. This study is a starting point.

In the next chapter, I present the research questions in light of chapters two and three. I then discuss a Bourdieusian approach, competing theories, and the use of Bourdieu's thinking tools in educational research.

Chapter 4 Theory and Practice

Synopsis

Bourdieu's theory of practice was upmost and foremost derived from his empirical work. Rather than derive theory divorced from practice, or the vice versa, his approach was a mutual, organic, and reflexive relationship of the two. Bourdieu is commonly known in the educational field for his work on cultural *capital* and the school as a mechanism for reproduction of social class. This chapter introduces Bourdieu, the person and the researcher as well as his 'thinking tools' as he liked to call them (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a).

4.0 Introduction

So far, I have set the scene of the field of International Schools, through delineating a history of International Schools and explained reasons for growth through a framework of globalisation and capitalism where the English language is promoted as a valued commodity. In the previous chapter, I reviewed available literature on International Schools and concluded that although it contributes much to our understanding of International Schooling, much still needs to be addressed in particular to for-profit schools, including more voices and reconciling the theory and practice gap.

In this chapter, I briefly introduce Bourdieu's history and his progression as an academic and empiricist. I elaborate on Bourdieu's thinking tools and I present a brief synopsis on how some research in the educational field has used Bourdieu. I also compare his notion of capital and others who have used the term albeit differently, such as Gary Becker and James Coleman to name a few. Finally, I put forth an argument for the 'purchasing' power that Bourdieu's thinking

tools provide that others do not while acknowledging the implications of using Bourdieu, and in particular how that pertains to my thesis.

4.1 Bourdieu: a brief history

In order to understand Bourdieu's thinking tools, it is important to know his history, particularly, his educational background and influences at the time. Philippe Bourdieu was born in 1930 in the French Pyrenees. He grew up in a small village, where the people spoke Béarnese rather than French. Although Bourdieu is described as a sociologist, he originally studies philosophy at the prestigious École Normale Supérieure in France; a first for someone from his family. Although he studied under Louis Althusser, he was dissatisfied with his 'humanistic' grand theory, particularly as a 'Normalien', Althusser had never seen a peasant or a worker, yet claims a theory to understand their lives. He was equally critical of a sociology that claims it can free itself from 'pre-constructions' promoted by Gaston Bachelard (Bourdieu, 2000; Bourdieu et al., 1991).

Bourdieu's interest in sociology was consecrated in Algeria where he was conscripted during the Algerian war of liberation (1956 – 1962). He employed ethnographic tools and a sociology of science to essentially understand the conversion of a pre-capitalist state (Algeria) into a capitalist one during post-colonial times and the impact that has on the people (L. Wacquant, 2004). It was during his years in Algeria that he started breaking from common practice of anthropologists, mainly the notion of a 'participant observer' who can objectively study the 'other' without addressing in his/her own relationship into the object of study (Bourdieu, 1990).

Bourdieu returned to France and was appointed the director of studies at the prestigious École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in 1964. He continued his ethnographic work in his own town of Béarn. There his theory of practice continued evolving. Influenced by continental philosophers at the time, which is evident in his work. For example, Bachelard's reflexive epistemology, which necessitated a break from positivism and the realisation of the importance of cultural influences on social action. He was also influenced by Karl Marx and the notion of fields of struggle. Max Weber was also a major influence, particularly structure, domination of classes in power, the symbolic dimensions of social action and the importance of understanding social life through a subjective understanding. From Max Weber, Bourdieu borrowed the term *ethos*. Durkheim on the other hand, influenced Bourdieu on the importance of seeing social facts as real objects, and that people attach symbolic meanings and worth to physical objects. His main conundrum was to break with the debate of subjectivism/existentialism and objectivism/idealism. He in fact states in an interview "I've spent my life demolishing dualisms" (Bourdieu et al., 1991, p. 251). To Bourdieu, both extremes did not reconcile sociological theory with practice of theory and research methodologies. On the one hand, a structuralist anthropology, in the Saussurian fashion, fails to address the relationship between the knower and the object. Whilst on the other, phenomenology excludes the existence of structures that influence human action.

Bourdieu had his own break with the objective/subjective divide with employing *habitus*. *Habitus* traces its origins to Aristotle's concept of *hexis*, which was then translated to its Latin form, *habitus*. *Habitus* since was used since by other philosophers and sociologists which influenced Bourdieu. For example, Edmund Husserl used the term *habitualität* to describe a person's ability to use past experiences in future actions (L. Wacquant, 2016). Bourdieu however

understood *habitus* differently: it acted as the mediating factor between objective structures and subjective experiences that in turn structure the objective structures. Bourdieu's ultimate aim was to reconcile the subject and the object without losing on the advantages of either. (I will explain this concept further in section 4.3.1)

Bourdieu wrote on many topics and fields, mainly from his years in Algeria, and later on in France. On education, he looked at the social space of academics in French universities *Homo Academicus*, and elite pupils in elite schools *The inheritors*. He wrote on methodology, *An outline of a theory of practice*, *The logic of practice*, and *The craft of sociology*. One of his famous works on how schools reproduce the social class system *Distinction* and a depiction of human suffering in *The weight of the world*. He also wrote on the fields of economics, art, and later on in his career on politics and he was critical of the neo-liberal 'globalisation'.

It is important also to note he did not develop these thinking tools in a single moment of epiphany, but rather they originated of epistemological necessity. Bourdieu talks about the genesis of each of his tools and how they arose from working in the field in his book *The rules of art: genesis and structure of the literary field* (1996), he pre-empts the discussion with the declaration:

"I have never had much taste for 'grand theory', and when I read works which might enter into that category, I cannot stop myself from feeling a certain irritation before a typically scholastic combination of false audacity and true carefulness." (Bourdieu, 1996).

While not a fan of 'grand theories', Bourdieu did not support research devoid of theory or theory building. Rather he saw research and theory as mutually constitutive. That is why he never wrote a 'manual' that prescribes his methodology. However, he did describe his 'thinking

tools’ and ‘do’s and don’ts’ in a series of workshops and interviews. Delineation of Bourdieu’s thinking tools that were most pertinent to my study.

4.2 Bourdieu and his thinking tools

Ultimately, this study aimed at better understanding the *field* of International Schooling. Bourdieu emphasises that in order to ‘understand’ a *field*,

“There is thus a sort of hermeneutic circle: in order to construct the field, one must identify the forms of specific capital that operate within it, and to construct the forms of specific capital one must know the specific logic of the field.” (1992, p. 108)

To put in other words, I set out to understand the *field* via defining what is at stake in this *field*, what buys people credit in this *field* to occupy the various positions. To do this, I employ the following thinking tools:

4.2.1 *Habitus*

For Bourdieu, *habitus* was motivated by a need to ‘break’ from the positivistic structuralism faction of anthropology. *Habitus* for Bourdieu extends beyond ‘habit’, he explains “I wanted to demonstrate the active, inventive and ‘creative’ capacities of *habitus* and the agent which are not expressed by the term ‘habit’.” (Bourdieu, 1996) For Bourdieu, *habitus* is produced through a particular conditioning, the most significant is often one’s family and then schooling.

Bourdieu defines *habitus* as

“systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends of an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them.” (1990, p. 179)

Habitus explains mannerisms and acquired tastes, such as accents and a propensity to like classical music as opposed to pop for example. Additionally, constituted in one’s history, *habitus* allows one to behave in future events in a reasonable manner. Bourdieu opposed Rational Theory which posits that agents are mechanistic beings, rather, much of their action is socially and historically mediated through their acquired *habitus*. Based on one’s position in a social space, the objective structures of the *field* will, to some extent, predict and explain differences in *habitus* and hence lifestyle, dispositions and tastes. Because *habitus* is structured by the field, it tends to be durable over time and transposable in similar *fields* (Bourdieu, 1990). This does not mean that one’s *habitus* is fixed; it evolves with exposure to new *fields*. It best explains why people develop a “feel for the game” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 223) and hence feel like “fish in water” (Bourdieu, 1996). For example, earlier in chapter three, many teachers in Roskell (2013) study on teacher transition from the UK to teaching internationally experienced a sense of de-skilling, while they were trained teachers, they felt like ‘fish out of the water’ in the new school.

It has been argued that the concept of *habitus* is in fact deterministic and “empirically unhelpful” (Sullivan, 2002). However, I concur with Bourdieu who claims this is only when *habitus* is viewed as a Cartesian dualism of structure and agency. Indeed, Bourdieu argues that

habitus can be used in a conscious manner “But these responses are first defined, without any calculation, in relation to objective potentialities” (Bourdieu, 1990). An individual has choices, but these choices are limited by the *field* (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu argues that *habitus* should be viewed as a matrices of available dispositions (Bourdieu, 1990), meaning that no two people in the same *field* will display the exact same behaviour.

The advantage of using *habitus* in research is that it transcends the dichotomy of objectivity and subjectivity (Bourdieu, 1990). Reay (2004) who acknowledges that *habitus* has often been misused in research when researchers explain human behaviour as all being *habitus*, or merely reducing *habitus* to agency. *Habitus*, when used appropriately, can be advantageous in understanding social behaviour because it views “structures as occurring within small-scale interactions and activity within large-scale settings.” (Reay, 2004a, p. 439).

4.2.2 Field

Field is a bounded area in social space defined by their own logic of practice, with each often consisting of sub-*fields*. For example, International Schooling is a *field* within the bigger *field* of education. The different *fields* may interact with one another. For example, the *field* of politics influences policies within the educational *field*, such as defining mandatory public education ages for pupils. Such an interaction makes it difficult for the empirical researcher to draw defined boundaries of *fields* (Thomson, 2012). Bourdieu acknowledges this challenge and claims that it is only empirical research that can reveal the boundaries of a *field* through a three-‘moment’ *field* analysis (explained further in chapter five) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a).

Bourdieu cautiously likens agents in a *field* to players in game (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a) following rules according to their positions (example a defence player vs. attacker follow

different rules). However, unlike players in a game, agents in a *field* don't follow explicit rules, but tacit ones that are observed and enacted through the objective structures imposed by the *field* (Bourdieu, 1992). Individuals in a *field* internalise the 'rules of the game' and will develop accepted practices as determined by these rules. This is manifested by an individual's *habitus*.

Habitus and *field* are relational. *Habitus* is both the product of objective structures, practices set out by the *field*, its *opus operatum*. *Habitus* is also subjective dispositions which are embodied in modes of practice (*modus operandi*) which in turn shape the *field*. This dialectical relationship is depicted in Figure 4.1.

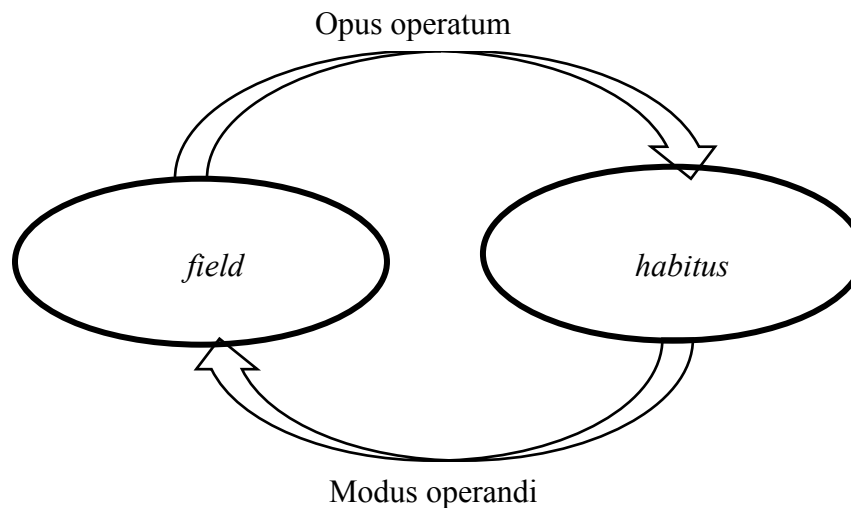


Figure 4.1 Relationship between field and habitus; adopted from Walther (2014)

4.2.3 Capital

All individuals in a *field* interact and struggle to occupy certain spaces in their social space. The struggle is over resources: *capital*. *Capital* in the sense used by Bourdieu is not defined in the narrow economic sense, but to incorporate “a wider system of exchange” (Moore, 2012). Again, Bourdieu admits to borrowing from economics similar terms, his use of *capital* is

distinct (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). When he talks about people ‘investing’ in *capital*, he implies that people act in a way that is in line with the relationship of field and *habitus*. He defines capital as “accumulated labour...which when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 118).

Capital are ‘tokens’ that allow the ‘players’ to buy positions in the field depending on its configuration (value and volume) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). “Capital in action is the enactment of the field.” (Moore, 2012, pp. 101–102) because its value is appropriated within the field. It is both objective by being having material value, and subjective by being embodied. For example, an argument made earlier in chapter two was that English is valued as the Lingua Franca of the business *field*, centuries ago, this was not the case.

Bourdieu identifies three fundamental types of *capital*: economic, social and cultural (see Table 4.1 for definitions and example) (Bourdieu, 2002). All types of *capital* share the following characteristics: they ‘buy’ a person position in the *field*, their value is only attributable to it by the relationship of the field and the *habitus* of the people in the field, and different forms of *capital* are interchangeable. All forms of capital in certain circumstance can be exchanged for economic *capital*. Additionally, all these forms of *capital* are forms of symbolic *capital* which ‘buys’ a person prestige in the *field* (Bourdieu, 1990). Different groups of people will attribute different value to the various types of *capital*, so, for example a family may attribute less value to economic *capital*, than say people in a business.

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Table 4.1 Types of *capital*, definitions and examples

Type of <i>capital</i>	Definition	Examples
Social	“sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 119)	Friends, family, acquaintances, royal titles, alumni of a certain school
Cultural	3 forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embodied: long-lasting dispositions of mind and body • Objectified: in the form of cultural goods • Institutionalised: a form of objectification that is legitimised by institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accent, mannerism, taste in music/art/literature • Cars, paintings, clothes • Educational degree (IGCSE), university degree, the more prestigious the university the more the capital
Economic	<i>Capital</i> that can be directly converted to money	Cash, property, shares

All three concepts – *habitus*, *field*, and *capital* – are related. A particular *field* will have its own rules, which both shape and shaped by the *habitus* through the *habitus*'s 'buy-in' of the 'rules of the game'. Within any field, agents will want to either maintain their position or improve them through their accrued capital, which is legitimised by the *field*. Writing in such relational terms appears circuitous and detracts from making a substantiated argument. Therefore, these concepts once evoked, necessitate the other through their nature of being.

4.2.4 *Doxa*, *illusio*, misrecognition, and symbolic violence

Although the triad of *capital*, *field*, and *habitus* are the most commonly used of his 'tools', Bourdieu employs other tools to explain his theory of practice. Going back to the metaphor of the *field* as a game, Bourdieu (1992) explains:

"We have an investment in the game, illusion ... players are taken in by the game, they oppose one another, sometimes with ferocity, only to the extent that they concur in their belief (*doxa*) in the game and its stakes; they grant these a recognition that escapes questioning." (P. 98)

Whether a game is worth the while of its players is determined by the players themselves in the field through an act of (mis)recognition. This is so because in the act of misrecognition, one is blind of the arbitrary nature of the rules in place and takes them for granted (*doxa*). Bourdieu distinguishes *doxa* from heterodoxy and orthodoxy by implying that *doxa* implies 'awareness' of the player, albeit (mis)recognised. In fact, through the players *illusio*, they adhere to games of the rule and continue the game because they (mis)recognise it as worthwhile.

However, often what is deemed worthwhile is imposed on players in the field through the field of power, who through an act of symbolic violence impose legitimacy to their own meaning of things and it goes by as (mis)recognised. For example, Bourdieu in *Distinction* proposed that education is an act of symbolic violence that imposes and reproduces the ruling class structures. The word ‘violence’ in symbolic violence evokes a negative imagery. Bourdieu suggested that people may experience physical oppression as a result of symbolic violence, in the case of military colonialism. Often, the most (mis)recognised forms of symbolic violence are more subtle in their manifestation, such as the reproduction of cultural *capital* of the dominant in schooling. The subtlety of this form of violence does not ameliorate its impact on people’s suffering.

4.3 Variations of ‘capital’¹⁰

Bourdieu is not the only academic who uses the terms capital. Widely used in organisational and educational theory are the concepts of social capital as defined by Robert Putnam (2001) and James Coleman (1988). Additionally, human capital was developed by Gary Becker (1975, 1994). The next section will discuss how each (social and human) is defined, the theoretical assumptions, their application in education and an argument for the use of a Bourdieusian conceptualisation of capital as a better fit to my research questions.

¹⁰ Here, capital is not italicised because it does not evoke the other concepts of *field* and *habitus*

4.3.1 Social capital

Coleman (1988) believes that social action could be explained by two strands: sociology (the actor acts according to rules, norms and obligations as dictated by society) or economics (the actor acts out of self-interest and individualism). Social capital according to Coleman, is the merging of the two strands: they complement each other rather than remain in an antagonistic relationship. Focusing on the sociology aspect, renders theories useless, while focusing on the economics ignores the norms of society that an actor follows. Social capital is comprised of obligations, expectations and trustworthiness (Coleman, 1988).

Whilst Coleman's conceptualisation of social capital is individualistic, Putnam's (2001) conceptualisation of social capital is more collective. Ultimately, social capital to Putnam, is the groundwork needed to build and maintain a democracy. Social capital, according to Putnam is measured by strength of ties of people in a society and the type of network (open or closed). The implicit rules of a person's behaviour are for the collective better. When social capital in a society declines, rates of crime and lack of trust increase (as proved by increasing number of lawyers hired by people). Putnam claims there is strong evidence suggesting that investing in social capital in schools produces better results than reducing the teacher-student ratio. However, Putnam that further refinements to be made to define metrics for social capital.

Implications of this conceptualisation of social capital was tremendous for organisations and the field of education in the late 20th century and up to this date. Organisational theorists build on these concepts to improve effectiveness and ultimately productivity of businesses (Lin, 1999; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 2007). School leadership that invests in social capital can use it to support the creation of intellectual capital (knowledge) and create leverage for schools to improve performance (Hargreaves, 1999; Tomlinson, 2013). Social capital as such has been used

to inform theories of distributed and transformational leadership (Gronn, 2000; Hallinger, 1992; Spillane, 2006) in schools were built on the tenants of social capital such as trust and collegiality. One only has to look at reports by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and European commissions to see the buy-in this form of leadership has by policy-makers (European Commission, 2013; Pont et al., 2008). However, while policy-makers are jumping on the bandwagon, there are those who are critical of the practicality of implementing distributed leadership (Harris, 2013; Lumby, 2016), and that in practice, a form of ‘contrived collegiality’ is manifested (Hargreaves, 2000). Even one of the founders of distributed leadership and advocates, has suggested in practice, a form of hybrid leadership emerges rather than pure distributed (Gronn, 2009). Few International Schools also adopted this notion of distributed leadership. One study in IB schools in South East Asia, showed that distributed leadership and fostering collegiality enables leaders to successfully implement new programmes (Lee, Hallinger, & Walker, 2012a).

There are those who are doubtful that such practices mentioned above are successful in practice. For example, Caffyn (2009) argues that International Schools are sites where micro-politics are at play. Social capital is at play, but not in the sense of gaining trust and networking, but rather advancing one’s position. Grenfell (2009) also raises the question of how do policies that at the one hand promote collaboration and trust, yet use such information shared by teachers as an evaluative measure of their performance, can promote the type of social capital promoted by Coleman and Putnam (pp. 25).

4.3.2 Human capital

For Becker (1975) human capital is a combination of the knowledge and skill a person possesses. He devised mathematical modelling to operationalise and measure returns on earnings from investing on cultivating knowledge and skills through the education of children. Becker bases his thesis on the assumption that people are rational with the exception of children. Young adults on the other hand – the ‘benefactors’ of the investment – are ‘guided’ by parents in decision-making (ibid.). Becker concluded based on his empirical findings on census data from the mid-1900s that income increases as years of schooling increases. As such, the relationship between education and earning became increasingly consecrated in the fabric of developing societies.

Bourdieu criticised Becker’s use of rational action theory in developing his conception of human capital. Bourdieu argues that such a conception does not explain why an increased investment in education has reproduced class distinctions. Additionally, rational action theory ignores the individual and collective history that are involved in decision-making, which are, according to Bourdieu, more reasonable, rather than calculative and mechanical. Rational action theory, to Bourdieu

“reduce[s] the universe of forms of conduct to mechanical reactionary purposive action is to make it impossible to shed light on all those actions that are reasonable without being the product of a reasoned purpose, even less, of conscious computation.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992b, pp. 119–120).

Although some studies pertaining to International Schools did use rational action (and choice) theory to shape their studies of parent choice (Ezra, 2007) and teacher choice in schools during recruitment (Kellett, 2015). Both studies attribute choices made to intuition, especially

teachers attending recruitment fairs who have to make swift decisions. Bourdieu's theory of practice helps understand such decision-making better, because rather than reducing them to irrational or intuitive, they are the result of a particular trajectory and socialisation.

4.3.3 Intellectual capital

Human capital was first coined by Becker in 1964, a time where developed societies such as the US were moving away from industry. By the late 20th century, Profitable organisations are ones that manage knowledge effectively. For corporations, knowledge is put simply the know-how for employees to do their job effectively (Beazley, Boenisch, & Harden, 2002). Knowledge and information have become the most important asset of an organisation, called 'intellectual capital'. However, defining knowledge is more complex, yet germane to education. Intellectual capital "is the capital resource that comes from relationships between stakeholders and partners, from an organisation's ability to innovate and manage change, from its infrastructure, and from the knowledge, experience and transferrable competencies of its staff." (Kelly, 2004, p. 9). According to Kelly, intellectual capital combines elements of school's improvement through generating and exploiting knowledge, and elements of school effectiveness through measures of outputs.

Although the concept of intellectual capital has been recognised earlier in the business world (Stewart, 1997), many contemporary educational academics have noted the advantage of incorporating intellectual capital into an educational theory of practice. International Schools, and many public schools, do exhibit similar practices to businesses: they have to compete for resources and customers. A school that is able to not only create but also manage its intellectual capital effectively will have a better standing in such a market.

Social capital is an essential component of intellectual capital. Additionally, there are parallels between intellectual capitals especially that of structural capital and institutional *habitus*, a concept developed by Reay (1998) which was influenced by Bourdieu's theory of practice. Whereas Bourdieu's own studies focused on individuals, Reay extrapolated the concept of *habitus* to apply to institutions. Applied to a school, institutional *habitus* comprises of educational status, organisational practice and the expressive order (Reay, David, & Ball, 2001; Tarabini, Curran, & Fontdevila, 2017). This demonstrates that intellectual capital would be compatible within a Bourdieusian theory of practice.

Bourdieu distinguishes between academic and intellectual *capital*. His concepts were developed from his empirical studies in universities in France. Intellectual capital is associated with prestige earned associated with research achievement and expertise (Rowlands, 2017). However, academic capital is the result of status earned by way of being part of a senior management team. Whereas intellectual capital is generated and possessed by people, academic capital is endowed by status and is used to wield power. Intellectual capital according to Bourdieu predicts successful schooling, very much like Kelly's (2004) concept of thinking capital.

Bourdieu's intellectual capital differs from Kelly's (2004) typology. However, in his chapter *Anthropology of economics*, he describes two types of *capital* that resonate with intellectual capital as denoted by Kelly, namely: technological capital which is an organisation's portfolio of technical resources (procedures, aptitudes, routines, unique and coherent know-how) which can be used to reduce expenditure in labour or increase the yield, and commercial *capital* which is an organisation's sales power (Bourdieu, 2005a).

Types of capital are prolific in academic and economic literature. Bourdieu notes that *capital* is only deemed of value by individuals in a *field* and hence needs to be derived empirically from the *field* in question rather than arbitrarily imposed. I have maintained an ascetic adherence to the types of *capitals* as delineated by Bourdieu.

4.4 Implications of using Bourdieu's thinking tools in practice

Despite the apparent interest in Bourdieu and positive acclaim, there are those who criticise his empirical and theoretical work, or who have completely dismissed it. For example, Cultural capital has been shown to be of importance to a pupil's academic success (Atkin, 2000; Flere, Krajnc, Klanjsek, Musil, & Kirbis, 2010; Lee & Bowen, 2006), but criticised for being pessimistic of schools as institutions for social mobility (Goldthorpe, 2007). The notion of *habitus* has been criticised as being too deterministic and theoretically incoherent (Sullivan, 2002). Bourdieu is being accused that of what he fought against: determinism and lack of methodological rigour (Bourdieu, 2007, p. 78).

Researchers using Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' are often accused of reifying Bourdieu and his concepts. For example, in the Ofsted report on a survey of educational research in the UK in the 1990s,¹¹ (Tooley & Darby, 1998), they were critical of some researchers 'adulation' of 'big' thinkers such as Reay's use of Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* to study of home *habitus* and learning (Reay, 1995). They found the concept *habitus* vague and they questioned whether it "worth the candle?" (Tooley & Darby, 1998, p. 59). Nash (1999), in no way defending Reay, suggests that Tooley and Darby miss Bourdieu's argument of a fuzzy concept such as *habitus*

¹¹ which was highly critical of the quality and usefulness of the qualitative educational research

and would rather have a more defined concept and methodology. Reay herself became critical of researchers who have used the term *habitus* in an uncritical way to explain all human behaviour and fetishizing the term (Reay, 2004b).

Those who have used Bourdieu's thinking tools in their research have noted advantages that other frameworks have not. For example, because Bourdieu's ontology is relational, the division between individual and society is replaced with a wider vision of an individual being a product and shaper of the field(s) they are in, therefore, empirical research links to a wider context (Gunter, 2002; McGinity, 2015; Widin, 2014). Bourdieu's thinking tools also allows a researcher to understand practice and strategy in relationship with positions and position-taking of agents rather than a person acting as a result of responding solely to market trends (subject) or in a void (object) (Ball, 1997; Gunter, 2002; Widin, 2014). Since much of Bourdieu's work asked questions of symbolic power and its impact on social spaces, research is able to understand trends in knowledge as homologous to trends in the political space and critically examine the relationship (McGinity, 2015; Thomson, 2010). Furthermore, Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' require a researcher to maintain vigilance through reflexivity. Reflexivity here in a sense that the researcher needs to turn the tools of their own research, on themselves (Grenfell, 2017, 2019; Thomson, 2017). As Grenfell (2019) suggests, the terms *habitus*, field and capital, need to be embodied and actualised not only to protect against bias, but also to form a "practical rationality" and a "praxeological knowledge" (p. 167).

Bourdieu never intended his approach to research as 'grand theory'. He clearly states:

“I have never had much taste for 'grand theory', and when I read works which might enter into that category, I cannot stop myself from feeling a certain irritation before a typically scholastic combination of false audacity and true carefulness.” (1996, p. 177)

His approach to research was one where the empirical and theoretical are mutually constitutive. Which is why he avoided writing a ‘how to’ manual. It is probably for this reason, that Bourdieu’s ‘thinking tools’ have been used in various ways in research. However, it seems that Tooley and Darby’s critique of educational research, particularly that claiming to use Bourdieu’s ‘thinking tools’ is not unfounded. Grenfell (2010) noted the many ways that Bourdieu’s ‘thinking tools’ were (mis)used. According to Grenfell (ibid.), Bourdieu’s conceptual tools have been used in a reductive manner, such that *habitus* and field are conflated with agency and context respectively. Additives to capital, and *habitus* are added endlessly, that they become fetishized concepts. Furthermore, his concepts are used as a veneer to add gravitas to the research. Wacquant (2017) also warns against the “*seduction of speaking Bourdieuse*” (p. 61). He suggests that a good test to prove whether or not the concepts of *habitus*, field and capital, have indeed contributed to a study, is by striking them out. If the meaning is not lost without them, then they should not have been used to start with.

For both Grenfell (2013) and Wacquant (2017), evoking Bourdieu’s concepts evokes an entire theory of practice. Both have suggested that researchers go wrong when they take Bourdieu’s language out of context and use them in a reductive manner. Rather than immersing themselves in reading his work and deriving how Bourdieu used them, and for what purpose. Despite Bourdieu not writing a ‘how-to’ manual, Grenfell, who has extensively read and worked with Bourdieu, has, with other academics, compiled a ‘theory of practice’ that could deceptively

be viewed as a ‘manual’, however, as Grenfell (2013) suggests, it is to protect against “a weak of constructivism” (p. 284).

4.4.1 Implications for a novice researcher

As a novel researcher, I have yet to develop the confidence of using and developing tools informed by theory, let alone using a theoretical framework that has already been challenged. Bourdieu acknowledges that many researchers share the feeling of ‘incompetence’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a) and I understand my concerns are not unfounded. I do not claim to be an expert Bourdieuan, but other theories that have been used in International Schooling research, such as rational action theory which ignores a person’s history, an essential component to explain behaviour that otherwise Rational Action Theory (RAT) identifies as ‘irrational’.

As of 2014, Bunnell had stated as such: it remains a challenge to identify the boundaries of International School and its logic of practice. For example, the two studies relating to teacher turnover in International Schools in chapter three used two databases to access teachers: CIS (Odland, 2008) and NESA (Mancuso et al., 2010) in order to reach as many teachers as possible. However, by not defining the boundaries of the *field* by analysing the *field* they have risked their conclusions being irrelevant. Equally, studies that have used Rational Action Theory (Cox, 2012; Ezra, 2007; Kellett, 2015) were unable to explain decisions made by teachers that were made in a haste, especially when teachers and managers had to make decisions hastily, often on the spot. However, Bourdieu’s notion of *habitus* explains this very well, because while RAT ignores a person’s history, *habitus* is an embodiment of the field which has been shaped through experiences and exposure.

“The peculiar difficulty of sociology, then, is to produce a precise science of an imprecise, fuzzy, woolly reality. For this it is better that its concepts be polymorphic, supple, and adaptable, rather than defined, calibrated, and used rigidly.”(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 23)

The latter statement succinctly presents my argument for using Bourdieu’s thinking theory of practice. To study and be able to analyse data of an International School that is within a contested space, where the people who have stake in the *field* come from diverse backgrounds, a researcher needs flexible tools, and concepts that have explanatory power and are not limited to what is observed.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced Bourdieu the man and the academic through a brief synopsis of his early life and career. I defined the conceptual tools *habitus*, *field*, and *capital*. These concepts it is important to remember were empirically necessitated through Bourdieu’s empirical work. They are relational terms and require the researcher who uses them to do so reflexively, by using the same tools of analysis to study the research object and the researcher’s relationship to the object. Capital, is a common concept and has a variety of uses, notwithstanding in schools (social and intellectual capital) and human capital (economics). I distinguish Bourdieu’s *capital* from the different forms. However, it must be said that ultimately, the different forms of capital are related in their roots. Nevertheless, to avoid a *capital* deluge, I have used forms of *capital* defined by Bourdieu.

I then discussed briefly how Bourdieu's conceptual tools have been viewed as advantageous, mainly through maintaining academic rigour through a reflexive methodology, elimination of the individual/society divide, and revealing political trends. However, there are some who believe Bourdieu has been (mis)used, or have even gone to the extreme of deeming his conceptual tools as irrelevant, theoretically incoherent, and deterministic. These, accusations are exactly what Bourdieu fought all his life against. I have presented arguments against accusations of determinism and lack of theoretical rigour. Essentially, Bourdieu's conceptual tools have allowed me as a researcher to enter a contested space, such as that of an International Schools, with a way to understand the complexity of the relationships internal and external of the field. Additionally, Bourdieu's tools help understand how the different players negotiate their experiences based on their histories and compile a logic of practice of the *field* of International Schooling.

According to Wacquant (2017) the proper way to approach Bourdieusian text is to guide scientific questions and do the handwork empirically (p. 61), which is the crux of the next chapter. I introduce the research questions. I then discuss the research plan and how Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' ontology becomes an epistemology.

Chapter 5 Methodology

Synopsis

In this chapter, I reintroduce the aim and research questions. This study uses an ethnographic case study design. Main features are described and how this type of design is conducive to answering the research questions. Key to a case study is access to the case and participants, this chapter explains the process whereby a case study school and participants for interviews and surveys were recruited. Main methods to collect data were interviews, and qualitative surveys. Other sources of information include documents and a research diary was kept. I explain why and how each method was used, and implications of using them. Data analysis methods are then described. Particular attention to the quality of the data and ethical considerations are also presented.

5.0 Introduction

The research design adopted a case study design of one case study school in Kuwait, Beacon Light School, BLS. The rationale was twofold. Firstly, this design is argued as matching the purpose of this study was to understand the field of International Schooling, particularly that of a for-profit. Secondly, as the study will be using a Bourdieusian approach to understanding the field, the design provides both the flexibility and the rigour that matches Bourdieu's sociological methodology (Bourdieu et al., 1991).

The purpose of the methods used was to combine depth of understanding and breadth of participants, while maintaining flexibility to access. Methods used were semi-structured interviews, and surveys to answer the main research questions. Documents were also used for method triangulation and to map the trajectory of the school.

I first reintroduce the research aims and questions before discussing the methodological design and methods used.

5.1 Research aims and question

The purpose of this study stemmed from a gap in the literature that aligned with Waterson (2016) statement suggesting there is little known about the “motivation, business model, *modus operandi* and impact” (p. 193) of a for-profit International School from a stakeholder perspective. I particularly focused on the motivation and impact of choosing and experiencing a for-profit International School by various stakeholders. The assumption is that International Schooling is a field and the various stakeholders in the *field* seek to gain *capital*. This study sought to understand what type of capital was of value to the participants in this particular field. Furthermore, the purpose was to understand the ‘modus operandi’ of the school, and what capital did it use to achieve it. The research questions that were used to drive the research were:

1. How do teachers, school leaders and parents make their choices of selecting an International School?
2. What type of *capital* do stakeholders (parents, graduating pupils, teachers and school leaders) at an International School value and what types do they *not* value?
3. How does an International School use its accumulated *capital* to gain advantage within the field of International Schools?

5.2 Case study research

A case study allows researchers to examine the complexity of relationships, beliefs and attitudes within a bounded unit, the case (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Case studies tend

to focus on a particular group of people, a case. Data is typically collected from multiple sources which are typically less structured than methodologies that are experimental or rely on surveys (Hammersley, 2012; Stake, 1995). The population in both methodologies is often small-scale, however, the aim is to generate in-depth meaning of understanding people or a programme and how they function. Main distinctions between a case study and ethnography would be that while the latter is concerned with the understanding of people, this is not necessarily true of the former.

Case studies are often categorised as qualitative or interpretive studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Marilyn, 2013; Stake, 1995). Stake (1995) identifies case study as both qualitative and interpretive rather than quantitative because the former focuses on understanding rather than explaining, constructing conclusions rather than deducing them, and where the researcher is very much part of the research. Yin (2014) suggests that case study could be used for experimental hypothesis testing and evaluative purposes; going beyond mere descriptions.

Case study findings, are often criticised for being idiosyncratic and hence ungeneralizable to a wider population. Yin (2014) who promotes a more positivistic approach (multiple cases, random sampling, testing hypotheses, etc.), suggests that this is not the case. On the other hand, Stake claims that the purpose of a case study is not to make generalisations from one case to a larger population, rather it is to make assertions where the researcher has to confirm or challenge with other theories. Yin also suggests that case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions or “analytic generalizations and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization) populations (2009, p. 15). The aim of this study resonates with Yin’s ‘analytic generalization’ because findings were used to “corroborate, modify, reject” (2014, p. 40), or address gaps in the literature pertaining to International Schooling choice-making of stakeholders, their experiences and how the school gained competitive advantage.

The next section argues the rationale of adopting a case study design.

5.3 Relevance of a case study design to this study

An issue identified in the literature review are boundary setting of an International School (Bunnell, 2014; Bunnell et al., 2016). By adopting a case study design, I set the boundary by selecting one case study school, BLS. However, I acknowledge that BLS is part of the wider field of International Schooling, and hence findings are situated within this wider context. Case studies are critiqued for using a small-scale sample, it is argued that this feature is in fact a strength (Hammersley, 1985), the more representative the case of the typical object of study, the more valid the findings and assertions are (Woods, 1986). On the other hand, Stake (1995) recommends the study of unique cases to maximise understanding. Hammersley (1985) suggests that a case should be selected only after identifying the problem of the study. The case ideally reflects features that help the researcher address the issues developed in the initial stages of the inquiry.

It has been argued that studies involving International Schools need to use a case study design because little is known about what goes in an International School, their classrooms (Allan, 2007; Bunnell, 2014; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). Additionally, such a design considers the voices and subjects of the participants and understanding power relationships which could be masked in other designs which only cover the surface (Allan, 2007). Some empirical studies that have used cross-sectional, quantitative methods on International Schools have called for the use of in-depth, qualitative methods to explore nuanced variables that could have impact on phenomena such as teacher turnover (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

This study starts from the premise that the field of International Schooling, particularly that of a for-profit school is little understood. The theoretical underpinnings of this study lie in a relational ontology (Wacquant & Akçaoğlu, 2017). Different agents (people and firms) have different positioning in space according to how much *capital* they have, and the strategies they employ to maintain these positions or secure more advanced positions depend on their positions in space. To understand the positions of the different agents, one has to understand their trajectory (personal and professional experiences) which has shaped their *habitus* and their ability to fit in the *field* or not. To understand these aspects of people, research design needs to take account of trajectory, context, and the different relations that people have with the object of study: the International School. A case study meets this purpose because it is designed to provide in-depth understanding. Furthermore, as the *field* of International Schooling, particularly that of a for-profit school, requires further empirical understanding, a case study design provides the flexibility to attend to issues as they arise in the *field*, whereas other, more rigid designs, such as structured surveys would not allow (Bourdieu et al., 1991).

Social science research, or any research for that matter can never be value free as research is often affected by the orientations, or *habitus*, that they bring in. Their values, socio-historical locations and interests could all play a part in how the data is interpreted (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). This has been a position of attack against ethnographic studies. However, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that instead of researchers trying to eliminate their impact which would be in vain; instead they should exploit their impact as part of the data analysis process. This was mainly approached through the referencing to journal notes during the process of transcription and data analysis.

5.4 Case selection and gaining access

In selecting a case school, I identified a list of ‘representative’ or ‘typical’ International Schools in Kuwait rather than using the ‘unique’ case in line with Woods’ (1986) argument, the more ‘representative’ the school, the better the chances of external validity. By ‘typical’, I identified an International School based on the definition I used earlier: a school using an English based curriculum that is different to the national one. I used a Google Search to establish which International Schools in Kuwait qualified as such. I limited the choices to schools that have been in operation for ten years or more. Furthermore, I short-listed schools that were accredited by the following bodies: British School Overseas (BSO), European Council of International Schools (ECIS), or Council of International Schools (CIS) as a means to verify their legitimacy within the field of International Schools (Bunnell et al., 2016). This surmounted to ten schools.

I invited the schools to participate in the study through email using my university email to ensure schools of my status as a student. This took my place in November in 2016. The plan was to receive preliminary approval from the school to conduct the study. I received a negative response from three of the schools. Two of the three schools told me they were busy with accreditation and could not accommodate me. However, one of the schools gave me a negative response (see Appendix A) explaining that confirmed what Hayden (2008) had suggested earlier as to reasoning the lack of research on International Schools is due to International Schools being “a well-kept secret” (p. 15). I did not receive any response from the six other schools.

One school granted me access for my study. This was approved through the gatekeeper, the principal of the school (equivalent to a general manager in a business) mediated through an intermediary gatekeeper, the secondary head teacher (see Appendix A for letter of invitation).

Having to mediate through two or more gatekeepers is not uncommon in educational settings (Wanat, 2008). Whether or not intermediary gatekeepers feel they are obliged to participate in the research and provide assistance to the researcher may impede or even hinder the study. In my case, I was not under the impression that the head teacher was unwilling to participate, however, as shown in the email communication (January 7, 2018), the head teacher about a timeframe because of teacher and student time. This is consistent with my own experience working in a school, and literature pertaining to educational research also suggests that researchers should take this into account particularly since all research is perceived as intrusive to some extent (Flick, 2006; Stake, 1995). Establishing rapport and trust with gatekeepers is an essential part of research (Emmel, Hughes, Greenhalgh, & Sales, 2007; Flick, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007b). This was done by providing prompt information pertaining to the research and a face-to-face meeting with first the head teacher (September 1, 2018) and then with both the head teacher and principal (September 17, 2018).

The case study school is an International School in Kuwait. It adopts a British curriculum; students can graduate with IGCSEs (International General Certificate of Secondary Education), AS-levels (Advanced supplementary) and A-levels (Advanced level). They use Cambridge Assessment International Education for IGCSE. They are partners with Pearson Edexcel and AQA for A/S and A level examinations. The secondary school has been established for over twenty years, but the school's primary has been in existence for around thirty. They have British School Overseas status (BSO) accredited by Penta international, an accrediting body approved by the DfE (Department of Education) in the UK. The last accreditation report awarded in 2017 described the school as overall outstanding. This label adds credibility to the school on

top of its longevity in the field. Figure 5.1 shows the pupil population for the academic years 2000 – 2018.

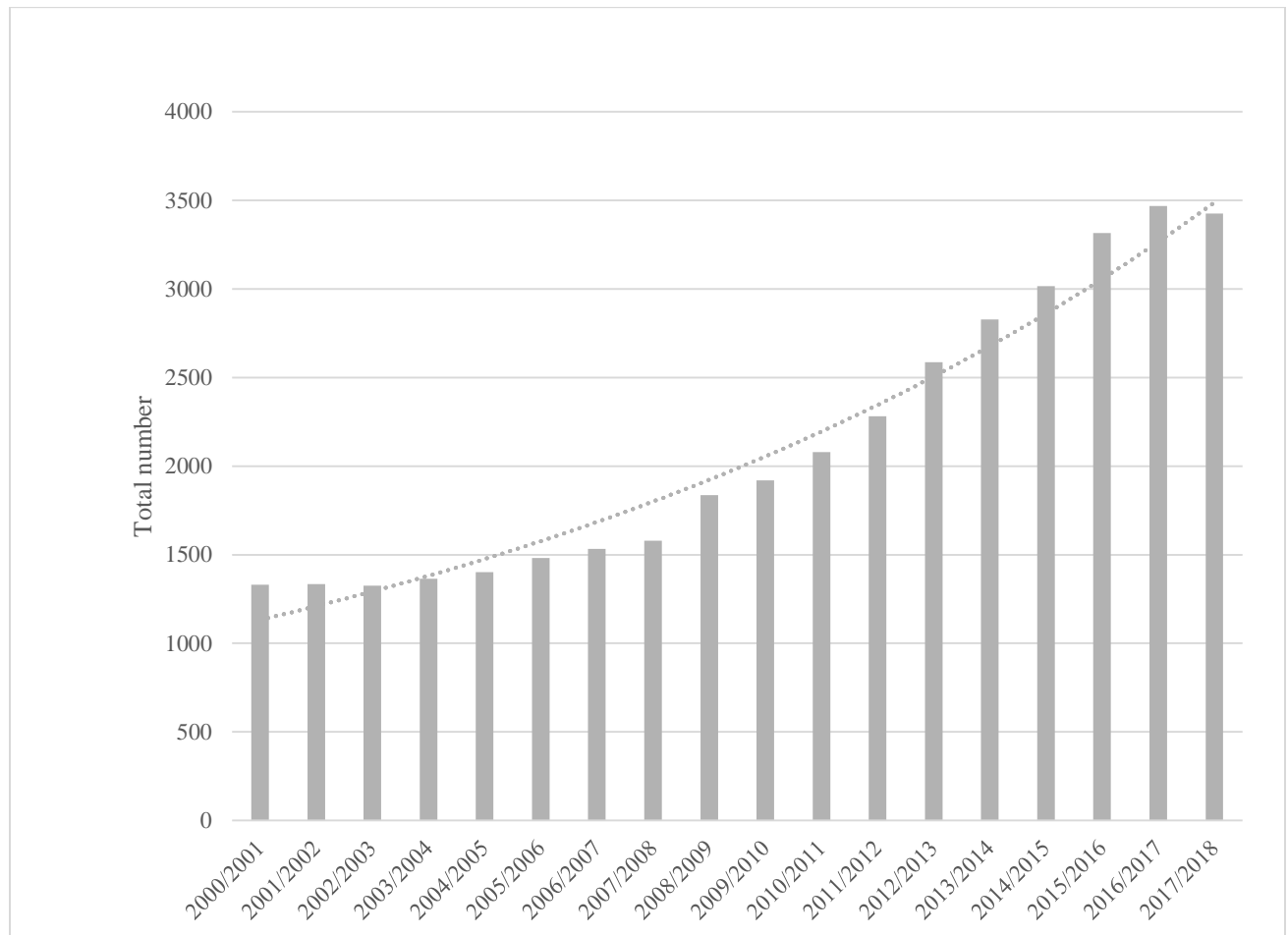


Figure 5.1 Total population at BLS for years 2000 - 2018

5.5 Methods of data collection

This study used the following methods to collect data:

- Semi-structured interviews (total of 39)
- One focus group interview
- Surveys
- Document analysis

- Field journal

Table 5.1 shows the timeline of data collection.

Table 5.1 Data collection timeline

Data collection method	Timeline
Pilot interviews	May 2017
Focus group interview	May 2017
Manager interviews	October – December 2017
Teacher interviews	October 2017 – January 2018
Parent interviews	October 2017 – January 2018
Surveys (all participants)	November – December 2017
Documents	November 2017 – January 2018

In this section, I will discuss the method selected, its administration in this study, the advantages and potential disadvantages.

5.5.1 Interviews

The main source of data collection methods was the semi-structured interview. I wanted to understand the phenomenon of ‘International Schooling’ and how people experienced it in their own language, hence, the interview was most suited to this purpose (Kvale, 2007); specifically a semi-structured approach. Interviews could be viewed as a continuum: on the one end there is the open-ended interview, where the interviewee is more in control of the flow of the interview to the close-ended interview, where the researcher is in control and follows a pre-constructed protocol. The semi-structured is somewhere along this continuum: the researcher has an agenda, but is not restricted by it, and uses probes to follow-up on answers (Kvale, 2007; Lichtman, 2013). A semi-structure interview meets the purpose of the research, because while the questions are derived by themes from the literature, it allows me to question those pre-constructed themes. A semi-structured interview allowed me the flexibility to pick up on issues

that arose on the field, such as the partnering with a transnational company that occurred whilst I was on the field. Additionally, a semi-structured interview allowed me to probe interviewees to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences.

Different interview protocols were devised for the different group of stakeholder (see Appendix B), but more or less were organised on the following themes:

1. Background (educational, work-related)
2. Choice of school
3. Experiences at the school

Semi-structured interviews also offer what other types of interviews do not. A closed-structured interview protocol will defeat the purpose of challenging pre-constructed themes. Furthermore, open-ended interviews suggesting the interviewee is in control is challenged. During an interview situation, it is the interviewer who is in a position of power because it is the interviewer who imposes and ‘intrudes’ on the interviewees life, and is ultimately using the interview to further their purpose rather than that of the interviewee (Bourdieu et al., 1999).

To complement the interview protocol, a combination of skills such as building rapport, establishing trust, questioning techniques and location are required to ensure a quality interview (Kvale, 2007; Lichtman, 2013). Building rapport and trust was probably the most difficult aspect, especially because with some interviewees I only met the one time only. Bourdieu et al. (1999) call upon researchers to practice “intellectual love” through the placing of oneself in the social space of the interviewee to understand where they are coming from. This does not mean identifying with the interviewee, and becoming a ‘native’ (Stake, 1995).

The teacher and parent interview protocols were piloted with two teachers (former colleagues at my previous International School where I was employed) and one parent (whose

children attended the International School I was employed at previously). The aim of the pilot was to receive feedback on interviewing skills and identifying areas for improvement. One of the pilot participants suggested I relax my facial features because at one point he felt he gave the ‘wrong’ answer.

5.5.2 Focus group interview

An International School such as BLS ultimately aims at providing pupils the means to access universities worldwide (ISC Research, 2018). For what capital is of most value to pupils, I wanted to understand how their experience at BLS relates to their perception of their readiness to transition to university. Therefore, I a longitudinal component to understanding the experiences of pupils was relevant because I could understand their perceptions before transition and after transitioning (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Furthermore, a focus group interview was most appropriate because it is perceived as a useful tool with pupils who could be intimidated by a one-to-one interview with a researcher (Lichtman, 2013). It also offers insights into a participant’s culture which is provided by the different perspectives and their rhetorical strategies that otherwise would not show in a one-to-one interview (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). However, during a focus group interview, some voices may be dominant (Lichtman, 2013); assuming the role of the facilitator I ensured that all voices were heard.

5.5.3 Surveys

Surveys were used in this study to complement the interview data and to reach a larger population (see Appendix B for the survey questions). This is particularly advantageous in a school setting where getting hold of participants, especially parents is challenging (Woods,

1986). Whereas, in a 'naturalistic' case study, surveys are discouraged (Stake, 1995). Since the survey was used as a complementary tool, rather than a tool to test a particular hypothesis, and relied on open-ended answers, the surveys were not piloted because they were predominantly open-ended questions pertaining to choice of the school and what they liked/disliked about the experience.

With respect to teachers, managers and parents, my target were the entire secondary school population. The survey was constructed online using the University of Southampton's I-Survey, which ensure the security of the surveys, which were saved on their server. I sent a link of each survey to the secondary head teacher, who tested it first to check how long it would take to complete and accessibility. A concern of gatekeepers is usually of how much time a researcher is imposing at their staff's time. Additionally, shorter surveys often have a higher response rate than longer ones (Muijs, 2004).

As a follow-up with the pupils I interviewed prior to graduation, I sent the same pupils a link to an online survey to know their perceptions of their experiences as now university students and how they relate to their International Schooling experience. An online survey method was selected as the tool to collect this kind of data because each student was now in a different country for university. I used SurveyMonkey® to create the questionnaire because SurveyMonkey® had features that iSurvey did not (such as the slider tool to rate their perceptions). The survey was adapted from a 2013 First-year university student experience (Canadian University Survey Consortium, 2013). However, my tool was much simplified to ensure completion. I understand that after a few months the pupils would have adjusted to various extents based on their own *habitus*, however, I wanted to know what is it in particular they attribute to their transition to university to the school. This is particularly useful since they

were physically, not part of the school, their positionalities have changed. All six pupils who participated in the group interview responded to the follow-up survey.

5.5.4 Participant sampling for interviews and surveys

After gaining access to the school, access to participants, and documents were mediated through the intermediary gatekeeper. Furthermore, access to pupils was mediated through a further gatekeeper, the head of sixth form. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) have suggested that gatekeepers will often attempt to select participants “either in good faith to facilitate the research, or it may be designed to control the findings” (p. 104). They suggest that a researcher should negotiate for some freedom of choice of participants.

The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of the *field* of International Schooling using BLS as a microcosm of the field. Key decisions to selecting participants where pragmatic (time and cost) and representativeness (Flick, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). Furthermore, a Bourdieusian analysis needs to incorporate key agents who have the most influence, rather than using random sampling which might jeopardise losing insights from them. Hence, I used purposive sampling of participants (Polkinghorne, 2005) to ensure I have representation of all stakeholders.

According to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (2017), school stakeholders are groups of people who have a stake in the schooling process. These are usually leaders, teachers, parents, pupils, governors, community members and so on. In an International School, are often privately-owned, and increasingly owned by transnational companies (Hayden, 2011; Waterson, 2015). For BLS, access to the school owner and the partner transnational company were not possible. For parents, teachers and pupils, I limited my pool to the secondary

school, based on the literature on International Schooling, one of the high stakes purposes of an International School is pupil preparation for further education, usually in countries such as the US and the UK (Hayden, 2011; ISC, 2018; Lauder, 2007).

According to Mancuso et al.'s study (2010), an International School's principal (or head of school) was perceived as a determining factor in teacher retention rather than a head teacher. School leadership: the principal and head teachers, were important stakeholders to interview. Furthermore, it was suggested that International Schools are fragmented spaces where micropolitical actions to gain advanced positions is common practice (Caffyn, 2007, 2010).

The following groups of stakeholders were selected for my study with an explanation of criteria used for selection and relevance to the research:

- 1) School leadership team¹² : According to Mancuso et al.'s study (2010), an International School's principal (or head of school) was perceived as a determining factor in teacher retention rather than a head teacher. School leadership: the principal and head teachers, were important stakeholders to interview.
- 2) Secondary teachers
 - a) UK trained teachers with varying experience at the school (0 – 2; 5 – 10; 10 or more); holders of points of responsibility; had children in the school: According to Canterford (2003, 2009) the International School field labour market is segmented and biased towards Anglo-Saxon teachers/
 - b) Teachers of government Arabic and Islamic studies teachers on a local contract
- 3) Parents of children in the secondary school: Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti

¹² This was changed from the original 'management' because leadership was the term used by the school to identify the senior positions

4) Secondary pupils about to graduate during the academic year 2016-2017

The head teacher sought preliminary consent from staff and parents. I was then provided with the e-mails of the individual teachers and parents by the head teacher. The head teacher was not involved afterwards. I liaised consent and meetings for interviews with the individual participants via e-mail (see Appendix A for information sheets and consent forms). I received confirmation from thirteen teachers out of sixteen. Interviews took anywhere between forty minutes to one hour and thirty minutes. Most took place in the school, either in classrooms, staff room or room designated for parent-teacher meetings. Only three interviews took place outside of school in a public coffee shop. All interviews were voice recorded. All but four interviews were in English. Four interviews were in Arabic and translated and transcribed in English

Since the number of managers was less than teachers and considering an International School setting, senior management are perceived as agents with most influence (Kellett, 2015; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009), Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggests that all the population should be approached. I was invited to a meeting (September 19, 2017) where these managers met with the school principal to talk briefly about my project and request participation to be interviewed. I received positive confirmation for interviews from ten managers. Interviews were all voice recorded and lasted between forty minutes to three hours (on the course of two days). All interviews took place in the respective manager's office with the exception of one which took place in a parent-teacher conference room.

Out of eight parents whom I invited to participate in the research, five consented to conduct the interview. Using snowballing where parents recommended others who would be able to provide me with further insight (Schensul & LeCompte, 2013), I interviewed two more parents. I interviewed two sets of parents where both the mother and father were present, and

five mothers. Interviews lasted from one hour to two hours. All were voice recorded except two. One interview took place in the family's home, two took place in the parent-teacher meeting room in school and four took place in a public coffee shop. Three interviews were in Arabic¹³ and translated into English, while the rest were in English.

Finally, I interviewed two key figures in the school: the human resource manager and the public relation manager to understand the nature of their role particularly because the literature review revealed that recruiting teachers in an International School is high stakes exacerbated by a “segmented labour market” (Canterford, 2003).

Table 5.2 lists the pseudonyms of the interviewees. Note that the leadership team was identified as either a member of the Strategic Management Team (SMT), and/or the Leadership team (LT), or Operational Management Team (OMT). Teachers who have a position of authority such as subject coordinator, were identified as (POA). All members of the leadership team were UK trained. Parents and pupils whose first language is English are identified with an (E). Members of the leadership team and teachers who are also parents of children of school age attending BLS are labelled as PB, those who are parents of children of school age not attending BLS are labelled as PNB.

¹³ These interviewees spoke English, but were more confident to speak in Arabic

Table 5.2 Interview participant pseudonyms and profile

Leadership team	UK qualified teachers	Non-UK qualified teachers	Parents	Pupils
John (SMT/LT)	Jessica	Abdullah (POA)	Mariam	Dima
Nicole (SMT/LT)	Michael (POA; PB)	Salma (PNB)	Laila	May
Richard (SMT/LT)	Chris (POA; PB)	Farah (PNB)	Nadia	Lara
Adam (LT)	Mathew (POA; PNB)	Waleed (PNB)	Carol (E) and Brad (E)	Jack (E)
Eric (LT)			Latifa and Malik	Imran
Nadine (LT)			Fatima (E)	Ahmed
Rebecca (LT)			Lubna	
Laura (LT)				
Tim (LT)				
Lisa (OMT)				
Linda (OMT)				
James (OMT)				

The survey was emailed to all secondary school staff, managers and parents. Table 5.3 shows the number of participants from each group of stakeholder that successfully completed the survey.¹⁴ The participants were subsequently identified with an identifier, for example, a parent participant would be identified as SUV-P-(number), teachers SUV-T-(number) and manager as SUV-MGT-(number). See Appendix E for a full transcript of the surveys.

¹⁴ I specifically avoided adding percentages of populations for survey participants because the aim was not to produce a representative sample.

Table 5.3 Number of survey participants

Category of stakeholder	Number of completed surveys
Parents	24
Senior management	4
Teachers	19

5.5.5 Documentary analysis

A school, like many social organisations, has a wealth of documents that reflect the social activities, its culture, policies and others (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). Documentary analysis lends itself well to this research because it has many advantages. As Bowen (2009) summarises, they are available, efficient, cost-effective, stable, exact, greater coverage and less-obtrusive than methods such as interviewing and observing. Bowen (2009) suggests that reflexivity is usually a non-issue with documents because the researcher does not influence them. However, others have suggested that documents are not-value free (Flick, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). Furthermore, it is the researcher who will interpret the documents, therefore reflexivity is relevant with any type of method.

Documents were also be used in a research study as a means to situate the data within the wider context (Flick, 2006) particularly that of mapping the field of International Schooling and delineating the fields of power. Additionally, documents were used to understand the history of the growth of the school (Bowen, 2009). Documents were also used as a triangulation tool to either corroborate or challenge interview data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Patton, 2002). Documents may range from formal documents such as staff and parent manuals, to informal journal diaries. In this study, documents were sought that would help contextualise the study. Documents that were used and how they related to my analysis are listed in table 5.4 below. Each document was scrutinised; they were not assumed to be value-free. The purpose, audience and authenticity of each document was recorded during the data collection phase (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Documents collected and their relevance to study

Criterion of analysis	Document	Source
<i>Cultural capital</i>	Teacher nationalities; degrees	Human resource manager
	Pupil nationalities; pupil university destinations	School administrative assistant; school website
	Accreditation report	Online
<i>Social capital</i>	School website to show partners/memberships	Online
<i>Symbolic capital</i> (customer loyalty)	Pupil population for past 10 years	Admin assistant
<i>Technical capital</i>	Copy of pupil/parent handbook	Secondary head teacher
<i>Fields of power</i>	Government website; newspaper publications	Online

5.5.6 Field journal

These are notes taken by the researcher throughout the research process of data collection and analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Woods, 1986). The nature of the notes could be descriptive, noting date, time, and place of an interview for example (ibid.). It could also include hunches that the researcher may have with respect to interpreting a particular phenomenon (Flick, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Woods, 1986). They could also describe thoughts, feelings and fears that a researcher might experience which could be useful during the analysis and reporting part of the research (Finlay, 2012). Feelings are important for a case-study researcher because they impact the relationship the researcher has with the object of study, and can impact what they imbue worth to data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). In other words, they can help reveal biases the researcher may have when interpreting the data (Flick, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). This

is useful to Bourdieu's objective reflexivity and a reminder to the researcher to beware of words that are used because they are not value-neutral (Grenfell, 2014).

I started a written research diary on day 1 of data collection. I noted the date, time and location of a field visit. I also described the physical context with as much detail as I could recall along with informal conversations I had with people in the school. These were often written in my car after leaving the field site. I maintained the diary during the analysis.

5.6 Data analysis

Analysis in a case study starts with the beginning of the research process. One area of concern for this mode of analysis of data that is more qualitative in nature is the hesitation on part of the researcher to make causal claims, reverting to defining their approach as 'exploratory', descriptive analysis, with the belief that it is only statistical analysis that could claim explanatory theory (Hammersley, 2012; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). The latter however, is a form of 'naïve realism' to which Hammersley (2012) and others have argued that statistical analysis is not linked to explanation theory: correlation does not mean causation (Pring, 2015). Additionally, Hammersley (2008) argues that qualitative researchers fall into the same analytic plunders they argue against such as the use social constructs, such as social class and gender, to analyse their data, rather than constructs that emerge from the field. This is relevant to my study because the literature of International Schooling is inundated with constructs that are taken-for granted, such as that of overseas and local teachers. While I have used these constructs to create a sample of interviews, I do not use them as analytical categories, instead, they are object of analysis.

According to Yin (2014), case studies lend themselves to analytic generalisation rather than statistical generalisations. Analytic generalisations corroborate, modify, reject existing theory or advance new theoretical concepts. On the other hand, Stake (1995) claims that case studies produce 'naturalistic generalisations' where the researcher presents the reader with a "vicarious experience"

through the use of participant quotes and sufficient contextual data before and after each quote for the reader to form their own interpretations.

The purpose of the data analysis of this study is two-fold: On the one hand it provides a vicarious experience for the reader on people's experiences, and on the other, an institution's story of struggles within the wider field of International Schooling. I understand that the analysis imposes an 'artificial' structure on the data particularly because it was imposed by myself, the researcher, with all my pre-constructions that I carry into the field. Just as reflexivity is essential during the data collection process, it is also crucial at the analysis and reporting stage.

5.6.1 Bourdieu's *field* analysis

Although Bourdieu did not support a 'recipe-book' methodology, he did argue that fields should be analysed according to a three-level *field* analysis of exploring the *habitus* or the participants, their objective position in the field and the relation of the *field* to the field of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). One could also elicit other practical aspects of research practice that Bourdieu promotes such as construction of the research object and participation objectivation (ibid.). Grenfell (2013) has formalised a Bourdieusian *field* analysis to help researchers avoid falling in the trap of a "weak form of constructivism" (p.284). In this section I describe the *field* analysis process and how it was used in this study:

A) The construction of the research object is intended to make explicit all assumptions pertaining to the object and list properties that define it. To this end, Bourdieu (1992) suggests a simple exercise:

"the *square-table of the pertinent properties of a set of agents or institutions*...I will enter each of these institutions on a line and I will create a new column each time I discover a property necessary to characterize one of them; this will oblige me to question all other institutions on the presence or absence of this property." (p. 230)

I had not done this suggested exercise because it was beyond the scope of this project.

However, in chapter two and three I have delineated the most essential characteristics of International Schools as depicted by the literature. Furthermore, the findings and conclusions of this study could challenge the characteristics as depicted by the literature, and could therefore be used in future construction of International Schooling

B) Conducting a three level analysis of the *field*:

1. Analyse the position of the field vis-a-vis the field of power
2. Map out the objective structure of relations between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions who compete for the legitimate form of specific authority of which this field in the site
3. Analyse the *habitus* of agents, the different systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalizing a determinate type of social and economic condition, and which find in a definite trajectory within the field under consideration a more or less favorable opportunity to become actualized (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 105)

With respect to my study, I have reversed the levels of *field* analysis. In other words, I start off with analysing the *habitus* of agents with respect to the process of choice. I then analyse the position of the case-study school in the *field* of International Schooling, then finally analysing the position of the field of International Schooling within the wider context of the *field* of power. In other words, I weave through the analysis from micro, to macro.

C) Participant objectivation: which to Bourdieu (1992) “is the most difficult but also the most necessary exercise” (p. 253).

In doing this exercise, a researcher is required to bring a consciousness to the unconscious presuppositions and prejudices. This involves a type of reflexivity which he called a “*metanoia*” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 251). This ‘new gaze’ calls upon using one’s own tools to question their position and relation to the research object, or as Bourdieu explains:

“the bringing to awareness of the dispositions, favorable or unfavorable, associated with your social origins, academic background, and gender offers you a chance, if a limited one, to get a grip on those dispositions.” (p. 253)

I have already stated how my social origins, academic background and gender have played a part in contributing to my interest in this study in chapter two. Throughout the rest of the study though, I add interludes to bring forth my ‘consciousness of pre-consciousness’. These were noted throughout the research in my research diary. I particularly analyse my position in the field of International Schooling as a novice researcher rather than a stakeholder of one, and how that has shaped my approach to the various stages, be it gaining access, interviewing, analysis or writing up.

5.6.2 Transcription of interviews

Data analysis started as soon as I collected the interview data and transcribed the interviews. Transcription is an interpretive action, not mechanical, the act of punctuating imposes artificiality to the discourse (Bourdieu et al., 1999) I transcribed the interview soon after I conducted it, into a word document that was password protected. I used pseudonyms for all interview participants. Although Flick (2006) has suggested transcribing only data pertaining to the research in question, I transcribed the interview data verbatim, only eliminating utterances that were incomprehensible or repetitions to avoid losing data that could be useful in the analysis process.

Seven interviews were conducted in Arabic (four teachers and three parents). I translated the interview from English to Arabic and then again translated from Arabic to English during transcription. I am bilingual in English and Arabic and therefore I was confident in translation. There is the concern that in translating, similar to transcription, there could have been a loss of meaning (Temple & Young, 2004; van Nes, Abma, Jonsson, & Deeg, 2010). The participants were bilingual, however, they were more confident speaking Arabic. I offered the interviewees to check the English

transcripts to ensure a reliable representation of their accounts. I acknowledged that an interview situation is a power interchange where I was in control of the question and the interpretation. The researcher as the translator could further amplify this power relationship. I did not opt to have a professional translator as Temple and Young (2004) have suggested because I did not consider my position as a neutral researcher and my subjectivities were addressed at every stage of the study.

5.6.3 Stages of analysis

Once transcribed, all interviews were uploaded to Nvivo® 12. I also uploaded survey results and the two accreditation report documents. I used Nvivo® as a data management tool, rather than a tool for analysis. I read and re-read the data twice over to familiarise myself with the data and get a sense of what ‘story’ it tells me (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Kvale, 2007; Stake, 1995), for while these hunches were important, I was sure in my field journal to document them in order to avoid imposing meaning on the data.

To analyse the data, I used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is useful to analyse large amounts of qualitative data. It is also flexible in that coding could be inductive or deductive or both. Data goes through iterative processes of coding, forming patterns and themes that sufficiently and completely answer the research question.

Using Bourdieu’s concepts and three levels of *field* analysis, I created categories using his thinking tools: *habitus*, *capital*, symbolic violence, symbolic power. Then, using data from the interviews and surveys, I coded data chunks into these categories, while being open-minded to the necessity of creating further categories where patterns were emerging (see Appendix C for a final list of categories of this stage of analysis). Within each category, I divided the data into various themes. A theme is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as what

“captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.” (p. 9)

Braun and Clarke (2006) do not make claims to a rigid ‘method’ of thematic analysis as that of ‘grounded theory’ nor do they suggest there is one ‘correct’ size for a theme. This flexible approach was suitable to reduce the data as well as conduct a three-level *field* analysis as described earlier (section 4.3.2).

The analysis process was iterative and consisted of moving back and forth between the data, conceptual understanding of Bourdieu’s thinking tools and back; otherwise, a combination of induction and deductive thematic analysis. New themes that were created were often emic, derived from what participants were saying. New themes were also defined in order to ensure that coded data fit.

All codes and coded data were read once through to check for redundancies, or possible themes that could be combined, or inaccuracies. The name of the themes were printed out and cut out. They were then placed on large surface and moved around to create a visual concept map of the story that emerged. Themes were re-grouped and placed under a larger theme that ultimately answers the research questions and use Bourdieu’s three level of field analysis.

5.6.4 Narrative analysis

In presenting the findings and discussion chapters, I have used a form of narrative analysis which is relevant to case studies as they capture the key features of the object of study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a). I adapt Bourdieu et al.’s (1999) depiction of people’s experiences in housing projects in France. In *Weight of the world*, Bourdieu and a group of interviewers present their analysis of social suffering as represented by the interviewee’s own voice, in the form of long excerpts in the text to tell the reader about their social experience. The interviewers maintain a reflexive stance throughout and understand the tension created through the influence of the researcher on the interviewee and the self-censorship of the interviewee. In that sense, I have used excerpts from interviewees to tell the story of their individual trajectories and experiences. These experiences, I

remind the reader, where shaped by their social histories. The stories show that within the same school, there exists conflicting voices, which occupy the contested space, the International School.

Polkinghorne (1995) distinguishes between two forms of narrative analysis. One where the data collected is in itself in narrative form. Another is where the final presentation of the analysis is in a narrative form. In the latter, the data forms a coherent whole that contributes to a certain understanding pertaining to the research question (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15). To do this, the researcher asks the questions:” How and why did something happen?” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15). However, unlike Bourdieu et al.’s (1999) approach in using the analysis to uncover social suffering, narrative analysis as suggested by Polkinghorne is to develop a plot that links data in a temporal manner to culminate in a climax ending.

5.7 Credibility of the research

The quality of any research is subject to scrutiny. Checks and balances of reliability, authenticity, validity, transferability, generalisability and so on are used in varying contexts to maintain the quality of research. There seems to be an unresolved debate about criteria used to evaluate the credibility of research that relies mainly on qualitative data such as this study.

Concerns are raised of using interview or similar qualitative data to answer a research question. There is the assumption of relying on people’s accounts of their experiences that there may be irregularities and inconsistencies (Polkinghorne, 2007). Indeed, Bourdieu (1991) has criticised retrospective motivations and opinions because they are based on the assumptions that people know the truth of their previous actions and remember it. Bourdieu (1991) does not suggest researchers not to inquire about past motivations; however, they should view the discourses “not as the explanation of behaviour but as an aspect of the behaviour to be explained.” (p. 38). As a researcher myself, I had to maintain a reflexive approach in order to prevent falling into the trap of a “spontaneous sociology” (ibid. p. 38) where the researcher constructs facts that are disconnected from theory. Hence, during

the analysis, I was not looking at ‘true’ instances, but how do the participant experiences and perceptions relate to their position in the *field*.

Additionally, when the researcher analyses the data, the whole act of analysis, starting from transcription is subject to error of the researcher imbuing his/her preconceptions on the data, which could threaten the validity of the interpretations (Hammersley, 2012).

To ensure the credibility of my research, in addition to participant objectivation (see section 5.3) I employed what Patton (1999) calls “strategies for reducing systematic bias” (p. 1197):

1. Triangulation (Patton, 1999): derived from surveying techniques, triangulation in analysis is meant to ensure for consistency of the analysis and reporting. Patton (1999) describes four types of triangulation (p. 1193), of which I have used two¹⁵
 - a. Triangulation of sources: the use of different sources to collect similar type of data in order to compare and contrast for consistency. For example, using document analysis to corroborate what people have suggested about school’s policies. In my study, I used semi-structured interviews, qualitative surveys, and document analysis, all of which generated qualitative data.
 - b. Methods triangulation: the use of different methods to check for consistency and exploring the same issue from different perspectives. In my study, I used quantitative data pertaining to the school demographics such as pupil population, nationalities of pupils and teachers (see more in 5.5.5) to understand the school’s trajectory and valued type(s) of capital
 - c. Theory triangulation: during the analysis and reporting, I challenge every interpretation I make with an alternative proposition

¹⁵ The fourth type of triangulation – analyst triangulation – applies when there is more than one researcher in the field.

2. Member checks (Stake, 1995): All interviews were voice recorded and in English. I offered to all interviewees the choice to check transcripts for ‘member checks’ which serves as a validation of the transcription and translation (Flick, 2006; Kvale, 2006; Stake, 1995). Only seven interviewees out of the 39 checked their transcripts. We met in the school at a time of their choosing.
3. Procedural reliability (Flick, 2006): data collection and analysis is contingent upon the researcher. The quality of the interview hinges upon the skills of the interviewer to ask questions and use appropriate probing techniques while avoiding leading the interviewee or using double-barrelled questions (Kvale, 2007). Although, others have suggested leading questions might be useful particularly where the researcher may want to test an alternative scenario to the one given by the interviewee (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Kvale, 2007). Following the pilot interview, I transcribed the interview and paid particular attention to instances where my questioning techniques could be vague or confusing.

Additionally, the interviewees demeanour and physical appearance also play a role (Lichtman, 2013). As a female researcher in a Muslim country, doing a study in a school where they uphold a ‘high’ standard with respect to professional outlook, I made sure to dress conservatively and ‘professionally’; ironed clothes, no knees showing, shirts not t-shirts, and no jeans. I also piloted the interviews with two personal teacher colleagues and a parent in order to ‘sensitise’ myself to my body language, and listening to myself interview helped identify strengths and weaknesses of my questioning techniques (Kvale, 2007).

5.8 Ethical considerations

This study confirmed to the University of Southampton’s ethical code of conduct. I proceeded with the recruitment of participants and data collection once I received ethical approval (see appendix A for information sheets and consent forms). BERA (2018) guidelines acknowledge that while anonymising data and maintaining confidentiality are the norm, complete anonymity may not be

possible if the research is conducted in a small community where participants could be identified. This is the case for this study since there are only a small number of British-style schools. BERA (2018) suggests that researchers either used ‘fictitious’ characters or provide information that could easily identify them. In order to ensure anonymity of the participants and the school I have not identified the positions of responsibility or subject. Furthermore, in order to protect the school’s identity, I have not identified the transnational company that the school has partnered with, instead I gave it a pseudonym. Furthermore, participants in the focus group interview were notified that they should not discuss what was spoken about during the interview with others beyond the group.

Bourdieu maintains that while it is important that researchers protect the identity of their respondents by changing names, it is also important to “protect them from the dangers of misinterpretation.” (Bourdieu et al., 1999, p. 1). The researcher is then presented with conflictions, on the one hand trying to maintain the respondents’ voice by using their own words, while at the same time protecting the interviewee from being identified. I have offered transcripts of the interviews to the participants for member check to ensure that my transcriptions, a form of interpretation, confirmed to their views at the time.

Additionally, the interview data along with the other forms have been analysed and synthesised into a new whole. Such analysis may be a cause of concern for some researchers who worry about the disconnect between what responders expect and what is actually presented by the researcher (Hammersley, 2014; Josselen, 2007). In my study, I used pseudonyms and aggregated information that may give away the identity such as age, sex and country of qualification (see table 5.1).

5.9 Participant objectivation

My presence in the field¹⁶ was obtrusive even if I did not partake in any observation or school activities. Indeed, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) that social research is participative to some extent as the presence of the researcher does influence their surroundings. In this section, I objectify my experiences in the field. This is crucial because on the one hand I am familiar with International Schooling as a stakeholder (pupil and employee), hence, I bring with me a lot of ‘baggage’ with respect to taken-for granted constructs that I had to constantly break with. An exercise I did with creating the data collection tools, after every field visit, during transcription and analysis stages. I constantly asked the questions: what am I taking for granted? The field journal was a useful tool to ‘bracket’ my own pre-conceptions and through my experiences, understand my various positionalities within the field.

Familiarity with a field presents a challenge for case study researchers who aim at converting the familiar to strange (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007a; Stake, 1995). Bourdieu (1996) argues that the purpose of sociological research is – quoting Gustave Flaubert – to “Write the mediocre well” (p. 94). Therefore, I was conscious to scrutinise the data, even the most seemingly benign, in order to present a thorough depiction of the field of International Schooling.

Nevertheless, I was also entering strange territory. I am a novice researcher. I completed a Masters in Educational Research before embarking on the PhD, but within the academic field, I understand my position as being at the bottom because of lack of expertise in researching in the field. Furthermore, I am a novice with respect to a Bourdieusian research. I had to rely on my readings of Bourdieu and how others have used his tools.

As a researcher, I was considered as on ‘outsider’ in a field I was in the past an ‘insider’. Instead of walking through a school gate straight into the school premises, I had to wear a visitor’s

¹⁶ In this section, I use ‘field’ (non-italics) to denote the case-study school site

badge every time I visited the school campus, and I was usually escorted to the person I was going to meet. Meaning, even if I wanted to ‘blend’ in the background, I could not. My position in the space was in-flux. For example, when I approached schools to participate in the study, the rejection by the one school (see Appendix D)

Two points that struck me in the email was: it seems that where I am from is of relevance and the refusal to participate in the study because of fear of the public identifying the school if it does indeed participate. I was made aware that I was being treated as an outsider and my intentions - or rather the object of any research pertaining to International Schools in Kuwait is. This heightened my awareness of my own vulnerability as a novice researcher, restricted by my lack of experience of research. Additionally, holding of a travel document, I was restricted in terms of locations of schools particularly in the Middle East. I resolved these issues by reassuring the case study school gatekeeper that my intentions are non-evaluative which I assumed at the time was the concern of the school that rejected my offer.

My position as a researcher was also challenged in the field with respect to access. As mentioned earlier in section 5.3, gatekeepers could be powerful agents in mediating access for data collection. I was expecting this to be matter-of-fact; that access to all institutions would involve some negotiations. However, I question whether or not an accreditation team would be subject to similar restrictions. For example, I was not made privy to the school’s budget and strategic plans.

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the rationale of using a case study design. Previous literature has consistently suggested little is understood about International Schools in general and for-profit schools in particular. A case study provides enough depth to address these concerns because it allows in-depth understanding afforded by a multi-method approach. Additionally, using a Bourdieusian theoretical framework, a case study matches the ontology and epistemology required to address the research aims of this study.

The case study school is a for-profit school in Kuwait that has a British Schools Overseas status. I used a multiple-method approach, however, semi-structured interviews with teachers, managers, and parents were the main source of data. A focus interview was also conducted with pupils. The main themes of questions were their reasoning of the choice of an International School and particularly that school, as well as their experiences in the school. The questions were framed with the different forms of *capital* in mind.

I explained how I went about the analysis using thematic analysis to form a narrative of Bourdieu's three level *field* analysis. I addressed issues of reliability and validity which some have argued are inherent in a case study design. I argued that no research can claim to be free of distortions. Adopting a reflexive approach to research will demonstrate an understanding of the researcher's relationship to all aspects of the research notwithstanding the analysis of data. I end the chapter with ethical considerations, particularly maintaining anonymity of interviewees.

In chapter six, I present an analysis of the process of decision making on the part of interview and survey participants in selecting the school. This corresponds to level three of a Bourdieusian analysis because I explore how *habitus* and *capital* play a role.

Chapter 6 Choice and symbolic violence

“Imperialism after all was a cooperative venture; and a salient trait of its modern form is that it was (or claimed to be) an educational movement; it set out quite consciously to modernize, develop, instruct, and civilize.” (Said, 1993, p. 223)

“An essential element of the inspection is considering the extent to which the British character of the school is evident in its ethos, curriculum, teaching, care for pupils and pupils’ achievements. By achieving UK inspection based approval, participating schools will be able to demonstrate that they provide a British education that has similar characteristics to an education in an independent school in England.” (DfE, 2016)

Synopsis:

A feature of International Schooling, similar to an independent school in the UK, is that parents pay fees for their children to attend the school. However, in Kuwait, unlike the UK, Kuwaiti citizens do not pay tax, and despite large government spending on public schooling, Kuwaiti children attending International Schools are increasing. This chapter however, is not a story about Kuwaiti families only, it is stories of people from different backgrounds and trajectories who end up in this one school.

6.0 Introduction

In the genesis of the *field* of International Schooling is its own legitimisation by the various players within the *field*, and those wanting to access it. Findings from the interviews and survey data revealed the trajectories of the participants, explaining decisions made at crucial stages in their life and choices they had to make, or in some instances, choices made for them. The interplay between *habitus* and *field* comes to the forefront when the notion of choice was introduced. Additionally, *capital*, what is deemed most valuable in the *field* by the dominant players determines the varied experiences.

I have assumed that experiencing schooling goes through three time-periods: before, during and after. I acknowledge that this is a simplified version of a more complex and often non-linear

experience, but for the sake of analysis, I had adopted this simplified demarcation. In this chapter, I look at the ‘before’ stage of selecting Beacon Light School (BLS). Interview and survey data reveal the following themes:

1. Overseas staff making choices of leaving their country of residence
2. Practice of choosing an International School and a British school overseas in particular by staff and parents
3. The practice of selecting BLS in particular

As this is a narrative analysis, I will refer to pseudonyms of interviewees throughout. A copy of table 5.2 which shows the pseudonyms used for the various interviewees is inserted below for convenience in identifying the group of stakeholder. Survey participants are identified by a signifier - P for parent, T for teachers, MGT for senior management – and a number (look at Appendix E for further information on survey participants).

Table 6.1 Pseudonyms of interview participants

Leadership team	UK qualified teachers	Non-UK qualified teachers	Parents	Pupils
John (SMT/LT)	Jessica	Abdullah (POA)	Mariam	Dima
Nicole (SMT/LT)	Michael (POA; PB)	Salma (PNB)	Laila	May
Richard (SMT/LT)		Farah (PNB)	Nadia	Lara
Adam (LT)	Chris (POA; PB)	Waleed (PNB)	Carol (E) and	Jack (E)
Eric (LT)	Mathew (POA; PNB)		Brad (E)	Imran
Nadine (LT)			Latifa and	Ahmed
Rebecca (LT)	Josh (POA; PB)		Malik	
Laura (LT)	Ryan (POA)		Fatima (E)	
Tim (LT)	Robert (POA; PNB)		Lubna	
Lisa (OMT)				
Linda (OMT)	Jason			
James (OMT)	Jenny			

6.1 “most people would just be here for the money or because state school behaviour was bad”

Jason

BLS prides itself in that all of its teaching staff are UK qualified. In order to understand the present experiences of the UK trained teaching staff, one must ask about their past: why did they choose to leave the UK in the first place. Many of the teaching staff suggested that their decision to leave the UK was due to financial reasons. However, during the interviews, it was not always pointed out as a priority as Jason suggests. Indeed, many spoke of dire working conditions in state schools in the UK, especially due to deteriorating behaviour of pupils.

Nadine and Jessica have alluded to their perception that children from economically privileged families would be more disciplined and value education more than British pupils. This is consistent with perceptions of embodied dispositions of the privileged classes. Ryan describes his experience in a state school in the UK prior to moving to BLS:

“I taught in a state school in the UK. Again, you get top students, bottom students, behaviour issues; it is quite variable. You get students who get into fights in the playground regularly... I think I have only seen two fights during all my time. Whereas, in the UK in the state schools, you might have two fights a week. It is very different.

Before I came over here, I had a student who poured Coca Cola all over me; I was completely drenched. It is common to be verbally abused in state schools, especially in the UK I found. From speaking to other teachers who have worked in the state system before, they have had similar experiences. It is hard work teaching in the state system in the UK.”

Both Jessica and Ryan contrast their experiences in state schools in the UK and at BLS, behaviour being one observable difference they have experienced that have made their experience in BLS worthwhile. Back in the UK, teachers were not only overwhelmed with behaviour issues it seems, work intensification was also a push factor,

“I found that you don’t have a life when you are a teacher in the UK. I found that my Sunday of the weekend was my planning day.” Sarah

Teachers not only felt they worked hard, but there were no prospects for future recognition in the form of job promotions and progression.

“No opportunities to do anything. In that 13 years, because I could see nothing happening in the UK: there have been no indications for any additional funding, no new ideas. Things were not going anywhere.” Eric

Additionally, in some areas in the UK, structural changes in schooling publicly that impacted lives of the teachers and hence their decisions to move overseas. Wales and Scotland (particularly in 2009) presented such examples where in the former there was a downsizing of public schools, and in the latter there was a surplus of newly qualified teachers (NQTs). However, Mathew did acknowledge that at the time of the interview circumstances in Scotland were different and there were more teaching positions available now.

“Finding a teaching job in Scotland was impossible. There are about 50 people applying for one job.” Mathew

My findings that many of the teachers who have left teaching in the UK were either looking for better working conditions as suggested in other studies (Coulter & Abney, 2009; Hrycak, 2015). However, further scrutiny of the individual teacher trajectory, teachers from Wales and Scotland did not seem to cite behaviour and working conditions as a reason. Rather, in their circumstances, it was more of a shortage of teacher placement. This is consistent with news reports and research depicting a ‘brain drain’ situation in the UK which has been plagued with teacher shortages for almost a decade (Coughlan, 2018; Richardson, 2016). Teacher shortage and deteriorating working conditions have been recently been addressed by the DfE who have commissioned recommendations regarding teacher workload (Allen, 2018) and have since accepted them. It remains to see if these initiatives may change UK teacher attitudes of wanting to leave. A recent COBIS report suggests that British International Schools have been benefiting from ‘teacher burnout’ in the UK as they populate their schools from UK school leavers (COBIS, 2018).

For Jason and Nicole who had teaching experience in independent schools in England have experienced similar pupil behaviour to that in BLS. Why do these teachers then leave the UK to teach abroad? Jason makes a point that most teachers teach overseas to save money. However, money did not prevail as a major pejorative for teachers leaving. For Josh however, the 2007/8 financial crisis directly impacted his decision to work overseas:

“The bank that owned our house had just collapsed... It looked like we were going to lose everything. My wife and I sat down in a coffee shop and thought of what we were going to do. We got The Educational Supplement and we saw a job that would offer accommodation. We thought that was our emergency get out.”

Jessica was candid about money being amongst her decisions to leave the UK. However, it was not on the top of her list of reasons to teach overseas,

“I also wanted more money. It is difficult when you start as a teacher in England, to pay the rent and get a car. You are really poor. I was not able to save any money. That is what I was looking for.”

Kate Fox (2004) in her book *Watching the English* declared that the British are “squeamish about money” and any talk about the money is taboo. This somehow explains that more teachers completing the surveys pointed out the importance of salaries when considering a job at BLS as opposed to staff interviews. Additionally, it could explain why the non-British teaching staff spoke more openly about seeking better salaries. The *habitus* manifests itself in self-censorship (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 46). John points out this as an issue that he specifically addresses when he gives talks to newly qualified teachers in the UK universities:

“Don’t be shy talking about packages. For goodness sake, you are going to a different country, surely you want to know what you will be getting paid, where you are going to live, what the hours of work are, what the holidays are, what’s the cost of living is like. But in the typical British reserve, don’t make it the first question.”

While John acknowledges that pay is an important factor impinging upon decisions, it should not be placed in the forefront in order to maintain and reproduce the codes and norms of British culture

Although many teachers have also suggested experiencing different cultures as a reason for teaching overseas, it was not the most important reason as suggested by findings in other International School studies (Bailey, 2015b; Hrycak, 2015; Savva, 2015). This could be that Kuwait is not the ideal ‘wanderlust’ destination (Cox, 2012) which seems to be of relevance to first time teachers overseas (Chandler, 2010).

Organisations as fields in themselves are interested in maintaining their positions in the field or accumulating more capital to improve their position (Bourdieu, 2005a). For BLS, it was spending economic capital to participate in recruiting fairs with not much return in accumulating cultural capital in the form of recruiting teachers. This had a direct impact on recruitment structures at the school (more on this in chapter 7).

6.2 Selecting an International School

School choice has become common rhetoric in developing nations such as the US and the UK through the marketization of public education. Concepts borrowed from the commercial sector such as markets, competition, consumer behaviour, and so on, are commonly used in government policies pertaining to education, educators and academic research (Allen, Burgess, & Mayo, 2018; Reuben, Wiswall, & Zafar, 2017; Yamato & Bray, 2006). The justification being, as governments de-centralise, creating a market incentivises schools to improve quality through competition for resources and

clients. Implied within this model is an increased accountability to the customer through the publication of inspection reports.

Quality education in itself is a vague term and often varies amongst different nations (Ng, 2015). Quality of public education often varies with political and economic circumstances. Standards of quality education in advanced countries such as the US and the UK are now readily available online for the public. However, in the International School field, information about quality of schools is often difficult to acquire. Laura talked about the initial difficulty of judging quality of International Schools and she partly attributes that to her mismatch with her first posting at another International School in Kuwait.

“In terms of quality, it is not quite clear. Unless you are guided. As an NQT, just coming out of practice, obviously, having not taught internationally before, it was a bit of minefield, hence my experience. They will try and sell you. Obviously, they are desperate to recruit.”

The lack of information about International Schools is also exacerbated by what Eric suggested as a ‘deliberate’ agenda in the UK:

“Certainly, in the UK, for obvious reasons, schools in the UK spend zero hours encouraging their teachers to look at international placements. They have a hard-enough time recruiting staff. At the moment in the UK, most teaching jobs will go unfilled at the start of the year. They are not going to invest time and effort in saying: “Also, if you want to earn more and not pay any tax and be a long way away from home in a desert island, you can.” So, they are not going to invest any time and effort in that.”

In the next section I highlight choices made using the concepts of capital, particularly the types that are most relevant to inform choices and *habitus*. At this stage, before working or enrolling

at BLS, the *habitus* is shaped either by pedagogic experiences in previous schools and/or other social and cultural experiences.

6.2.1 Making choices based on anecdotal evidence

One outcome of the lack of transparency is the reliance of many participants on their social capital to make decisions. Parents relied heavily on their social networks for recommendations about selecting schools.

“My friends recommend me for this school because the best and oldest private school in Kuwait.” P-14

Both Nadia and Mariam affirmed that their friend’s children attend BLS. For Fatima, asking friends about schools was ‘doing research’. She describes how she decided to move her child from a previous International School:

Fatima: [it] was a nice school, the coordinators were really nice. To be honest, I had a good experience up and till then. But then, everyone was telling me to take her out. Then, we started looking at [school X] and BLS. We didn’t even think of [school Y].

Lina: Why was it just [school X] and BLS and not [school Y]?

Fatima: I didn’t know much about school Y. We did our research, and the ones that kept coming up were school X and BLS.

Lina: Can I ask how you did your research? Was it just talking to people? Or did you look online?

Fatima: We talked to people. Mainly, we talked to people.

Teachers also drew on similar social networks, not only to know about which schools to apply for, but additionally to raise awareness about opportunities overseas. Frustrated with teaching in the

UK, Sarah, Rebecca, Ryan and Jason were told by friends and acquaintances of opportunities overseas as Sarah explains:

“It was my third year of teaching that my brother told me to take a look at teaching abroad. I didn’t even know that was a possibility. I thought teaching abroad meant teaching TEFL [Teaching English as a Foreign Language] when you go to Thailand (laughs). I didn’t know that there were British schools set up around the world that you can apply to. That night, I started looking at the internet. I looked at TES which is always a good place to look at when you are looking for jobs. I was in touch with a friend on facebook that I went to uni with. I knew that she was somewhere abroad. I asked her: “where are you?” and she was here in Kuwait, in BLS. She told me there were jobs.”

6.2.2 Choice and risk

For Rebecca and Chris, both who had children, knowing someone at BLS was crucial to their decision of leaving the UK and working at BLS.

Chris: The only reason that I came here is that I heard so many horror stories about International Schools. I wanted to go somewhere where I knew I would be told the truth. Good bits, bad bits. I knew what was coming.

Lina: What did you use to learn more about the school? Was your friend the only source of information?

Chris: I used the website and International School Review to look at as much as I could. But, to be honest, because it was someone I trusted, I relied mostly on what my friend told me.

International school literature has often suggested that teachers, particularly overseas teachers are apprehensive of a transition for the first time (Hrycak, 2015), or experience ‘culture shock’ in the

new host country or in the international school context (Halicioglu, 2015; Roskell, 2013). However, from interview data, and using Bourdieu's concept of habitus, a transition from the familiar to the unknown is perceived as a threat to the *habitus*, a durable set of dispositions. A move to Kuwait by UK trained teacher, was all the more precarious particularly as during the 'information age', people in the UK rely increasingly on media for knowledge which does not portray a peaceful image:

"When I decided to leave for Kuwait, everyone thought I was mad. Why are you going over there? It is dangerous, there are wars going on, there is terrorism going on. I think there is this misconception of the Middle East. The perception that its chaos. For me, the images of front pages of newspapers were of people burning flags and jumping up and down, you know, "Death to America" and all that kind of stuff." Ryan

Ryan's excerpt and other participants who recalled their own or family member concerns with respect to moving to Kuwait, echoes academic literature on how media in our current day and age largely influences and shapes knowledge (Herman and Chomsky, 1992). Said (1981) goes further to analyse how media in developed countries have created a skewed, violent portrayal of Islam.

However, Chris, places a more pragmatic approach to making choices.

"There is an element of risk in everything we do. It does require a lot of trust. I can see how some people are curious for it. I can see how some people may back out at the last minute. I don't regret anything. Whatever you do, you do it for a reason. If it doesn't work out, what is the worst that could happen? There is always something else that could work for you. We just went for it."

Chris attributes his risk-taking to trusting his instincts. Instincts do not occur spontaneously, depending on experience, instincts could be shaped to form a degree of accurate correspondences

between expectation and then the experienced reality. Experiences could also limit an individual's inclination to perceive the potential for opportunity, and hence, 'backing off' last minute.

For teachers and parents who already knew someone on the inside, used their social capital as a 'multiplier effect' to gain access both to school through employment and 'insider knowledge; of the school's culture:

"I actually did a visit to the school. At the time, my ex-husband was working here. He was covering a maternity leave. He had already said what the school was like: the schemes of work were fully embedded, behaviour was very good, and management team was very supportive." Nadine

However, not everyone had insider knowledge. For many teachers, it was the use of their own cultural capital and *habitus* shaped by their own pedagogic experiences.

6.2.3 "Unfortunately, education in Kuwait is very poor. It is the only option we have."

The above heading was given as a survey response, by an Egyptian mother, to the survey question: "Would you recommend the school to others?" This sentiment was also shared by an Australian father who has had experience with enrolling his children in other International Schools:

"BLS is on par with other International Schools in Kuwait BUT it is also fair to say that when the benchmark is compared to other International Schools outside Kuwait the facilities, opportunities and overall quality of education falls short of what I would expect from an International School. My 3 kids have been in International Schools in Europe, Asia and the Middle East and the Kuwait offering is significantly behind what we have experienced elsewhere." P-03

According to the latter parent, there is a distinction between international schools in Kuwait and others internationally. This parent clearly uses three distinct criteria for comparison between schools: facilities, opportunities and overall quality of education. Based on this parent's account of other International Schools in the world, BLS falls short of his expectations. Compared to the neighbouring United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, numbers of International Schools in Kuwait are of a lower calibre. Kuwait is a smaller state than both UAE and Saudi Arabia, which could explain the smaller number of International Schools. Furthermore, interview and survey data suggest that many parents rely on the reputation of the school rather than any other measure. Since International Schools are meeting their quota in Kuwait by relying on the goodwill of their clients, it could be argued that there seems to be little incentive to improve the quality. Alternatively, according to market analysis, it is also attributed to state control over the economy that restricts entrance of investors, particularly foreign investors in the Kuwait market to establish International Schools (Capital, 2016; Moujaes, Hoteit, & Hiltunen, 2011). Indeed, John reveals that the government of Kuwait's fee and building restrictions have prevented the school from expanding its facilities (see chapter eight).

Based on interview data, there seems to be three top tier competing British schools, BLS being one of them. However, BLS is not the only option, there are American schools and an IB school in Kuwait. The Australian father suggested BLS was the best at the time, but, a British education would closely match his *habitus*. For example, in conversation with Fatima, suggested that a British education was mandatory for them:

“For us, an American school was not an option, or a local school; we wanted British.

Because, we are from the UK, we didn't know how long we were going to be here. Coming here was a five-year plan. We thought when we go back, she [daughter] needs to have British curriculum experience. No other school was an option: it was just British.”

It seems for many parents, the number of options is too few to worry about making choices. However, for some, unlike Fatima, a British education means substantially more than simply a means of ensuring continuity for her children.

6.3 ‘Britishness’ as a brand

The ‘Britishness’ of BLS was repeated throughout the interviews, surveys and documents as a distinctive feature that makes the school appealing to teachers and families alike. ‘Britishness’ was attributed with higher standards and provision of extra-curricular activities. It served a purpose of accumulating more *capital* such as social and cultural ultimately leading to distinction and perceived advantage over other pupils from other schools for western university admissions, and finally providing a social space where a pupil is shielded from the current tensions in the political field plaguing the region of the Middle East. The value of ‘Britishness’ on the part of families, who for the most part were themselves not British, could be interpreted as domination effects of the British, the coloniser, a form of symbolic violence (see 4.2.4).

Forces of globalisation, capitalism and neoliberalism could also impinge on families seeking to accumulate more capital for their children and a perceived competitive advantage. Interview data confirms International School literature where people in developing countries perceive an International Schooling gains them more cultural *capital* than their own non-English native language curriculum.

This section first introduces how various participants defined ‘Britishness’. Then the three themes attributed to the perception of value of a ‘British’ education which are higher standards, a means to gaining entrance to university (particularly in the UK and US), and provision of extra-curricular activities. Lastly, I discuss some contradictions amongst the data.

6.3.1 Defining ‘Britishness’

Managers recognise the importance parents attribute to ‘Britishness’. ‘Britishness’ was used as a construct in its own right; however, I queried what it meant to them as managers:

“I think it is the British education. From speaking to parents who bring them here: they want the discipline, they want the routine. They want them to learn the British way. From the feedback I have had: they feel they get a good education, but they get that personality as well. They like them to learn the British way; Britishness.” Rebecca

Rebecca’s definition echoed what parents have suggested with respect to discipline. ‘Britishness’ according to Eric encompasses moral and ethical meanings such as inclusivity. Laura elaborates on what ‘British’ discipline entails:

“We have a British policy and as a British school, it is important for us to have those values and morals. Being British: punctuality, rules are rules, very organised in our communication. Because we are in an international setting as well, it is having those characteristics of what a British person. How we lead and instil those values and morals in the children from a British view.”

The use of ‘Britishness’ in this context, seems to be synonymous with “Englishness”, an analysis partaken by Derek Sayer and Philip Corrigan (1985) in their book *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution*. The use of ‘Britishness’ to be synonymous with a national behaviour is at once arbitrary, and displays how “the invention of a national culture is directly tied to the invention of the state” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 46).

None of the previous International School studies pertaining to parental choice revealed this distinction between American and British curriculum schools. Although, one conducted in 2004 in Buenos Aires comparing two International Schools comparing rationale of choices of parents between

two schools (no mention of the curriculum provided), one being more expensive than the other. Parents enrolling children in the more expensive school attributed a more disciplinary environment higher value than the well-being of the child (Potter & Hayden, 2004). Potter and Hayden (2004) likened the parents of this school to middle-class families in the UK. Although I do not have information pertaining to parent income, it could be alluded from fees parents pay for the school that the families afford the equivalent of middle-class UK living.

As mentioned earlier (chapter two), many of the families in Kuwait come from countries that were once part of the British Empire or under British mandate. The impact of colonialism and imperialism is embodied in the dominated people even after the coloniser leaves the country physically, 'the domination effect'. 'Britishness' - as embodied behaviour - is viewed as taste of higher, more advantaged people.

Arab and Muslim culture generally emphasises behavioural discipline embedded in religious values. Through the primary socialisation of children in Arab or Muslim culture, children are taught the importance of disciplined behaviour and work ethics. For these families between the choice of a British school and American one, the British matches their *habitus* the most. A public school or Arabic education system was not even considered as a choice. This seems to confirm what other studies suggest, mainly that parents are dissatisfied with their own educational systems and favouring International Schooling for their children (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010; Mackenzie et al., 2003).

6.3.2 “The British system has higher standards than the American” Laila

A recurring theme that emerged from wanting a 'British' type education amongst parents was a debate of American vs. British curriculum, both of which use English. Parents attribute discipline, higher standards to a British education. American schools were portrayed as less academic:

Latifa: Also, for other systems, such as the American system, we used to know relatives here who sent their daughters to an American system school. We talked to them too. They were

not too happy with their children's education but now that their daughters were grown up, they were stuck with it. They said, if we were to do it again we would have preferred the British system. With experience, they found out that the American system is a little too laid back. The stresses come much later, and the kids are not prepared for that. In the British system, right from the start, there is discipline. There is a more uniform...

Malik: *...more structured...*

Latifa: *...more structured. It was the same workload throughout.*

A parent survey respondent also favours the discipline that is seemingly espoused by a British school:

"I emphasize the order and discipline that is kept as part of the British system." P-23

6.3.3 Means to an end

Besides Potter and Hayden's study in Buenos Aires in 2004, studies of parent choice have not revealed this divide between American-seemingly more relaxed and a British more-disciplined approach to learning. This could be because other studies have compared International School choices to state school choices and not choices amongst International Schools (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010). Parents in this study have alluded to similar value of International Schools as those in Ezra's and MacKenzie's review of parent choice. That being the provision of English as a language and a means to an end, which is, gaining a degree to enable their children to seek education in western universities such as one survey parent explains:

"To prepare them for the competitive market and have a better chance in future recruitment!"

Figure 6.1 demonstrates trends of university destinations of year 13 pupils from the academic year 2008/2009 to 2017/2018. Consistent throughout is the UK as the top one country of choice followed closely by mainly Anglo-Saxon nations.

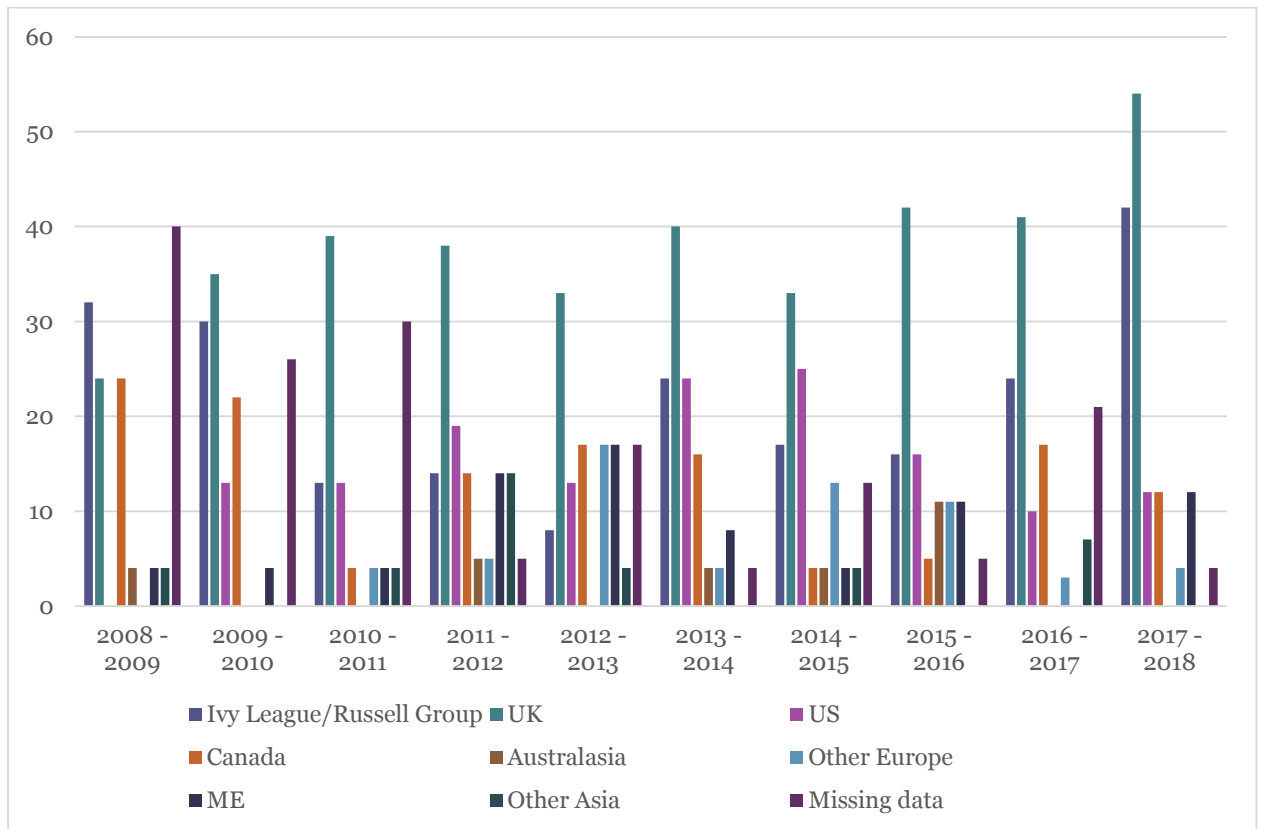


Figure 6.1 Trends of year 13 pupils' university destinations

As a mother, Mariam suggested that an education at BLS would provide her child with a ‘magic wand. Parents like Mariam are hoping to convert their economic capital with institutionalised cultural capital in the form of a degree. While this is consistent of other studies about the rationale of International School choice, it also has parallels with parent choice in the UK who struggle between deciding between state and private schools (Ball, 1997). It was suggested that in Europe, and particularly in the UK, that the marketization of education has led to reproduction of social classes differentiation, and has favoured families with more cultural capital and economic capital.

However, it seems that not all parents of children in BLS are endowed with a similar cultural capital as those of middle-class and upper class parents in the UK. For some, the symbolic capital of an international, and a 'British' education is enough to invest in.

6.3.4 Provision of extra-curricular activities

Another feature that attracted parents to a British-style school and BLS specifically is the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. Imran spoke of the importance of the activities to his family. He noted that his parents wanted him to experience something they did not experience himself. This was echoed by Mariam, Nadia, and Lubna. Not only are parents interested in converting their economic capital to institutionalised cultural capital, but also acquiring embodied cultural capital through activities that are traditionally associated with higher classes such as acting, music, debating which are experiences they did not have:

Imran: So, when they were going around looking for schools, what really sold them; it's a common theme I feel...is all the extracurricular activities ... BLS has expanded since. Even then, there was a breadth of extracurricular activities which one could choose from. They wanted me to try different things because my family is originally from Pakistan and back there is no culture of extracurricular activities.

According to Lara, moving from a Pakistani school to BLS, was a move upwards in social space specifically due to the activities, which also helped her gain social capital:

Lara: For me it has been 4 years at BLS and before that I was at a Pakistani school. I believed that when I first moved to BLS, the major difference I noticed was activities. In my other school they were very keen on studies; they were very strict in studies. That is why when I came to BLS I did not have any trouble. I did not really struggle; I did not feel I needed to

catch up with my studies.... I did languages and MUN [Model United Nations] for a couple of years. That allowed me the opportunity to get to know more people. It moulded my personality somehow. I feel activities are important because I was engaged with different people and it helped me be less socially awkward. I do not feel tense when I am in a social situation.

Malik and Lubna concur that by providing extra-curricular activities, BLS distinguishes itself from other International Schools in the field who only focus on academics. Such a feature brings much symbolic capital to BLS that the school capitalises on, for example by featuring such events on their website and Facebook page. While BLS is not unique in providing extra-curricular activities, John notes that these activities provide a roundedness to the curriculum BLS provides, as well as a British connotation, either through the school's partnership (social capital) with other British schools:

"Be great at all kind of sport: we are in every single sport that we compete against other schools. We are in BSME and we compete against schools from Bahrain and Dubai. But also, we are in COBIS, the worldwide organisation. As well as the BSME, we won the COBIS in Madrid against a British school in Berlin and Moscow. To test ourselves worldwide."

Or, through British examinations:

"We often say that we are an International School. But the curriculum is firmly British: the schemes of work are British; the assessments are British, IGCSE's, AS and A-levels. We don't do IB. We do Royal School of Music exams. We do British ballet exams."

While parents and pupils noted the importance of extra-curricular activities in developing personalities (*habitus*), cultural and symbolic capital that distinguishes BLS from other schools,

Adam points out that the exposure to extra-curricular activities help pupils gain a competitive advantage when it comes to applying to western universities:

“I point out to the students that I am interested in them getting an A also. I want you to get the A and the A. But I also want to prepare you for the future, because that won’t get you into university ... that won’t be the end of your journey ... The grades will get you in the door. What you do after that, will depend on the skills we tell you about: the ability to reason, to look at a problem objectively, to make a reasonable judgment on what the next step is, to reflect on how you do things and whether it is the most appropriate way to do it and if you can improve it? ... All of these things have nothing to do with your grades ... It is a case of gradually changing that perspective. It also helps seeing the universities our students end up in ... we can point at examples: this person did x, y and z and got there, whereas, this person did not.”*

Adam’s plea with pupils and their families reflects an emphasis of value associated with exam grades. Families not only seem to be fixated on grades, but in secondary school, families and their children seem to favour particular subjects and hence configurations of capital. The “it will look good on your personal statement” (Shuker, 2014) argument is not particular to BLS. Similar rhetoric is found in the UK and the US. In both the UK and the US, extra-curricular activities is thought to ‘raise the odds’ of getting accepted to a high-ranking university particularly given that it was found that many pupils attending these universities tend to have participated in such activities alongside being high academic achievers (Espenshade, Radford, & Chung, 2009; Sevilla & Borra, 2015)

When Bourdieu and Boltanski (1978) explained the increased demand for an academic education as a result of changing societies, they predicted that this will last as long as the commodity in question is rare (hence we see changes such as increased demand for postgraduate degrees as

opposed to a few decades ago). Not all schools provide extra-curricular activities. This makes BLS, as a provider of such activities, a purveyor of added-value to a child's education.

6.3.5 Contradictions 1: Implications of British-trained teachers

Whereas some International Schools have reverted to recruiting local staff to teach English-speaking subjects, BLS upholds its policy of recruiting British trained teachers. Indeed, Nadine spoke of her experience when she first came to BLS and experienced her first parent informal meeting:

“When I first came to the school, I was a year 6 tutor. I stood in my tutor base. A parent said to me [angry tone] “Your name is Nadine, where are you trained?” I said: “I am British, and I have British qualifications.” “Oh, ok.” So, they trust that. They know that the mark of quality to be a British educator. They know our staff are mainly from the UK. That makes a big difference.”

According to many of the parents interviewed, quality of teaching and learning varied according to teacher.

“But, to be honest, every year is different in terms of quality of teaching. We have to a conclusion with BLS that there is a pattern: one year you get teacher, the next year you get a terrible teacher.” Fatima

According to Latifa and Malik, quality of teaching and learning was more consistent in the primary years, whereas in the secondary school, their experience with their children was more challenging:

Latifa: Even the discipline: the primary years give good education in every aspect. Hygiene, cooperating with your friends, leadership; [now] Things are different, more advanced. They keep creating and innovating...In the higher years though, sometimes you feel the teachers are not that capable. Things are less clear.

Lina: Do you mean the quality of teachers in the secondary is not as high as primary?

Latifa: Not as high. But, because the children's foundation is good, the children learn to manage. Some things become part of them, and they learn how to manage. Maybe that is the purpose, for them to learn to be independent. On the whole, I would say BLS does a good job in teaching.

Malik also touched upon teacher sustainability impacting the quality of teaching and learning. Which is also something that has been a major theme within the findings. Which is not surprising given that many studies of International Schools have reiterated the teacher turnover as an issue. However, this is of resonance to teachers from the UK. As he also links these results to teaching.

Sarah explained to me that in recent years, their retention rates of teachers have improved:

“our retention rate of staff used to be two to three years. Now it is about five.”

BLS hires about 60 teachers each year. Based on the total number of 300 teachers in the academic year 2017-2018, this roughly surmounts to a 20% teacher turnover each year. Compared to other International Schools, the only data available is from Mancuso et al.'s (2010) study which provided data for NESA participating schools. 16% teachers left on average in 2008/2009 (ibid. p. 313). In the UK, recent NFER data state that about 9.4% full time teachers have left teaching schools in England in 2017 (DfE, 2018). Indeed, for Jason, the difference of turnover between the UK and a British school overseas is palpable to say the least:

The turnover is huge compared to the UK that is because it is a strange country if you are British ... but the general thing is people say: "I can't just sit down and have a bottle of wine." You can't do it here. Obviously, people do, but it is not the same in England. That gets to some people. But you can earn tax-free, get enough for a deposit on a little something, somewhere. ... I have been at BLS two years, this is my third. If you include the year I have arrived, something like half the department has changed.

According to the number of teachers that depart each year, it is not quite as large as half, but to Jason, it seems large enough to feel that way. None of the teachers related turnover to the quality of teaching and learning. Rather, one manager considered that compared to other International Schools, BLS is faring much better:

"The turnover is not that high. I think the average stay here is five years. For an international setting, that is good. I still know quite a few people who came with me at the same time. This is my only experience in an International School. In terms of turnover, we buck the trend and teachers end up staying longer with us."

Like Malik though, Laila feels teacher turnover is too high. However, unlike Malik, she implies this has impacts negatively on younger children than older children because younger children are more impressionable:

"This school has one fault: its teachers don't last for long. They stay two or three years and they move on. Why do they leave? [School X] has stolen half the teachers here I don't know why. This year [School X] took five teachers from here. Something is at fault with the way the school is managed ... Two, three years and then they either go back home or go to another school...Look, it doesn't really impact. But, in a certain time it does. For example, reception and KG, children are

young, they get really attached to teachers... This kind of attachment to a teacher stays with the child until they are in year five. Afterwards, they might like the teacher, but they don't get attached anymore."

Laila's concern is an affective one, while Malik's was more on outcome. One way to interpret this difference is a gender difference, mothers generally embody gender roles that are nurturing whereas fathers are less so (Biesecker, 2009). Or, it could also be more practical: Laila's child at the time of the study was still in year nine, it could be that her concern might change when her daughter is in sixth form. However, Laila also perceives the issue with teacher retention as a management one, particularly because she refers that the teachers leave to go work at a rival school in Kuwait, as opposed to leaving the country. Implying that management might have a cause and effect on teacher retention seems to reveal how Laila perceives positioning of teachers and management: teachers seemingly subordinate.

From a manager's perspective, Richard accepts the transient nature as a challenge that is rewarding because it requires building relationships. However, in an International School, time is of essence:

"The transient workforce means we have to build relationships quickly. We have to accept that we will build people and they will leave. But that is actually a good thing. The more we are known for building people, for giving them opportunities, especially with what you call the millennials, the more we make ourselves the workplace of choice. Some of them will stay for the comforts of Kuwait."

It might seem nonsensical that a manager would see effort of investing time and effort into 'building' skills positively. However, Richard indicates an important aspect, that of becoming 'the workplace of choice'. While accepting that a high turnover is part of the logic of the field of International Schooling, regardless of how supportive leadership is as some literature suggests

(Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009), if a manager helps build that social and cultural capital of a teacher, then that will inform the school's reputation. While teacher turnover amongst UK trained teachers is high, that amongst locally hired teachers is low. Indeed, local teachers often stay for a long time at BLS.

While BLS hires only British-trained teachers to teach English-speaking subjects (including foreign languages), for parents, some have raised concerns of quality of teaching. Others have noted that issues usually pertain to adjusting to a new country and hence a mismatch of *habitus* occurs, not necessarily with teaching and pedagogic practice, but life in Kuwait and with pupils. Josh also adds that new teachers at BLS, have had trouble adjusting because of practices of parents who are outcome-driven:

“We have had in the past, parents who have picked on new staff. That has led to different sorts of complications: students being moved around. Not so much anymore. Definitely, when I started, there was a culture where parents would bully staff to change grades. It is very much, have the grades, have the evidence for it, if you can justify it, explain it and eventually, they will agree with you as though they have always agreed with you.”

As suggested by Rebecca who felt that she has to do more parent-pleasing at BLS as compared to the UK. Could it be that they are fee-paying that this is so? Nicole who has worked in an independent school felt that parents in the UK were more realistic.

6.3.6 Contradiction 2: The British are too strict

The school has a student charter of seven declarations that children have to abide by. Parents consent to the charter when they register their child and sign off the term's and condition. For some parents, it is too strict. The 2017 Penta inspection report of BLS noted with respect to the school's system and its positive impact on the school's appeal to parents:

“Students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in terms of behaviour. The school effectively enables and encourages students to distinguish right from wrong, and to show respect for the law. For Muslim students, the principles of right and wrong are supported through Islamic studies and the Quran. Consistent and effective systems have been established to both promote positive behaviour and address any negative behaviour concerns. These systems are understood by students and implemented effectively by teachers and senior leadership. While the strengths of the academic programme is a key aspect of the school, parents often referenced ‘student behaviour’ as a significant factor in selecting BLS for their children.”

A point of departure between parents and pupils with respect to choosing between a British and an American school is the reward and sanction policy that BLS enforces. When asked whether there is something they would change about the school a parent states in the survey:

“The school is very strict with their House points an[d] negative points system which puts a lot of pressure on the students and lower the confidence level! Old school type of system! Definitely need to be changed. New teachers abusing the system as well!” (P-19)

The above excerpt insinuates a perceived negative impact on ‘student confidence’ and that this kind of ‘system’ is ‘old school’. Indeed, the use of rewards and consequences dates back to the introduction of Skinner’s behaviourism techniques in schools (Payne, 2015; Rose, 2017). However, it is still widely used in schools to this day to manage what is termed as ‘low disruptive’ behaviour which had become a cause for concern for the UK’s Chief education inspector (Ofsted, 2014). Other parents expressed similar concerns over the impact of the ‘negative point’ system on their children:

“The school needs to be more flexible in its rules and more keen on the psychological well being of the students.” (P-09)

Poor student behaviour is one of the major reasons teachers leave the UK (Hrycak, 2015; Ofsted, 2014; Richardson, 2016). For parents, there seems to be a divide: those who value discipline and order, with those who feel that the school’s use of consequences is excessive.

I have suggested earlier the impact of colonialism and Islam on the parent’s *habitus*. That does not explain though parents on the other divide who find the use of consequences as ‘old school’. One possible explanation for this divide is a homology between the bureaucratic field and schooling. Current debates in the bureaucratic field have been around working conditions, and emotional and mental health. The argument being a ‘happy’ employee is more productive. Most bookstores contain self-help shelves. Leaders in organisations, schools included, are urged to create work cultures that foster positive emotional well-being of staff (Day, 2007; Day et al., 2010; Drysdale, 2011; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Furthermore, slogans such as ‘work smarter, not harder’ insinuate there are shortcuts to productivity. However, Hargreaves suggested that it is a deficiency amongst British nationals to enable them to create the culture to ‘work smarter’ “many British teachers lack a culture of collaborative professional learning by which they might work smarter” (Hargreaves, 2001).

For some parents BLS starts to be stressful in the secondary school and recommend changing schools to an American one:

“I do actually recommend the school to parents for children up to Y6 or Y8 at the most. After that, I advise parents to switch to another High School or even better, leave the British system altogether because it gets way too stressful for students starting Y9 onwards.” (P-10)

This is reiterated by other parents in the survey, and as one parent suggests, the ‘American system’ is “less complicated”. Pupils who participated in the focus interview described the negative

impact of the rewards and sanctions policy on their emotional well-being as exemplified by Jack in a lengthy exchange, but one that needed to be present in its entirety to capture the impact of the behaviours system on a Jack:

“I think BLS does have a focus on protocol in a very mechanical way and what it does quite a lot is that it punishes people who want to do well and not people who don't. You find that the person who gets a negative because they did not do their homework, they don't care because they don't want to do their homework. Whereas, the good student who always want to do well, forgets something one day, gets a negative, they feel genuinely bad about that. Just having the mistake pointed out by the teacher would have made them not to want to do that again because they were not going to do it again anyway but yet they feel punished for that and they actually care. Whereas, people whose behaviour the teacher are not going to change that way, it's not a punishment for them at all. Now, much of that is not prevalent in 6th form, but much of that is needed for IGCSE's, years 14, 15 and 16 you kind of need as much help as you can get at that age. I think, things like that, every so often that will be the thing that makes you feel like you just want to give up for that day.”

Jack perceives the use of sanctions as negatively impacting the social capital between pupils and teachers.

6.3.7 'Britishness' as symbolic violence

For Bourdieu, the education system, particularly that in France in the late twentieth century, was perceived as an act of symbolic violence. Despite reforms to promote equal access, Bourdieu showed that in effect, schooling was an act of symbolic violence, and that in effect, it reproduces the cultural arbitrary of the dominant classes (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990).

Notwithstanding the symbolic violence that seems to be inherent in schooling, a 'British' type schooling contributes further to symbolic violence. All participants seem to agree in (mis)recognising the elevated status of a British education. Despite reservations of teacher quality and discipline procedures, it is generally agreed upon that any other form of education that is not 'British' or 'American' is of less quality. Participants failed to recognise the arbitrary nature of their value of 'Britishness'.

International School literature has alluded to the impact of this form of schooling on the identity of pupils, particularly whose English is not their first language. There seems to be a dominance of English language and western Anglophone culture on pupils (Ezra, 2007; Pearce, 2011). Sears (2012) suggested that pupils' self is identified with the language spoken. English in this instance seems to have higher value over the pupil's native language. However, it is not only a matter of speaking the language, but pupils who do not master the accent and fluency are often ostracised (Sears, 2012). In some cases, such as in one case study in Nigeria, indigenous pupils identified more with Western culture than their own (Emenike & Plowright, 2017). In other instances, International Schooling is viewed as advantageous precisely because it allows its pupils to have multiple languages and be more resilient than their national school counterparts (Rydenvald, 2015; Young, 2016). However, it is important to note that Rydenvald and Young's studies were both in European countries, whereas the other studies mentioned here were in third-world countries.

While my findings do not contradict the International School literature: BLS pupils are fluent in English, they identify with western culture and use it to gain advantage to secure university entrance. My findings do suggest that pupils are predisposed to value English as a language and western, Anglophone culture as more valuable. This is due to a combination of domination effects by British culture, due to their long-term presence in countries such as the Middle East and India (the home countries of many BLS pupils). Furthermore, globalisation has in effect contributed to the symbolic force attributed to the British and the English language, which disposes the families at BLS to recognise the former as a symbolic authority. This recognition legitimises the symbolic violence

bestowed upon non-British participants and thus its subsequent (mis)recognition in it being an act of symbolic violence. It is not just the International Schooling experience that contributes to the identity formation.

On the part of the British educators, they also contribute to the (mis)recognition because they believe that they are purveyors of all that is ‘good’ inherent in a British-style education. At BLS, the curriculum is ‘strictly British’: pupils are learning history, art and music from a perspective that is remote to their own culture. The expectation that by completing a British education, pupils will be well-rounded. However, it is known that curriculum is hardly neutral; it is a ‘cultural artefacts’ (Apple, 2004, p. 183) often to reproduce a certain culture, or in Bourdieusian terms, the dominant culture. Furthermore, the fact that many top universities are in the UK, or in English-speaking countries, further contributes to the (mis)recognition that a British education is the appropriate vehicle to achieve access to such universities.

6.4 International Schooling: a space where everyone is equal

For families who believe that an education at BLS benefits the student’s cultural capital through developing independence and confidence. For Nadia, her choice of BLS was on a moral and ethical basis:

“It was a personal choice. I wanted this for my daughter, whereas my husband did not... Why would I want a foreign school and not an Arabic, government school? I want to raise an independent child. I want a child who has his/her own identity: “I am Jana; I am not Kuwaiti Jana, or Jana whose parents have money.” ... it does not matter if the person sitting next to me is Lebanese, Iraqi, Egyptian, or Sudanese. They are all human beings. My aim was to put her in a school that is multi-national in its student population. BLS is one the schools with the most diverse student population in terms of nationalities.”

Nadia attributed the impetus for choosing a school that has more a diverse population was a personal one:

“I want her to learn respect of the other. One of the reasons being, I was raised in a home where my father is Sunni, and my mother is Shiite. I never felt the difference. At the time I had my [child], the problem of discrimination started to appear in Kuwait: this person is Muslim, this person is Christian, Sunni or Shiite. I wanted [my child] to grow up in a neutral environment. To learn to treat people not based on nationality, or religion, or material worth...to treat people as human beings... To learn to respect the other because they are human. That was the main reason. Language was not an issue. I graduated from government school and Kuwait university; my English is good. It is easy to learn language by taking courses.”

Nadia downplayed the role of the school being a purveyor of English as compared to tolerance and equity. Which is in line with global citizenship and intercultural awareness espoused by many advocates of international education (R. Bates, 2012; Bunnell, 2008a; Savva, 2013). A Phd study in Kuwait showed that some Kuwait university students viewed English as a means of prestige, successful access to university scholarship schemes and better paying jobs (Al-Rubaie, 2010). For Nadia, a business owner, she has sufficient economic capital, her primary interests in BLS were not a better job and pay.

Nadia's rationale also reveals the current political unrest widespread in the Middle East fuelled in many parts by religious sectarianism between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Kuwaiti nationals are predominantly Sunni Muslims. Being from a mixed sect Muslim household puts one in a precarious position in that particular social space. Similar to Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and global nomads who find safe spaces in International Schools (Fanning & Burns, 2017; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008; Wilkins, 2013), Nadia's purpose seems to find a safe place for her child. By acknowledging

that she does not want her child to feel superior because of her citizenship and religion, she is insinuating that it is taking place in Kuwaiti society. Since Kuwait is a rentier state, it has been suggested that there is a faction of Kuwaiti society that feels entitled simply for being a citizen of a wealthy state (Herb, 2014).

6.4.1 A space of struggles: inequality, clique-nature, and prejudice

While discrimination against race/ethnicity, as suggested by Nadia above are forms of palpable symbolic violence, there seems to be a more nuanced act of symbolic violence at BLS. BLS is a fee-paying, for-profit school and its fees are amongst the highest of fee-paying schools in Kuwait. In order to have your child enrolled, you must have a certain income. Latifa explained that some families in fact seek distinction by sending their children in BLS:

Besides the money issue, many people base their decision on status. Status-conscious people put their children in BLS because it is an expensive school. There are people who want to be identified in that category. You can easily point out such parents by their attitude and during parent-teacher meetings: they have done their job. Sending them to the most expensive school, telling people about that.”

Laila echoes Latifa but suggests that would be a mistake:

“I wouldn’t recommend it to parents whose purpose of them sending their children to such a school is to say I have sent my child to an English school. I cannot send my children to a school and not know what is going on. One of the ladies I know enrolled her daughter here in year three...The lady has other children in the school; I feel she has enrolled them in the school just to boast to people that her children are in BLS. Why do I say this? There is no follow-up or care from the mother’s part.”

Some families in BLS aim at increasing their symbolic capital through the prestige of attending a high-fee-paying school. However, for others, this has implications for their children who want to ‘fit in’:

“There is definitely a clique-kind-of-culture at BLS. It is very snobbish. It is very image conscious. We had quite a difficult time with the older one because she wanted a laptop. We told her any old rickety one would be fine. But she wanted the latest things because she would be teased. We told her to go to school with it, and if people tease her, she would have to deal with it.” Fatima

For Fatima, she is willing to pay the school fees because she views the education as important capital, but other accoutrements that go along with a more ‘snobbish’ status were unnecessary. However, they do put pressure on pupils, their identity and possible friendships. These findings are consistent with teacher experiences in International Schools, especially those who cater for elites (Rydenvald, 2015). In fact, Poore (2005) put it bluntly: “Let me be terribly honest for a moment: many students in International Schools are on the whole pampered, sometimes downright spoiled, and quite often sheltered from the real world around them despite their often prolific travels.” (P. 358).

In addition to perceiving BLS as ‘clique-natured’, it comes as an interesting finding that Fatima, a British national, would also feel prejudice towards her children by teachers in the school:

“The thing at BLS ...they can be quite racist. They can say inappropriate things to you and to the children. [A] teacher asks my daughter where she is going for the holidays. My daughter responds by telling her that she is going home for the holidays. The teacher asks: “Where is home?” My daughter says: “England. That is where I am from.” The teacher comments: “You are not from England. You are from Pakistan or India.” My daughter insisted

she is from England ... The teacher asked what passport my daughter has. My daughter told her she has a British passport to which the teacher says: "Just because you have a British passport doesn't mean you are British."

This comes in contradiction to what managers have suggested with respect to the school promoting 'Britishness', which was synonymous with inclusivity and diversity (section 6.3). For example, the fact that pupils must be of a certain calibre intellectually, suggests that the school's modus operandi conflicts with equality in the general sense:

"This may not suit social demographic goals or inclusivity goals. This is not inclusive ... we are not the fluffy type and social justice ... It is not about that at all." Richard

Furthermore, one would assume that by being British, attending a British school, Fatima's and her children should feel like 'fish in the sea'. It seems that Fatima is more concerned with the symbolic capital of appearances and 'looking British'.

Additionally, through the 'British' style structure of houses and house points, Laila feels that her child has grown to be prejudiced:

"By the way, the students here are prejudiced against France. They are strongly affiliated to their houses... My daughter is prejudiced towards ... the British in general."

Laila, who earlier suggested that she has sent her child to BLS for her to learn to be more exclusive is suggesting that she is now prejudiced against France and children from other houses. Children at a British School Overseas (BSO) seem to embody socially constructed prejudices in the UK which brings to question on how such prejudices are constructed to this day, and particularly a location that is so remote as Kuwait.

6.5 “In Kuwait, it is always reputation and what students usually say.” Dima

When it comes to practice of selecting BLS as the school of choice for work or study, the school’s ‘good’ reputation was a common justification.¹⁷ Many survey respondents gave “reputation” as a response to their choice of school. To glean on what a ‘good’ reputation meant for participants I relied heavily on interviews, especially since they contained more rich and nuanced data. The data strongly suggested that the school’s reputation was synonymous with quality. Different forms of capital were converted to reputation (see Figure 6.1). I will discuss each conversion in this section.

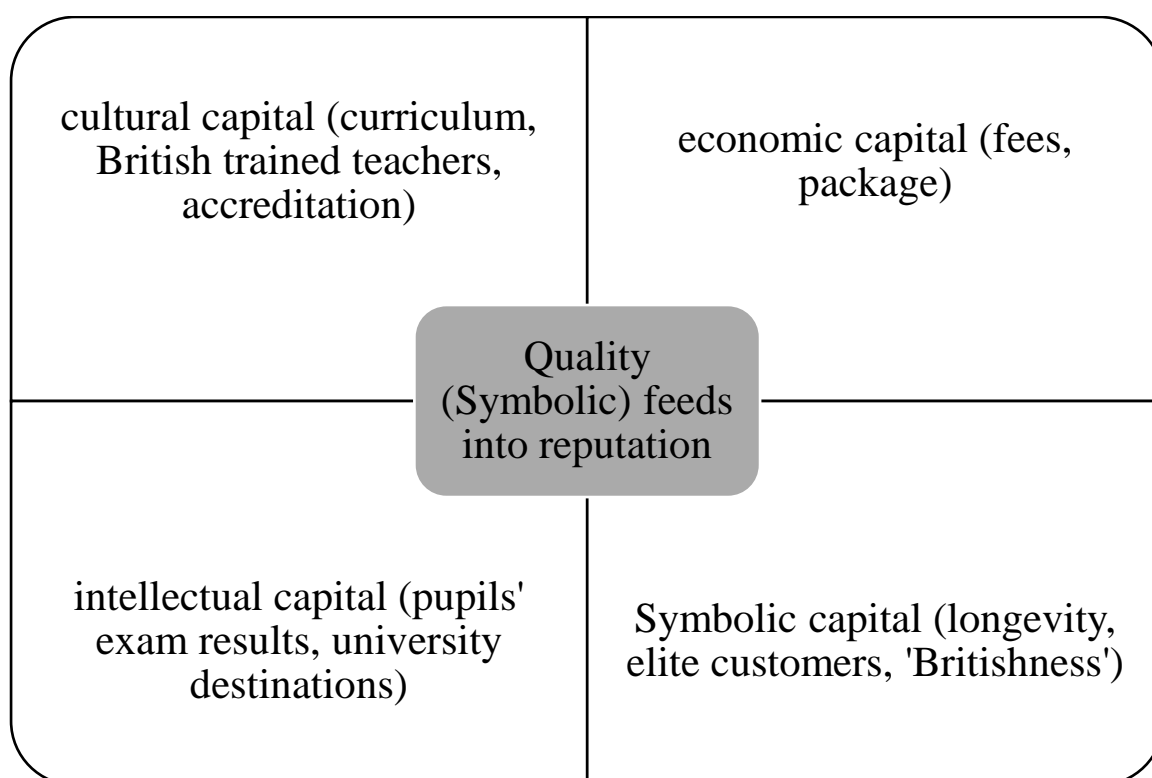


Figure 6.2 Capital conversions into reputation (symbolic capital)

¹⁷ A Merriam-Webster definition of reputation is: “overall quality or character as seen or judged by people in general”.

6.5.1 Economic capital

According to Mariam and Nadia, it is a straightforward equation, higher fees, better qualities. Although they did not elaborate on their understanding of such a formulation, I was able to deduce how fees and quality were perceived by other participants in the study.

Laura speaks how she made the choice to work in BLS after understanding that quality schools ‘invest’ in quality teachers:

“I understood there were about five schools in the area who were the top ones. They offer pretty good packages, they value as a teacher and they have high morals, British morals, which I wanted. My first school was very much a business. The profit they made was not put back into the school. That impacted on the quality of the education that we can give them. That is one example, whereas, it isn’t like that in this school. We invest heavily into resources. There is a lot of analysis that goes on attainment and gaps that we want to close. Budgets are reviewed each year. Where we are spending gets reviewed. There is a good cycle of improvement investment and where we go in terms of the quality of education and the standard that we want.”

Teachers who have had experiences at other for-profit International Schools have noted how ‘re-investment’ of profits into the school makes a palpable effect, not the least on resources but also on the school’s culture. For example, Josh speaks of his experience at one British-type school in Kuwait:

“We made a fairly unresearched decision ... My first impression was utter chaos. There appeared to be no rules, no set lesson time, just: “what is going on here?” Within a few weeks, I was sitting in the staff room, and somebody leaned over and said to me “What are you doing here? You are a real teacher? Why don’t go over and work at BLS?”

After landing a job at BLS, Josh experienced a contrasting school climate:

“Bearing in mind we were coming from [another school] and the impression of chaos we had there. When we came here, the first thing we saw was: classrooms looked like classrooms, there seemed to be some sort of order. My real fear was they were all going to be like this. My first reaction was very positive.”

Teachers in International Schools have varied experiences, ranging from nightmarish, like Josh and teachers in Roskell (2013) study (see chapter three), to satisfied with the quality, like Laura for example and teachers in Coulter and Abney’s (2009) study. An underlying common theme relates to the school’s spending on recruiting ‘UK’ qualified teachers and on physical structures that are attributed to classrooms and schools in general. Other studies on International Schools have suggested that for-profit schools could often impinge negatively on the quality of teaching and learning (Benson, 2011; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009).

From a customer point of view, as parents paying the school fees, of which the bulk is spent on teaching and learning parents had a say about ‘getting their money’s worth’. For example, in the high stakes sixth form, where pupils are preparing for their ultimate school qualification that will provide them with the ‘magic wand’ into university, Malik was disappointed with the apparent lack experience and knowledge of their subject content:

“When he was in sixth form, at that level, yes, we wished we had better teachers. That is where the grades are going to matter. The last two, three years are the most important; they need the best teachers. You cannot waste time because the teacher is not good enough or is confused ... They [teachers] wasted so much time for him to figure out a certain concept ... There are a few teachers who are monitoring things, sit with the students and are involved.

Not just give an assignment to students and wait for them to do it. Not to allow students to struggle. Years of experience would be required. It is not an experiment for them to try. Maybe there are financial constraints for hiring teachers, so they want to compromise.”

Malik speculates that BLS is hiring more inexperienced teachers as a way for the school to cut cost. Fatima also alluded to such a conclusion:

“In terms of the teaching. I know for the lower years, they are getting newly qualified teachers. Which is fine. There is nothing wrong with that. They are fresh, full of new ideas. But, the experience is not there. My friend ... told me that these teachers are cheap, they don’t have to pay them that much.”

Malik identifies himself as a customer paying for a commodity personified in the teaching and learning experience of his child. He knows his position in the space of the school as a field of production: he suggests he does not have the cultural capital to be a teacher. Nevertheless, putting it bluntly, he explains:

“When you are spending money on a product, the customer knows that not all products have the same value. I am aware of what I am spending and what I want. I am looking for good quality staff. Staff who are able to help and assist students if there are problems. If there is a part for us, we are also available. The part that the staff have to do, they have to do it.”

Laila also feels she is not getting her money’s worth, but she doesn’t blame solely on inexperienced teachers, but also on the increase class sizes:

Honestly, according to the fees we pay, the quality of the teachers should be better. It is not acceptable that I come home to find my child has incomplete information. When she started with them in KG and reception, the number of students in class was 18. Now, some of their classes reach 26 and 28. I can't blame a teacher who has 26 or 28 students: it is too much. For schools such as this one, the maximum number of students should be 18.

Teaching and learning, as in any school, is the *modus operandi*. Beneath the surface in a for-profit International School is the (mis)recognised tension between business and education. It is misrecognised, because ultimately, all schools (public, private, international and so on) have to operate as businesses to some extent through attracting customers, budgeting, raising funds and other commercial activities. However, in a fee-paying, for-profit schools, parents on the one hand expect the teaching to match their spending, and on the other, UK trained teachers attribute to quality to spending on attractive packages and resources for teaching. Quality of teaching and learning is obviously a contested concept, however, in this study, I am using participants experiences to bring forth what is of value to them, rather than defining what quality of teaching entails.

6.5.2 Cultural capital: Accreditation

For UK trained teachers, the school's accreditation status reflects the school's quality. I classify accreditation as institutionalised form of cultural capital because it is awarded and legitimised by an institution (Penta), that is in turn approved by the DfE.

Penta concludes in its 2017 report that BLS is an outstanding school:

[BLS] is an outstanding school which continues to improve. It is fully committed to its mission statement, 'Striving for excellence in all areas of school life.' BLS sets very high expectations of all its students and they respond by making good or better progress in their lessons. Levels

of attainment are high in both academic and wider creative capacities that enable students to be highly effective learners.

For Eric, the outstanding status of BLS works both ways: attracting quality teachers, and parents:

“But more than that, the reason I considered BLS over many, many other schools, is that accreditation process. When I see British School Overseas, when I see Penta inspections, BSME; that is serious. That is not a made-up school. There are plenty of schools around the world, that if they don’t take part in accreditation, then they are just saying they are good. That is not good enough in my opinion. I wouldn’t want to ever sit in front of a parent and say, yes, we are an outstanding school if I didn’t have proof.”

Most of the parents interviewed or surveyed mentioned the Penta report as a reason for them selecting BLS. Fatima was the only exception because she is a British citizen and knows the existence of reports that compare school performance, however, she still found the ‘language’ used in the previous Penta report difficult to understand:

“I didn’t read the latest one. I read the one prior. It was not an easy read. I found there was a lot of waffle. In the UK, I can go to a website and see a list of schools and whether or not they are outstanding, failing, or needs improvement. Something like that would be useful before even going to see the school.”

Lubna (parent) and Jason (teacher) were sceptical of the authenticity of the accreditation report. Lubna likened the accreditation process as garnishing on a bland plate. In playing devil's advocate about what makes BLS outstanding, Jason suggests some foul-play:

Lina: My thoughts are if an international or British school has been awarded outstanding by BSO, then something is going well.

Jason: I don't think so. I think someone who critiqued got paid more or less. I don't think it has much to do with how good the school is.

Lina: Would you look at these reviews with a pinch of salt?

Jason: I would look at it with a bag of salt. I would look at in the sea with salt on my head. I don't think it is worth anything.

Lubna and Jason have doubts of the accreditation process. In Odland's (2008) PhD study teachers have suggested that they also have reservations of the accredited status of their International School. The driving force for accrediting International Schools has been argued for as a means for legitimising an otherwise illegitimate field (Bunnell et al., 2016; Fertig, 2007). At face value, it could be that investing in the accreditation process does not really influence parents which is consistent with empirical studies pertaining to parental choice confirm my findings with respect to parents not attributing high value to accreditation (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010; Mackenzie et al., 2003). Contrarily, advocates of free-markets believe that International School quality would be regulated by market forces (Bunnell, 2014).

UK trained teachers and managers referenced the Penta report as evidence of quality of a school. Conversely, parents did not mention it as an attribute of the quality of the school. This distinction could simply be a lack of value of the accreditation report for parents as opposed to other attributes such as teaching and learning and university acceptances. It also could be that parents, particularly in Kuwait, where there is a lack of transparency in terms of school quality in general, not

pertaining to International Schools in particular,, therefore, parents *habitus* is not shaped by a *field* that uses language such as league tables, inspections and so on, like the UK.

It is contested space: parents are paying a fee wanting quality teaching, the school uses the process of accreditation and performance management to ensure quality, but for some teachers it feels stifling, yet, in a school with a large turnover, ensuring effective continuity is essential. Richards (2016) speaks of his experience as a head of International School head and how his vision has always been to work with his teachers to ensure a quality teaching and learning experience. He realises that International Schools are facing pressures of conformity due to influence by politicians. He ends his chapter with a sordid note: “And I fear the men in dark suits. But most of all, I fear for our children.” (Richards, 2016, p. 163).

6.5.3 Cultural *capital*: Curriculum

Parents and teachers alike are attracted to the cultural capital embodied in its strict adherence to a British curriculum and ‘British’ values. Previously, in section 6.3 I discussed how parents and teachers choose BLS because of its ‘British values’. In this section I focus on how the curriculum is a symbol of quality education.

For teachers, especially those with UK training, means that their pedagogic *habitus*, should in theory mean a smooth transition to BLS. Additionally, as an education similar, if not equivalent to that of the UK:

“BLS matches very well what a traditional British school is. I think that is the secret to its success. We are trying to offer British exams, so we need to run the school like a British school for that to work. That is how these exams are designed.” Eric

Conversely, Fatima has suggested that the curriculum is watered down, and the examination boards used are less challenging than other boards used by competitive British schools in Kuwait.

There is some evidence to suggest that different exam-boards do have different standards (Watt & Newell, 2011).

6.5.4 “the foundation, the clay” Pupils intellectual *capital* and cultural *capital*

Ultimately, the curriculum leads to the culminating awards (IGCSE, A-levels). BLS, similar to other British schools in Kuwait, publish ‘outstanding’ achievements of pupils IGCSE and A-level results in local newspapers, on their website, and social media outlets. It is converting its cultural capital, to symbolic capital, quality, as depicted by the result of a pathway followed by pupils, learning a British curriculum, earning comparable results to that of pupils in the UK as evidenced by the 2017 Penta report:

“Overall the standards achieved by students are high. External examination results compare very favourably to UK national expectations... Students continue to make good or better progress across the secondary years.”

Figure 6.2 depicts year 13 pupil destinations between 2008 – 2018 given as a percentage of total number of year 13 pupils. Information was gathered from the school’s website. Whereas total number of pupils was derived from pupil data provided to me by the school.

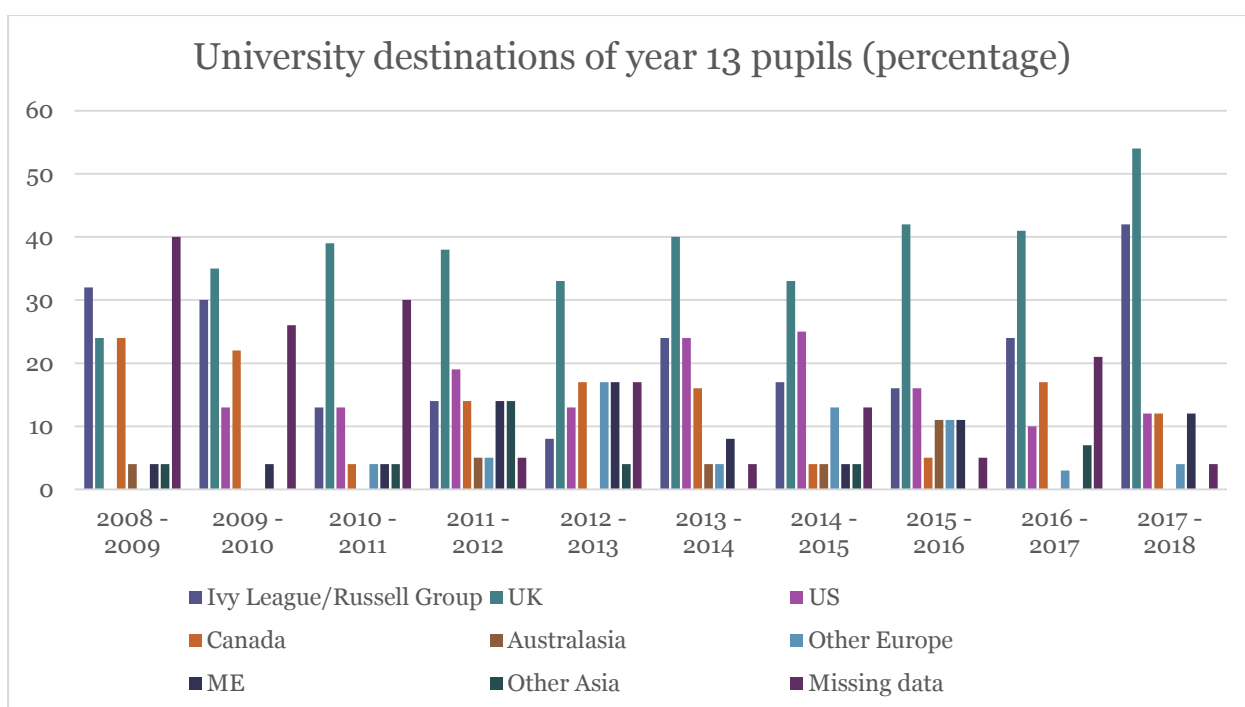


Figure 6.3 University destinations of year 13 pupils 2008 – 2018

It is probably not surprising to see that the UK is the number one destination of BLS year 13 pupils, particularly since it is a BSO. Most graduating year 13 pupils do go to a university in an Anglo-Saxon destination. Even pupils who remain in the Middle East, they tend to attend a university affiliated with an Anglo-Saxon institution, such as the Royal College of Surgeons in Bahrain. These findings are consistent with other studies that suggest that International School pupils attend universities in an English-speaking institution or country (Kanan & Baker, 2006; Wilkins, 2013). I have also shown the number of pupils attending Ivy League universities in the US or Russell Group universities in the UK. Although I would need further information such as financial status of the pupil, their cultural capital based on parents' education, this data does show awareness of pupils of these institutions and their success at securing positions in such competitive institutions.

For Richard, the school's reputation and hence its quality is brought about by the intellectual capital and embodied cultural capital of the pupils themselves. While pupil results due to a British curriculum and British trained teachers were viewed as symbols of quality, Richard reminded me that it is in fact the capital embodied in the pupils also plays a role:

“One thing we haven’t talked about, we talked about support of parents, but what we have not talked about the calibre of children. The raw material if you like ... Children who come from our feeder school ... people who come from an outside reception, must pass a certain bar. Thereafter, anyone else who comes will go through an entrance test, which is a little more formal. The capital is protected there. It is the foundation, the clay if you like with which we work ... We give ourselves the head start on developing children. We avoid behaviour problems.”

In being selective, the school ensures that not only the cultural *capital* to be academically successful, they also have a matching *habitus* to the school’s, thus, avoiding behaviour problems, a concern of many teachers as behaviour is viewed as a disruptor of the teaching and learning process (Giles, 2006; Ofsted, 2014).

Nicole describes the process of pupil selection at BLS highlighting the importance of English language proficiency at the secondary level:

“The school uses a cognitive ability test for student applicants ... whilst English language proficiency is important, it has more weight in determining selection of students at the secondary level than primary. The rationale being students at elementary have more time to be language proficient than in secondary. Students admitted at secondary who are not language proficient have to show proof of immersion in an English intensive course of the summer; they are not completely turned away.”

John also notes how parents also play a substantive role in the pupil selection process:

“You have to be careful when you are interviewing children. When we interview children as part of the selective process, we interview their parents. We sometimes admit students because their parents do not care to be involved. For some of these children, school becomes their safe haven. I am sure you have seen that when you were in school. They feel more at home in school than they do at home. It is where they have friends, where they learn things. This is probably true everywhere in the world. A lot of children come from abusive backgrounds, uncaring parents and so on. Sometimes, we admit students who are clearly very clever even though their parents are not very supportive.”

John acknowledges the importance of the parent's *habitus* in decision making. John is implying that BLS favours children whose parents' *habitus* matches that of the school, however, exceptions are made for 'clever' pupils. John also seems to imply that this process is discerned through the child's interview. While it may seem intuitive, John, who has twenty plus years' experience in schooling in Kuwait would have embodied an understanding of what sort of child matches BLS requirements for success through his own immersion in the social and cultural context of Kuwait.

According to Rebecca, interviewing parents at the early age level is essential, not to say the least that children at that age have still not developed their oral skills fully:

“What happens here is that we interview the parents. We take them around on a tour of the facilities. We look at how responsive the children are ... we look at how supportive the parents are. If they can't speak English, it is not a problem. It is something that we develop as we go through. And, we have got translators here to help us with the communication. But it is more about what they want for their children. When we are going around on tour, we look at whether or not they are interested, and motivated by what they see. They have to be happy

with our environment. We explain that we are not purely academic, formal subjects. It is more about active learning; it is about all the areas that we want from the children.”

Rebecca shows an understanding of the parenting culture, hence, the need to pre-empt to parents that the school is a place for active learning (recall that parents are perceived in general to be more academic oriented and BLS modus operandi is to change that attitude). Rebecca reminds parents what they are looking for in a child bearing in mind skills needed for children who continue on to primary school:

“I could say to parents: “We are looking for children that will succeed. These are the type of skills that we need.” We do have some difficult conversations with parents, sometimes. Sometimes we will have a child that is climbing over things, jumping around, and the parent cannot get their attention ... Behaviour is an important aspect. Independence as well. If children are independent...we can help train the parents... into helping their children. We don't want parents that will feed their child and carry things for them. We need them to be on board with us... We are a selective school. We don't have the resources to support students with learning difficulties and disabilities.”

BLS then looks for a certain type of pupil: one that has a matching amount of intellectual capital, in the secondary level, English language capital is of equal importance because the school does not have the time to improve their language capital. Additionally, parents' *habitus* and cultural capital is also scrutinised. Rebecca has insinuated that parents of children at BLS tend to enable their children. This was also observed by Hayden (2006) who suggested that International School pupil's experience 'learned helplessness' due to their advantaged positions and the common employment of caregivers by families.

While Richard views the selection process as giving BLS a head start, Chris from the UK have found that the good behaviour of pupils has impinged upon his pedagogic *habitus*:

I think my teaching is worse since I came out here, but the learning in my class is much better. Back in the UK, so much of my effort was in doing fun activities to make students behave because I worked in some tough schools. In that way, I find that my teaching was better. Here, the focus is just on the learning and the subject. All I think about is how do I teach this? I don't think about how do I make this entertaining to make little Johnny stop messing about? I feel I put less effort to what goes on before the lesson.

Culturally again, the respect that a teacher has is quite high. Students here seem to automatically respect you. I am sure if you are a bad teacher or do things badly, then things might change. Whereas quite often in a school in England, you have to go in and fight a battle, you win the respect and then it is fine. Whereas here, they presume you will be everything they want.

Chris suggest that because behaviour is good, he did not need to be as creative. He also suggests that the pupil behaviour is cultural, or part of primary socialisation at home, their primary *habitus* (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Not everyone agrees with respect to the behaviour of pupils. Mathew spoke of his experience interviewing at the school and his impressions of pupil behaviour before and after working at the school:

"It will be hard to say what gave the impression, but you come out thinking: "Wow, this is the best school in the world." The students are all geniuses: all gifted and talented students. They facilities are amazing. When you come to work here, you find that it is not as amazing as you thought it would be. Students are more normal. There is a range of abilities: There are some

with middle range abilities and some who really struggle. Behaviour is not as great as you might think. Although, it is much better than anywhere else.”

He felt that good behaviour and academic achievement were exaggerated, and the reality was a more mixed ability. Mathew represents a more conservative view of pupil’s ability and behaviour. Jessica points out to a more nuanced distinction with regards to behaviour:

There are some behaviours; maybe it is boys, teenage years, that is it. You don’t see bad behaviour from girls. And, mainly Kuwaitis. Not to point fingers. Not only, but predominantly. I can’t really think of any badly behaved Indian... I don’t think they really value education. Yeah, I think that is it.

Jessica speculates that behaviour is gender- related. Furthermore, stereotypical of certain nationalities. No other respondent has pointed out as directly as Jessica did to the link between behaviour and nationality. However, it has been alluded to that certain nationalities, such as Egyptian pupils are more fastidious with their studies. It does relate however, to different positioning in the social space of BLS. Kuwaiti pupils occupy relatively higher positions due to more volume of economic capital with respect to non-Kuwaitis who are not given the same status in Kuwait. Brad, an American parent, who at the time of the interview, was in his last year of a two-year contract in Kuwait, was hoping to relocate to Europe because experienced a mis-match in Kuwait, particular with respect to embodied capital he saw manifested:

“I think the experience will be good because the people here are rude, self-centred, only care about themselves, they don’t care about the environment. They see it when they walk by the beach and it is polluted, to when people are driving, they are in class and the Kuwaitis interrupt the teacher. Going to Europe, they will see this clean place, it is well taken care of,

and people are proud of their town. That I think will make a greater impression on them than what they learn in school.”

Again, there seems to be an impression that disruptive behaviour is linked to nationality. It is important to note here that the majority of the pupils in BLS up to year 11 are Kuwaiti pupils, number of pupils drops drastically as many choose to go to universities or colleges at the end of year 11. The nationalities even out in the sixth form, with Egyptians surpassing Kuwaitis by a small margin. Figure 6.2 shows the breakdown of pupils per nationality for the academic year 2016/2017. Figure 6.3 shows the breakdown for the same academic year for sixth form pupils (years 12 and 13). As a whole, Kuwaitis make up the most pupil population, however, in the sixth form, Egyptians form a slightly larger population.

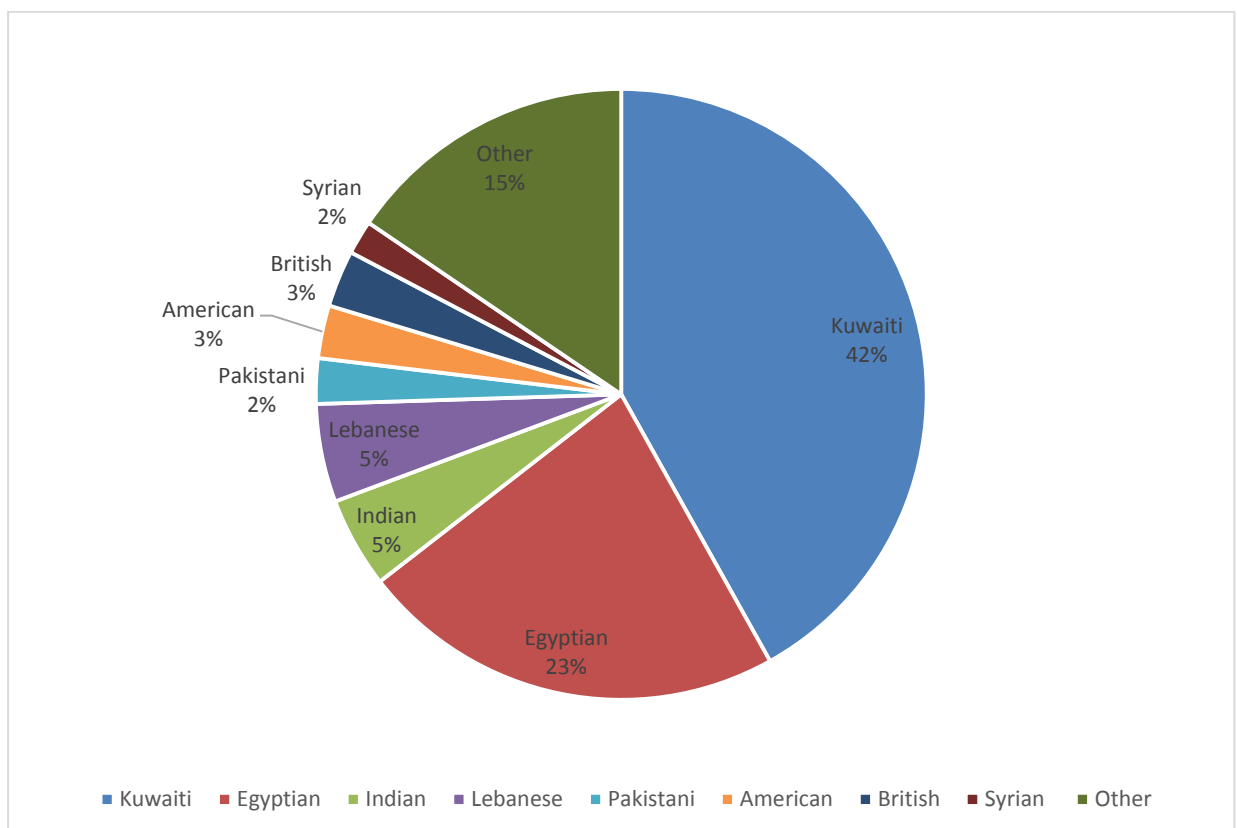


Figure 6.4 Breakdown of whole school pupil population according to nationality in 2016 - 2017

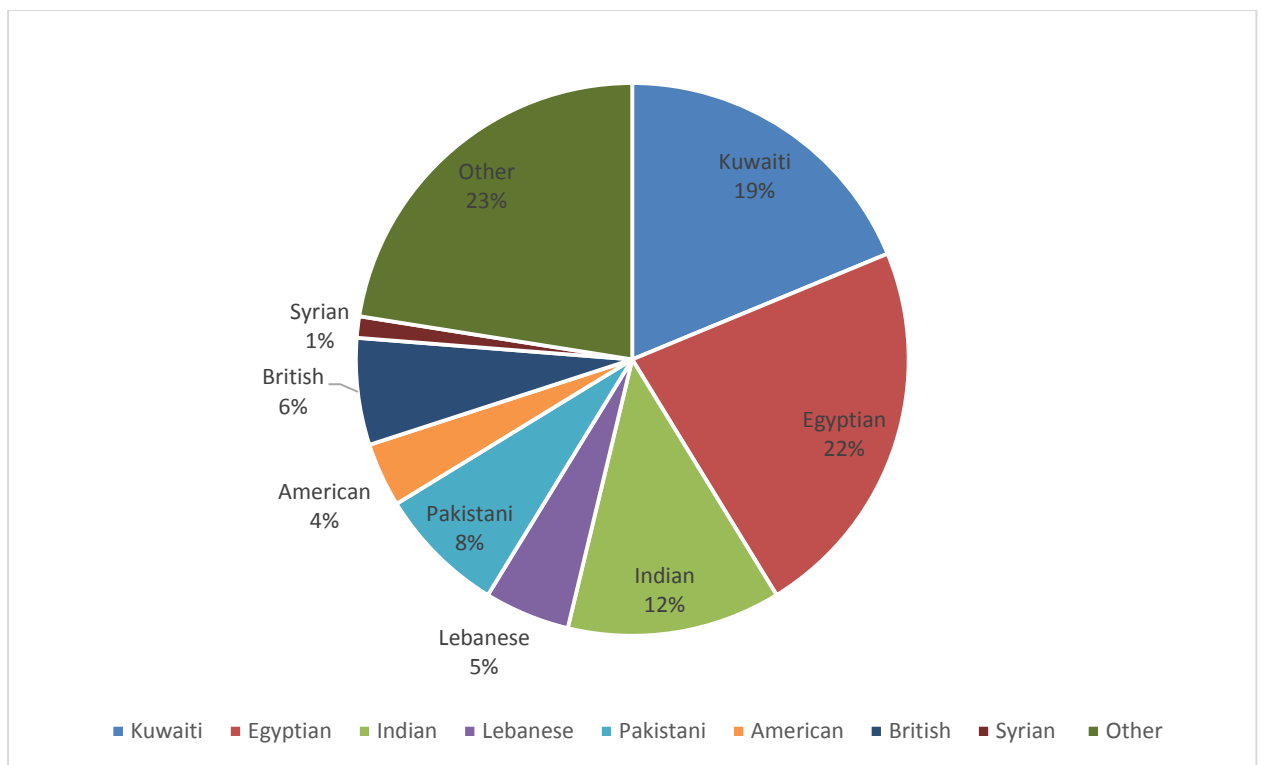


Figure 6.5 Breakdown of sixth form population by nationality for 2016 - 2017

For Brad, values such as respect of the other and the environment and altruism are absent from a Kuwaiti culture. Given that most of the pupils at BLS are Kuwaiti, does Brad's observation seem to resonate with Jessica's. Poole (2005) claims from his experience working in the *field* of International Schools, that many of the pupils are spoiled. Rebecca earlier suggested that a matter of concern is the 'spoiling' of pupils by the parents. There seems to be some parallels with respect to concerns to behaviour which could impinge on the quality of teaching and learning.

Behaviour is important to the school in terms of *capital* it values represented through the school's aim to strive for excellence is through stating clearly in the admission section of their website that the school has a certain calibre of pupils:

"It is important for our parents to know that their child will be sitting next to classmates who are equally able, well-behaved and highly motivated."

The rewards and sanctions policy at the school (see 6.3.3) is used as a tool to maintain the standard expected behaviour. According to Jason, pupils who are well-behaved, is symbolic of a quality school:

“The system is good. Behaviour, the negative point system; all that is good. Behaviour is a good litmus test at how good a school is.”

Previous International School studies show conflicting messages pertaining to pupil behaviour. On the one hand, in Odland’s study of teachers leaving their post at an International School ranked student behaviour as the least important reason (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). Slough-Kuss went as far as suggesting teachers leave their home country Canada to go teach in International Schools, well-behaved pupils being a motivating factor (Slough-Kuss, 2014). It was only in Hryack’s (2015) study asking International School teachers of advantages and disadvantages of teaching in International Schools. Some teachers have suggested that pupils are spoiled (Hrycak, 2015; Poore, 2005). However, there seems to be a sweeping generalisation of pupils and behaviour. Odland’s study for example, did not specify locations of the school’s teachers were employed in or nationalities of pupils worked with. Additionally, Mancuso et al. and Cox’s studies which followed up on Odland’s study on teacher retention, did not include pupil behaviour in the survey questions (Cox, 2012; Mancuso et al., 2010), unless one considers ‘workload’ and ‘working conditions’ as somehow related to pupil behaviour, one can only speculate that behaviour is not an issue and that my findings seem to contradict the findings of these studies. In-depth qualitative studies in South East Asian countries such as Thailand (Deveney, 2005) and China (Yue Zhang & McGrath, 2009) have shown that teachers perceive the pupils as highly motivated culturally to achieve academically and that a teacher is highly respected as part of the culture. A doctoral study in Kuwait reveals that a public survey showed that pupils hold teachers in high regard and that pupil behaviour does not present a problem to teachers (Alobaid, 2006).

For BLS, through selecting pupils with a certain accumulated cultural and intellectual capital and using structures that ensure behaviour that matches its aims for excellence evidenced by pupil exam results and university destinations (refer to Figure 6.1). Exam results are published each year in the local newspapers, a practice that is used by competitive British-style schools in Kuwait. Reverting back to Richard's earlier suggestion that the school's reputation is ensured by the quality of the pupils they select. These pupils then go through the whole structure of schooling and eventually produce academic achievements that in return feed into the school's reputation:

"Obviously, British schools are quite attractive because of universities in England. The level [of universities] such as Oxford and Cambridge. Not all of them go there, but they have quite a good reputation. To be educated in England is quite nice. Also, BLS has a good record now with exams. I think parents look and say: "Ok, good exam results." BLS has got really good exam results. I think parents think their children can achieve similar results." Jessica

Malik, from a parent's perspective, suggested that when the school publishes pupil results on social media, they are glossing over the results:

"It depends on different teachers. But for higher levels, they should have more sustainable teachers. They should aim that 99% of the students have A to B, rather than 100% A* to E. It might look good to some parents, but we understand the story behind these numbers and the grade limits."*

At the end of this section, the data reveals that while being selective, BLS seeks to find a match with pupils who have the cultural capital embodied in the ability of academic capabilities. Pupil behaviour, viewed as a result of stereotypical embodiment of particular social spaces (for example Kuwaiti nationals), is also something to be controlled by the school because it is viewed as

reflecting on its quality and impinging upon the teaching and learning process. There is also conflicting evidence with respect to published pupil results. The accreditation report suggests their pupil results are comparable to the UK, some parents have suggested published results are manipulated in such a way to exaggerate the success. Such practice, however, is not different to marketing strategies in commercial enterprises.

The discussion of the school's reputation attributed to choice-making by both teachers and parents resonate with the discussion earlier (6.3) pertaining to symbolic violence due to the (mis)recognition of 'Britishness' as a purveyor of a 'better' education, so much so, that British and a good reputation have become synonymous. Previous literature has attributed to the choice-making of International Schools by parents due to their perception of such schools providing a better quality education (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010). My findings have shown that it is a 'British' style education in particular that stands out for the reasons aforementioned in this chapter.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented a narrative of how agents negotiate their choice of an International School. I looked at what type of *capital* they mobilised to make their choices and types of *capital* they valued out of an International School experience and how that corresponded with their actual experiences. This chapter first introduced why participants chose an International School as a place of employment, or to enrol their children.

Data revealed that in fact the participants were actually making choices between an 'American' or 'British' type school rather than the generic 'International School'. A 'British' type school was viewed by some participants as providing a higher quality education, not only of the public education system in Kuwait, but than that provided by 'American' style International Schools. British International Schools provided higher standards, in terms of education (teachers, curriculum and discipline), a means to university entrance for pupils as reflected by university destinations

(Figure 6.2), and provides extra-curricular activities which adds symbolic value to the pupils' experience.

Generally, a quality school for teachers and managers from the UK meant a school that embodied a typical British curriculum and values while also offering a salary that enabled them to afford a way of life they did not have back in the UK. For parents, they measured quality by their perception of teaching and learning, which varied from seen as effective, to those who fear that the large turnover and increasing employment of younger teachers is impacting the quality negatively. Whilst exam results was also another measure of quality, this seemed related to a selection process that actively recruits pupils whose *habitus* and capital matches that of the school. In general, participants viewed BLS as a rung on a ladder to improve their position in their own social space.

The findings also revealed a novel theme to the understanding of the field of International Schooling. This was a distinction for parents, between British and American International Schools. Reasoning of either type of 'system' seems to reveal a more complex embodiment of remnants of colonialism for those who favour British versus those who favour American for its less regimented and argued to be more child-centred which seems to follow the mantra 'work smarter, not harder'.

The reoccurring theme of 'Britishness' as a measure of quality education I argued was a form of symbolic violence. Britain, as a previous colonising power, and speaker of the Lingua Franca, has the symbolic power to construct the social reality of the participants (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu (1977), in his study of the domination effect of French as a colonising power on Algerian tribes had suggested that domination is often indirect and is often manifested in unrecognised acts of symbolic violence "the gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognized as such" (1997, p. 192). Indeed, for the case of BLS, participants seem to take this conflated view of a 'British' education for granted and adopt the language of the dominant players in the *field*.

In the next chapter I turn to the school itself as an organisation. I depict the structures used in attracting parents and teachers and those that help the school achieve its aims in order to understand

what type of *capital* the school favours. I analyse the participant's experiences with respect to these structures to understand similarities and differences between the different groups.

Chapter 7 The International School as a *field*: Objective structures and subjective stances

“More concretely, it is the agents that is to say, the firms, defined by the volume and structure of specific capital they possess, that determine the structure the field that determines them, that is, the state of the forces exerted on the whole set of firms engaged in the production of similar goods.” (Bourdieu, 2005a, p. 75)

Synopsis

This chapter discusses findings and interpretations of strategies that BLS employs to distinguish itself within the International School *field*. Objective structures in place to promote the school are targeted towards ensuring the school successfully recruits ‘British’-trained educators, promoting itself in the UK as well as locally in Kuwait, and ensuring structures are in place to ensure effective data management. Finally, as a means to gaining university entrance for exiting pupils, the structures in place to ensure successful acceptances in universities worldwide are essential for BLS to stand out amongst its competitors.

7.0 Introduction

A fee-paying, for-profit, International School such as BLS occupies spaces in the two *fields*: the economic and educational. Applying Bourdieu’s above quote to International Schools means that the structure of the *field* of International Schools is at once structured by the *capital* configuration that is deemed most valuable by the dominant agents in that *field*. However, Bourdieu’s epistemology is relational, that means that whilst the *field* is determined by the *capital* of the agents, the *field* is at once exerting its own structure on the type of *capital* mediated through the *habitus* of the agents that embody the structures of the *field*.

In chapter six, I presented a narrative of how agents negotiate their choice of an International School. In the process of making choices, I was able to extrapolate what capital was valued in the

field of International Schooling. Themes that emerged revealed on the surface a (mis)recognition of a ‘British’ style of education which was familiar to UK trained teaching staff, and valued by families of children attending BLS because of symbolic significance in that region. However, there were cases where a participant’s *habitus* was mismatched with either the ‘Britishness’ of the school or the commercial nature of the school.

According to Bourdieu (2005b), firms create the economic *field*. Each firm carries a certain weight or energy according to its *capital* configuration which gives the firm its competitive advantage (2005b). In this chapter, I analyse the relevant types of capital that BLS employs to compete in the *field* of International Schooling.

To launch this chapter, I draw on a brief history to contextualise much of the findings and discussion in this chapter.¹⁸ As soon as the secondary department was established at BLS, the school’s owner set a goal to compete with the then conceived competition, namely two British schools in Kuwait (which I have named school X and Y). However, as John clarifies, their aim was not only to compete, but to eventually surpass the local competition and compete with schools on an International School – “*We want to get our name forward.*” To do this, BLS used a multifaceted approach to accrue capital (in both volume and configuration): ‘smart’ recruitment structures to ensure teachers employed match the school’s values and parent requirements, restructuring of the school’s divisions to create structures for teacher collaboration, employing a proactive public relation campaign, and quality control. This chapter draws on interviews, surveys, and documents to discuss the abovementioned strategies to accrue capital and what it meant for BLS and the stakeholders in terms of relative positions in the International Schooling field.

¹⁸ I have used the pseudonyms of interviewees and identifiers of survey participants as in chapter 6.

7.1 Evolving recruitment process of UK trained teachers

For International Schools, teacher retention was highlighted as a challenge due to a high turnover of expatriate teachers, which is only exacerbated by a segmented market favouring first language English speakers. (Canterford, 2003). Nadine pointed out how parents manifest such preference through the following encounter with a parent during her first parent meeting:

“When I first came to the school ... A parent said to me [using a firm tone] “Your name is Nadine, where are you trained?” I said: “I am British, and I have British qualifications.”

“Oh, ok.” So, they trust that. They know that the mark of quality to be a British educator. They know our staff are mainly from the UK. That makes a big difference.”

Furthermore, for some parents, it is not sufficient that their children acquire a British education from British trained teachers, but they want their children to learn and embody British ‘values’ (see chapter 6). Rebecca recalls how some parents want their children to learn the ‘accent’:

“They want them to go to universities in the UK. They want them to be familiar with the language they speak, the dialect, the accent even ... that is what they want. They sometimes want their children to speak and have the accent.”

Given the demand of a certain type of capital with respect to teachers and the segmented labour market. I enquired how the school addressed these concerns through its recruitment process.¹⁹

¹⁹ For this study’s purpose, I defined recruitment process starting with the school’s efforts in publicising their vacancies, to the processes involved in actual recruiting (interviews, attending fairs, etc.), and induction of new teachers to BLS and Kuwait for newcomers.

International Schools approach recruitment of expatriate teachers in various ways. Many attend International School recruitment fairs organised by International School institutions such as the Council of International Schools (CIS), or use of recruitment agencies, or post vacancies on their school's website or other outlets such as The Education Supplement (TES). All these approaches incur heavy costs, except for posting on the school's website, which however, relies on the school's symbolic capital in terms of its reputation, and social capital in terms of website traffic.

BLS adapted its recruiting structures across the years. Previously, the school's senior management did participate in recruiting fairs. However, it was deemed as inefficient because it was perceived that teachers who attended such fairs were those who were seeking experiences, or as "Wanderlust" (see chapter three). The decision was made by the principal and the school owner to abandon recruitment fairs for more cost-effective methods. Instead, the current main methods for recruiting prospective applicants with British qualifications are:

- Advertising in TES
- School's website
- "Job talks" in universities in the UK: according to the principal, this helps spread the word out there in the UK that NQTs would otherwise not know, such that there are accredited British schools overseas and ones that provide a QTS pathway for teachers because they are affiliated with institutions in the UK such as the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust
- Word of mouth (social capital: someone on the inside uses his position to help an acquaintance secure a job as soon as it becomes available)

Once an expatriate applicant applies to the school, the applicant's information goes through a winnowing process. The school has created a programme that is specific to the school. It will eliminate people who are not eligible for employment. This could be due to a non-match of qualifications, or characteristics that the school has found are not a good match for the school. The principal then considers factors such as housing arrangements for teachers. Married teachers are

housed in bigger flats than single teachers. These flats are located in different areas in Kuwait.

Transportation to and from school is also made available to expatriate teachers. Expatriate teachers may choose to rent a flat independently. As a fee-paying school, BLS would not be able to afford to hire teachers it could not house beyond the available housing. Local teachers do not receive such an allowance. Such an allowance contributes to the attractiveness of the package that an expatriate teacher receives. For teachers who have worked in London, the living space made available to them by BLS was an enhancement to what they had:

“I remember in the UK, I was renting a room in a house and it was a tiny room. When I was shown the accommodation, I thought to myself: this is total luxury compared to what I was coming from. I thought to myself: all this room just for me? The place had two bedrooms, two bathrooms and this massive living room. Everyone compares to what they have come from. All signs were good straight away.” Ryan

Ryan is cognisant that impressions of experiences are usually made in light of previous one. The implication that a decision of change, such as teaching overseas, would be either to maintain the same position in social space or improve it by acquiring more *capital*. In this case, for teachers, leaving the UK to teach overseas is equated with a gain in economic *capital*: tax-free salary, medical benefits, and a subsidised life style through provision of housing.

Furthermore, BLS hires subject-specific teachers, what John coined as ‘slot-in, slot-out’. This means, if they have one vacancy for chemistry and another for biology, BLS recruits two teachers, even if an applicant is capable of teaching both.

The remaining applicants are then dispatched to the different departments for further scrutiny of their CVs. Prospective teachers are then invited for a Skype interview with the school’s principal, the phase headteacher and year head (primary) or subject coordinator. During the Skype interview,

potential applicants are interviewed by a panel made up of the senior leaders at the school and the subject coordinator in the secondary school.

A key feature of the interview and decision-making process is the quick turnaround. This is common in International School practice, especially during recruitment fairs, where school managers and prospective teachers often have to make decisions within the recruitment fair period, which could be as short as 48 hours (Cox, 2012; Kellett, 2015). High stakes are involved in International School recruitment, not least of which is the increased competition over a limited resource. The fast pace of such a process and the types of questions asked during the interview reveal an economy of practice amongst the managers of BLS. They have embodied an understanding of the ‘rules of the game’ and are capable to make ‘reasonable’ decisions within the relatively short time of the recruitment process (that starts by processing an applicants CV).

However, interviewing in most cases takes place via Skype. Although John, through his ‘talk’ to NQTs emphasises the importance of taking a Skype interview as seriously as a face-to-face interview; they do pose certain disadvantages. Managers would have to rely on creating hypothetical situations to identify a match between the school’s values and that of the applicants. Managers would not be able to invite the applicant to give a sample lesson for example. The same is true for the applicant, they have to rely on their *habitus* to make reasonable choices of a school and management they have not seen.

Besides being knowledgeable of content, managers to discern if a candidate would be a good fit with the school in order to avoid high turnover due to possible culture shock (Roskell, 2013) or feeling de-skilled due to moving to a new school (Bailey, 2015b) . Managers reported that they look for the following characteristics: resilience and cultural sensitivity

A dictionary definition of resiliency is being able to adapt to new situations and not irked by new circumstances. Since most interviews are Skype interviews and not face-to-face, managers resort to providing scenarios where the candidate has to respond to. For example, Eric suggested an example of such a question:

“I will ask hypothetical scenario questions, things like: if you are cuing in the bank and they decided to close for prayers. Not that they do in Kuwait, but in the Middle East it does happen like in Saudi Arabia. Do you laugh that off or do you get frustrated? They might think, I am interviewing for a history teaching job, what has that got to do with anything. But, it has to do a lot with everything really.”

Resilience is not specific to International Schools, Day et al. (2006) have established that resilience is an important quality for teachers to maintain commitment to teaching throughout their career. However, resilience in an International School context is not only limited to working conditions but to all aspects of life: at work and outside work:

“Not only do we work with people, we live with the same people we work with. It is a very incestuous situation; I can’t be having people who will upset that. That takes a certain experience.” John.

Some managers pointed out that teachers who have done quite a bit of traveling, worked previously in International Schools (not grasshoppers though: teachers who seem to spend one year in different schools) are usually good indicators.

At BLS, managers are looking for UK trained teachers to be culturally sensitive. Nadine exemplifies such a scenario:

“I normally give scenarios when I am interviewing. I want to see if they are culturally sensitive. If they are well travelled. One question I ask: “You are a Muslim teacher, you don’t wear the hijab, I can see in your photograph you don’t wear the hijab, how would you feel if a student says to you, you are Muslim, why aren’t you wearing the hijab?” I want to see if they are culturally sensitive as well. What they know. What research they have done. A good

teacher researches fully. I will say to them: “What do you know about my school already?”

“What do you know about the country?” Have they done their homework effectively?”

Hill (2006) distinguishes between intercultural awareness and understanding. Intercultural awareness requires a superficial acknowledgement of other cultures, whereas intercultural understanding suggests a deeper, more embodied intercultural knowledge, which Hill argues should be the aim of International Schools for both its pupils and teaching staff. However, at BLS, cultural sensitivity does not measure up to a requirement of intercultural understanding, but teachers who demonstrate intercultural understanding.

In practice however, pupils perceive a different situation. The pupils then reveal that beneath the icy façade that teachers present (see 6.3.5), they perceive uncertainty on part of the teacher’s position in Kuwait, particularly those that are UK trained:

Jack: I think as well, either there are (these) default rules and opening up is a bit weird, but part of it is because we live here.

Lina: You mean in Kuwait?

Jack: Yes. There are certain things you cannot say, or teachers cannot respond to.

Lina: Can you help me understand a bit better?

Dima: I feel like teachers sometimes try to, for example I know this is an extreme case and it does not happen a lot, but if they would see a child with bruises, are they allowed to talk to their parents. They are not, I do not think so.

Jack: Certainly, there is always room to say, oh it might not be that and not investigate further for fear of certain...

Dima: I feel teachers here are scared of saying anything because of what they heard Kuwait might do or something?

Lina: So you mean because the teachers are often of different cultures of the students, they don't know...

Dima (interjects): ..what is appropriate or not.

Imran: All staff with the exception of the Arabic and Islamic teachers are UK accredited teachers and most of them have their teaching degrees from the UK and almost of them are British born citizens and they are accustomed to the format there. Coming here a lot of them are...

Dima: (interjects) ...reluctant...

Imran: Yeah, and a lot of them are not quite sure what the protocol is culturally and socially...

The pupils here imply that living in Kuwait has a direct impact on teacher behaviour, not entirely with respect to using rewards and sanctions. Rather, working in Kuwait, teachers, particularly UK trained teachers are portrayed as 'unsure' how to approach relationships with pupils because they are unsure of cultural and social appropriateness, or how Bourdieu would phrase it: 'fish out of the water' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). Which brings to the forefront that International Schools are not bounded fields within the physical boundaries of the school gates. The pupils can sense that their UK trained teachers have impressions of the external *fields* and hence maintain a safe distance.

7.1.2 Experiencing the interview

Cox (2012) and Kellet (2015) have both studied recruitment processes in International School recruiting fairs. Both have found that managers and teachers often have to make quick decisions. This seems to be the case at BLS as well. Some teachers spoke of their reasons for working at BLS was because it was the first schools to offer them a contract. Sometimes teachers were offered a contract during the interview time or shortly after:

“I was looking for a couple of things. I didn’t hone in on BLS only. I looked for what I felt what is good quality all over the world. But, BLS was one that responded to us. We had a couple of interviews, but BLS was the first to offer us a job, so, we accepted that.” Richard

Those who have had experience working in International Schools, seem to understand what is more “realistic”. For example, Josh, he had also applied to an International School in Holland and BLS. Given that BLS responded first, he felt he had to accept the offer because he knew that competition would be higher for the Holland school.

For teachers who have not had International School experience such as Tim, to work internationally posed a security risk for his family because it meant he has to give up his job in the UK for a job he would only receive a contract for after physically moving to the country. To work legally in Kuwait, a teacher must be present in the country (see chapter eight for the involvement of the state of Kuwait and issuing of work visas and permits). Tim spoke of how during the interview at a different International School he asked about assurances the school can offer him and his family and how that played a role in landing him a job at BLS:

I had one interview before coming to Kuwait and that was in Abu Dhabi. That was in London: a face-to-face interview. I thought, that was a positive interview. At the end they asked if I had questions for them. I asked them questions about my family. When I had feedback ... they didn’t think I would settle in the Middle East because I asked so many questions about my family. It gave them the impression that I wouldn’t settle. I apologised if I came across like that, but I will not apologise for, was asking those questions. To me, how they settled was crucial. If my family are settled, I can be the best I can. You will see the rewards at the other end.

For Tim, a parent and a teacher, ensuring that his family adjusted to their new circumstances was crucial for him to accept a teaching job overseas:

I wanted to know the children were safe. The children were looked after. To know that my wife will have everything she needs at home, and if she didn't have it yet, how will we go about getting it. Who was there to help us get that. Teaching is easy if you are settled.

At BLS, Tim's interview experience contrasted largely with that of the International School in Abu Dhabi:

Tim: I asked similar questions. But, the feedback I was getting from the interview put the questions or fears to one side. Things they mentioned in the meeting, they followed up quite quickly. I was given that Facebook group straight away. There was no down-time; the wheels were in motion quite quickly. I felt confident in my decision straight away. I had to give up my job without having the contract and visas. To me, that was huge.

Tim had two different experiences with two International Schools. However, both BLS and the other school responded quickly, even if it were negatively as was the case of the Abu Dhabi school. These two schools were looking for a certain matching profile. For Tim, being a teacher but also a parent means he was not relocating alone. The interview created the opportunity for him to assess the risk for making such a decision. Robert, who also has children, seemed more confident in moving to Kuwait because he was already employed in another International School in Europe. He did not recall a concern over relocating to Kuwait. It was noted previously that International School teachers who are parents attribute reasons to leaving their posting if their family or spouse is dissatisfied in the host country or living situation (Halicioglu, 2015; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Zilber, 2005).

Being in the country, could also help teachers understand the market of International Schools in that country, and speed up decision-making time. Mathew, who was already in Kuwait teaching at another school spoke of his experience of his face-face-face interview:

I did the interview with the school's principal, the headteacher at the time and the head of English at the time. They offered me a job on the spot. The principal gave me a tour of the school... I tried accepting the job straight away. But the principal told me to think about it. He said to reply to his email offer which I did. It was within 24 hours.

By embodying *habitus* of the International School, the school management are able to make 'economical' decisions and give quick responses. Based on a history of first-hand experience at BLS, they can discern from a brief interview and cultural *capital* of a possible match between the teacher and their school. Intuition, here is not an irrational, spontaneous decision as suggested by Cox (2012) and Kellett (2015) during the recruitment phase, but a reasonable one made due to a *habitus* shaped by the *field* of working in an International School.

The process so far reveals how BLS has streamlined the process of recruitment to maximise efficiency and cut costs. As a private, fee-paying and for-profit organisation seeking to improve its position in the *field*, managers use their own cultural *capital* they have accumulated through years of experience in working in a British school overseas, and particularly in Kuwait, in order to understand what works and what does not. BLS in particular, has developed its structures for helping teachers transition to the BLS, either to an enhanced position, or at least not worst off. Such attention to detail is important to for BLS to maintain its reputation amongst within the International School market.

7.1.3 Transition to BLS

After selecting a potential match with the customer (teacher or child), BLS has created structures that have become more formalised through the years for the customers to transition to BLS.

For expatriate teachers in particular, structures of readiness include meeting teachers at the airport by senior management, familiarising teachers with important landmarks important for a smoother transition to teaching overseas. I have already described the provision of housing as an essential feature of the package provided to International School teachers. BLS minds other minor details that make such a transition seem more welcoming: providing Wi-Fi, welcoming food in the flat pantry, orientation trips to local shopping outlets which are a feature of Gulf countries - that of enclosed shopping malls - containing familiar high street shops from the UK imported to Kuwait. Previous studies have shown that such structures, such as BLS induction can in fact be a deal breaker to some expatriate teachers transitioning to the International School *field* (Stirzaker, 2004). Sarah speaks of how indeed this structure has developed and has helped her feel less ‘homesick’:

They make sure they have sim cards so they have internet. They are very good at making sure that people have everything that they need to feel they are not far away from home, if that makes sense. That is the scary part; that Gosh everyone you know is really far away. I really think once you have internet you are fine because you can catch up with people on WhatsApp, you are on Facebook, you don't feel so alone.

BLS goes even further in terms of accommodating expatriate teachers through providing a buddy to newcomers to Kuwait as Sarah explains:

They are very good. Now they have a buddy system. A new teacher is paired up with an existing teacher for the first few weeks where they look after them and they make sure they are ok.

Despite seeking employment overseas, much of the induction of UK trained teachers was to create familiarity in the unfamiliar. *Habitus*, as Bourdieu explained, is durable, changing the field can

cause disruption. For UK teachers, moving to BLS involves a change of social space. Jenny, on the other hand, attributed to her well-adjusting to Kuwait, not to the induction and familiarity, but rather that she did not feel she fit in her own country, the UK. She explained that she was somewhat of a ‘social misfit’: she was not social, nor did she consume alcohol. In a family-oriented, dry country like Kuwait, Jenny felt more ‘in the water’ than back in the UK.

As suggested by Roskell (2013), adjusting to life in the country, seemed to the expatriate teachers, equally important as to adjusting to teaching in the school because it could impact teacher retention in the school.

One of the first experiences of expatriate teachers in Kuwait is that of the weather. Aesthetically, Kuwait lacks the greenery in the UK, and as a desert, it is considerably warmer. While the heat and climate did not seem to be a push factor to the teachers interviewed or surveyed, it did seem to contribute to aggravated teachers working in an International School in South East Asia (Roskell, 2013). The heat made it difficult for some expatriate teachers, particularly who have children, to experience the outdoors as they would back in their native countries. For example, Richard speaks of how he attempts to ensure his children are exposed to experiences they would have had if they were growing up back in their native Australia:

We work on the holistic child and all of that, but my kid could be in a football or in a cricket club on Saturdays. There would be a different social lifestyle. At the moment, it is ok. They are not suffering too much. I take them to Australia, they go fishing, they see their cousins. “Dad, why do we have to go back to Kuwait.” [makes a weeping sound] because I get paid twice as much as I would in Australia. Kind of the economic hit.”

As a Muslim country, Kuwait also imposes laws that may impact an expatriate’s lifestyle, such as consuming alcohol. For some expatriate teachers, while living in Kuwait means giving up some of their taken-for-granted lifestyle, temporarily (BLS offers generous holiday allowances). For

some expatriate teachers, there is a complete mismatch between their *habitus* and life in Kuwait that it could impact their pedagogic *habitus* as Jenny explains:

I think to be happy in a country is different than being happy at school. I know that a lot of people are not happy at school because they are not happy where they are. So, making sure you are settled in the place you are living and working, and getting support. I don't know how much the school can do about it. I know a lot of people last year were not comfortable. They have left already. Whereas I feel, I am not really bothered about where I am ... how much you miss certain things back home, and how you deal with the challenges in Kuwait. It is a little bit different than other countries.

The above excerpts show the importance of location to some expatriate teachers. However, local teachers did not seem to acknowledge these experiences. The local teachers have been in Kuwait for more than ten years and a possible explanation to not adding value to Kuwait's climate and social conditions, could be that they are themselves Muslims and adhere to the laws, and they are able to gain more economic *capital* by being employed at BLS rather than at another school in Kuwait, or in fact back in their respective countries (Egypt, Syria and Jordan). Whereas a UK trained teacher is a rare commodity, local teachers are not. From experience working at an International School in Kuwait, available teaching positions occupied by local teachers in International Schools in Kuwait are rare to come by because local teachers tend to stay longer than their counter expatriates. Indeed, what came across from this study is the importance of recruiting expatriate staff, senior management did not refer to recruitment of local teachers.

7.1.2 New pupil transition to BLS

While BLS seems to develop and adapt its structures to helping new expatriate teachers to Kuwait, it does not seem to provide similar structures to help new pupils transition to the school as

May suggested when she moved to BLS two years prior to the group interview took place from another International School in the UAE:

Lina: May, you have been here for two years. Have you found the transition socially easy or hard?

May: I think it was relatively easy [to make friends] because of the people, the students and year 12 last year. But less so on the school, they kind of just let me. There was no help or anything. Just make friends and do that. So it was kind of tough in the beginning but I was ok.

While May suggests she has found no support when she transitioned to BLS, Chris, Brad and Carol had opposite experiences:

Chris spoke of his children's transition from the UK to BLS where he teaches:

The transition has been very easy. I think that says a lot about the culture of the students that we have got here. They are amazingly welcoming to new students from wherever. My younger son, he has got friends from all over. When new students come, he feels an obligation to do what people did for him when he arrived. He had people who looked after him. He thinks: I need to do that. He feels that it is an important job that is given to him.

Brad and Carol describe their daughters' transition to the school being very smooth because the children already there were very welcoming:

Carol: During the parent teacher conference, every teacher made it a point to say how the girls were getting along, especially being the new kid in school. The teachers all said that they seemed to have a group of friends. They seemed happy and they are talking with the group. I don't know, they adapted so nicely.

Lina: Do you think it is the girls that adapted nicely or the school that helped them?

Carol: This is what Anne told me last year. She said: "Everybody wants to know where I am from. Everybody comes up to me and they want to talk to me." In the States, kids would have ignored her and not talked to her ... Yes, the kids they are friendly. Maybe because there are so many international students, and everybody was new at one point. They seem younger here too. In [US state], girls have started to put makeup and talk about boys. They have a dance they go to every three months and they get all prommed out for it at such a young age.

While Carol compared pupils at BLS to that of US, she was happy with the perceived 'innocence' of the girls at BLS. However, Brad suggested that the warm welcome was because the pupils at BLS are generally friendly, but rather that his daughters "look" different:

I really appreciate what she is saying. But, try to find our daughter from this picture. [he showed me a team photo on his cell phone. I could identify their daughter. Not only does she look like the Carol, she was the only white/blond-haired girl in the photo]. You can probably understand why she gets asked all these questions. She is the only blonde one. If they came in as brunettes, there wouldn't be the same excitement.

On the other hand, Fatima, a Muslim British mother of two did not have a similar positive experience when she moved her daughter to the school.

Right from the start, they put my daughter in an all-Arabic-speaking class. They asked for your nationality, and we put British. But I think because they looked at her name, they thought it was not an English name ... they thought it was an Arabic name. They put her in an Arabic class and she speaks English. She would come home and say: "Nobody speaks English in my class." She would go to Arabic class and she wouldn't understand anything... They put her in an Arabic speaking class as well.

The insinuation here is that parents sense discrimination according to colour of skin and race. This is not a generalisation or an assertion of racism, but preferential treatment of fair-skinned people is common in the social space, schools as spaces that reproduce distinctions in society, this does not come as a surprise.

7.2 Commercial capital: Marketing

BLS actively seeks to recruit teachers and pupils that have *capital* and *habitus* that matches that of the school. However, as an International School in Kuwait competing for resources: teachers and pupils, it has to ‘get its name out there’ and keeping it ‘there’ is as important as Richard suggests:

“To stay where we are; I would hazard a guess, we are at the top. You know, to stay at the top, you have to work just as hard as you did to get there, absolutely.”

‘Out there’ is the social space within which BLS exists in. The social space extends beyond the local geographical space of Kuwait, to places where potential teachers and partners exist. In this section, I describe and analyse the structures, particularly that used to accumulate and commercial and social *capital*. Recall that for Bourdieu, commercial *capital* of a firm is its sales power of its product. Drawing parallels in an International School that the product is the graduating pupil, however, I argue that the product is also its reputation and brand name that it has to promote.

Public relations (PR) have a vital role and function at BLS. Indeed, there is a dedicated group of staff at BLS who are responsible for the school’s PR. While the school management plays an active role in promoting the school and creating social networks (such as those with universities) to the school’s advantage. The PR team plays a more behind-the-scenes role. BLS as a business needs to distribute information about its products and services to current clients, who spread the name of the school through their social networks, and to potential teachers and parents.

The PR team at BLS acts as a liaison between the school, the academies and the local community in Kuwait. They prepare press releases of social, academic and extra-curricular events at BLS. They also maintain the Facebook page for the school that communicates latest news from the classrooms, notifications and recognitions of pupil achievements such as university acceptances abroad by current pupils. Such communications convey a message to the community of what *capital* is valuable to the school. BLS has played a role in securing places for its pupils in top universities, mainly the US, UK and Canada (see Figure 6.1).

By taking such roles on board, the PR expressed that this relieves the load of teachers. The only other study of the nature of the role in International Schools was by Bunnell (2005) who found among his sample, mostly managers performing the PR role, which was basically marketing. Similarly at BLS, PR was not involved in ‘customer satisfaction’.

At BLS, the PR staff are wary of ensuring that their press releases and photographs are in according to ministry regulations, particularly observing Islamic rules such as ensuring physical proximity of boys and girls in a photograph is within an acceptable distance. The PR staff at BLS are British nationals who have British university qualifications. To acquire such knowledge of Islamic and Kuwaiti culture requires an understanding of the cultural *field* in Kuwait which requires time. One of the current PR staff was at the time of the data collection a new employee being trained by the previous, now retired PR manager at BLS for 10 years. According to the retired PR manager, whom I interviewed, her physical presence to ensure a smooth handover is essential to maintain the continuity of the PR department of the school.

In contrast to schools participating in Bunnell’s (2005) study, BLS’s PR team also has an essential role of securing sponsors for events at BLS. BLS is a for-profit school that pays off most of its expenses through pupil’s fees. Events such as award ceremonies, theatrical events, school fairs, and others, attribute to the symbolic *capital* that BLS can accrue. However, such events are expensive and require funding. The PR team reach out to different corporations in Kuwait to act as sponsors for such events. The fact that the previous PR manager had been working for BLS for ten years has

helped establish firm connections with corporations. However, nothing comes for free: these corporations sometimes request that pupils pay a visit to their establishments: good PR to both, the school and the corporation. However, the PR team revealed that this puts them at a precarious situation because they might have to turn down the offer if it is a bad time during the school year at the risk of losing potential sponsors. While it is common practice for schools to request sponsors, it seems that schools who have high symbolic *capital* will probably be more successful at attracting sponsors than a school with less symbolic *capital*.

Bunnell (2005) purported that International Schools did not use their public relations to establish parent satisfaction or links with the local community, insinuating that International Schools, particularly the PR department, had a role to create networks with the local community in order to maintain the International School ethos of inclusivity. Bunnell (2005) lamented the fortress-like approach of International Schools in Europe. The seemingly physical and cultural separation has been noted in other International School studies (Caffyn, 2010; Jabal, 2013; Meyer, 2017). BLS was active in creating networks with the local community, not in a sense of promoting democracy and western liberal values, but more to promote itself and its brand name.

BLS is also member of four institutions within the wider International School field. It is member of CIS, the BSME, COBIS, and a German Government Partner School. While membership in these organisations allows access to shared “professional” experience through professional development seminars. What is most evident is the ability of the school to compete against other school members through sports, arts, music and others. Such events are published on the school’s official social media platform which goes back to support the school’s reputation and hence symbolic *capital*. It seems that ultimately all efforts are towards maintaining and improving the school’s reputation as a school that differs from its competitors in the Gulf state through these activities which are meant to add value to the pupils who attend the school.

BLS goes over and beyond to putting its name out there. This could be demonstrated by the school’s sponsorship of individual teachers who are willing to participate in events such as triathlons,

group skydiving, climbing Mt. Everest. All the teacher has to do is wear a school's t-shirt, take pictures and post them on various platforms. BLS hopes to convert this accumulated symbolic *capital* into brand recognition, particularly for expatriate teachers. John admits to investing a lot of economic *capital* to seek such distinction from other schools:

"We want to get our name forward. We spent a lot of money on our media and marketing that the other schools didn't."

Indeed, BLS spends a lot of money marketing the school. It also adapted its recruiting structures to save money on fairs and reinvests the money in creating attractive packages for expatriate teachers and induction structures that ensure a smooth transition. BLS has also gone through some restructuring internally in order to compete for a higher position in the social space of International Schools. In the next section, I discuss those internal structures.

7.3 Technical *capital*: structures

When BLS entered the field of International Schooling as a K-13 school, it was a new entrant. The owner's vision, according to John, was to challenge the schools already established in the *field*:

It was clear, it was evident that Mme Susan wanted to create a school that would initially challenge school X and Y as the leading school in Kuwait. I think it is fair to say that at that time... that [schools X and Y] were about equal in terms of their status. I was very interested in that challenge of how to break into a situation two already, well established schools and enter the competition ... Moreover, I was attracted to how she thought that might be done. How do you take on a school as well established as school Y?

Previously in this chapter, I explained how BLS evolved its process recruiting of teachers from the UK that match the school's values and ensuring they transition with as much familiarity as possible to prevent the rules and norms of the country - which fundamentally oppose that of the UK – from hindering their pedagogical work. Since its inception as a K-13 school, the school management aimed at bolstering the social and cultural *capital* amongst the staff. Equally important was the ability to maintain a high quality of teaching and learning that seems to be driven by accreditation. I present findings and discuss their implications according to the participants in this section.

7.3.1 Delegated management

School management viewed their staff as an important asset. Structures such as devolved budgets, professional learning communities, and daily morning briefings were aimed at “empowering” teachers:

We have devolved budgets. So history, geography and physics, year 1, year 2, regardless...The leaders of those subjects, bid for a budget, that budget is reviewed obviously. But you hand authority of expenditure to those people. That was a novel idea in Kuwait. [At School X], budgets were very tightly controlled at that time. Everything was centralised. Everything had to be carefully ordered. You were seeking approval from people all the time that might not necessarily be experts in the subject. That made it a very tedious process. Whereas here, trust and faith are given. People are empowered. That philosophy of empowerment works all the way through.” John

However, the bids still do go to senior management for final approval. Interviews with staff did not suggest that there was an issue with resourcing. Since many expatriate teachers were ordering from the UK, there was the issue of the time lapse between the time an order is put in and that of receiving the order; planning in advance is crucial.

Although it is suggested that people were ‘empowered’, teaching staff who are currently or at one point were subject coordinators felt they were sufficiently resourced, conversations about resources seemed to be followed with something along the lines of what Sarah describes as compiling evidence for approval:

“When year heads came along and we were in control of our own budget, things changed drastically. Each January you would apply for how much you would like. I would sit with all the catalogues from the UK. I would get an Excel sheet typed up with everything that I wanted, how much everything costs and estimated the freight costs. You have to make sure you add everything. Then I would get an overall total and I would submit that in January saying this is what I wanted. I attached all the spreadsheets with it to show that I have not waster money. Every year I would get it approved. They never said no, you need to cut back.”

It does seem that while subject coordinators are in “control”, the decentralisation entails bureaucratic work for the coordinators in the form of paperwork, which then requires approval. Once approved, orders for resources go through the school’s financial department and a procurement officer for ensuring an efficient and cost-effective process of ordering resources. This was recognised as such in the Penta 2013 accreditation report:

“Robust financial management ensure sufficiency of resources and value for money.”

‘Decentralisation’ at BLS is not restricted to department and subject budgets, but the creation of middle management positions as the school grows and expands. Many of which were recent (as of 2017-2018) such as the two assistant head teachers in the secondary department. Ryan, observes the paradox at BLS of decentralisation vs. centralisation:

On the one hand it is very centralised, there is a lot of top-down. On the other hand, there is a lot of decentralisation. There are a lot of middle managers all over the place.”

Ryan suggests that the type of decentralisation is indeed delegation of ‘tasks’ rather than delegation of ‘power’. Decentralisation, centralisation, and delegation: all are concepts closely related to distributed leadership. School leadership research and policy in the UK have been advocating that ‘successful’ leaders employ aspects of distributed leadership because of perceived benefits (Day et al., 2010; Leithwood et al., 2008; Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Stitzel Pareja, & Lewis, 2008). However, in practice results in a form of ‘pragmatic distribution’ that is reactionary in nature (MacBeath, 2009).

The evolving structures at BLS also seem to be more reactive to pupil growth and accreditation recommendations rather than the school’s own initiatives. Staff holding such new positions have expressed that much of their job descriptions and roles are being developed in situ. Eric describes such an instance:

“My role is evolving because this is the first year that this role has existed. The job specification was that my responsibility was teaching and learning. In the UK, you would call this a teaching and learning role. But, it is curriculum management, teaching and learning, and effectively I am going to push anything that is academic. So, by splitting the pastoral role away from me, the person who deals with behaviour will deal with behaviour.”

A consequence of such ambiguity has trickled down to the teaching staff who seem unsure of what the roles of the different middle managers are:

I am not sure how the middle phase leadership and the higher phase leadership work together.

I am not sure which things are shared and which things are entirely separate, because that is new this year. I think that is still being found it. Jenny

This comes in contradiction to the 2013 accreditation report which describes the roles and responsibilities of management as well established. If one considers BLS a firm, established know-how and job descriptions add to its technical capital and hence its weight in the field. Evidence from BLS suggests that such know-how remain in-flux.

The case of BLS shows that this type of delegation is type of pragmatic distributed leadership, where senior management create these middle management roles as they cease to be capable of managing all school matters (MacBeath, 2009). Most of the middle managers at BLS whom I interviewed, were promoted from within the school. Indeed, one of the appeals of International Schools to expat teachers is the ease of promotion as opposed to the UK. Promoting from within benefits BLS with respect to continuity management. Middle managers who were already at BLS already know the ‘system’: they know the rules of the game and what is at stake, as Eris suggests:

“Like you said, in my case, I was replacing someone who was leaving. That doesn’t actually happen very often. We often don’t employ people into leadership roles from outside the country very often. We tend to promote from within so that people who already know the job can get promoted. For instance, this year, everyone who has stepped up has been from within the school. It just makes things easier. We promote from within because people who understand the job will be able to begin straight away. They didn’t have that opportunity when I came, because of course, the number one and two were leaving. Only in a bigger subject, where there is a large number of teachers leaving, does that cause a problem. By bigger subject, I mean English or maths or science, there are eight or ten teachers. There is usually somebody ready to step up.”

7.3.2 Structures and culture for collaboration and support

Closely related to delegated leadership is teamwork. Common traditional conceptions of a school are divisions according to year groups and subjects. Ever since different disciplines have formed and fragmented, it has led to on the one hand deeper, more specialised, and on the other, teaching cultures become ‘balkanised’ (Hargreaves, 1994). At BLS, moving forward with their growth was to overcome the latter as John remarks:

“I was really interested in how the mechanics of ensuring teamwork; because I discovered when I worked in school X that different departments were very separate. They formed little cliques that often didn’t even talk to each other.”

Initially, BLS hosted staff social events, however, as the school staff got bigger in response to increasing pupil size, social events for staff were dropped. However, the first school’s principal initiated daily morning briefings where all BLS staff – teaching and non-teaching – met in the school’s hall where he addressed the staff with news highlights and other staff may share important school communications. This process is still observed to this day.

Structures are also created to ensure collaboration takes place. Such structures include the creation of a subject component coordinator. John explains the rationale:

“...whereby the head of Maths, what we call a component coordinator is responsible for Maths no matter where it is in the curriculum. So for example, if the physics team draw graphs, then who actually decides what the skill should be? What kind of graph? How should it be drawn? ... When a Physics teacher puts an examination or an assessment together, do they check the reading age of the English they are using in the assessment, so that the test is a test of Physics, and not a test of English. There is always a danger that they are using vocabulary that is beyond the reading age range of the people they are testing. Also, to bear in

mind that most of the children are second language learners. So, who is responsible for that? The head of English is responsible for that. Even though it is a physics test. By doing this ... it forces collaboration and cooperation across year groups and across different subject boundaries so that we are all working as one team.

Furthermore, the secondary phase was changed to commence at year six rather than year seven as in the UK.

...our different departments or phases don't coincide with the boundaries of the British curriculum key stages, deliberately. For example: our lower phase reception, year 1 and year 2. Our reception is early years foundation, years 1 and 2 are Key Stage 1, then year 3 is Key Stage 2. Years 4 and 5 are all Key Stage 2. Year 6 is, but it is still in the middle phase. They overlap. Why do they overlap? So, as to force colleagues to collaborate when a student moves from one-year group to the next, all of the records on the student, all the schemes of work on someone have to be part of a continuation. It forces people to collaborate with people outside of their department, outside their phase to ensure that there is a smooth continuation of the curriculum.”

In both structure changes, one of the justifications was to ‘force’ collaboration. The use of the verb ‘force’ implies an activity that does not happen organically or spontaneously. Organic collaboration entails grass-root movement resulting in professional (or teacher) learning communities (Stoll et al., 2005; Wenger & Snyder, 2000). Hargreaves (1994) suggests that despite best intentions of school leaders to distribute leadership, or create collaborative structures, due to work intensification, sometimes the result is ‘contrived collegiality’.

In general, the teaching staff, through the survey, and interviews have expressed satisfaction working with colleagues. Parents have suggested the ease of communication with teachers, made

through the Virtual Learning Environment, email, or through face-time in parent meetings, or in the case of the primary school, before and after school. Teaching staff (both UK trained, Arabic and Islamic Studies teachers) and management have described a general satisfaction with working with colleagues. Ryan succinctly summarises this as one of the advantages of working in an International School:

That is one of the things I like about being in an International School especially this one.

Teaching is nice and pretty straightforward because everyone is on board: the students are on board, you are on board and the parents are on board. Everyone wants to be a success.

Whereas in the state schools [UK], you have got this constant battle. The student might not be interested, the parent doesn't back you up. You get abused by the student and the parent may back up the student. There is this conflict. Whereas here, everyone's on board. It is very positive. I cannot remember the last time I had an issue with a parent. We have various parent consultations throughout the year ... It is a really positive experience. The parents just want to know two things: is my son doing well? Is he behaving well? And what is his grade and what he can do to improve. If the grade is low, what can be done to improve. So, they are on board. Very supportive.

However, with respect to collaboration, there was a contrasting theme to what managers described. Teachers have suggested they had less time to meet with other teachers beyond their team, and even with the time they have, it seems to be insufficient to share information necessary. This comes as a direct consequence of increasing size of the school and increasing workloads as the school management requires the teachers to meet accreditation requirements of improving all lessons to outstanding. Michael succinctly describes the impact of the increase in school size and geographical expansion on the collaboration efforts:

We used to have a system where the SCs met more regularly with the head teacher. That was more effective. A group input is always going to be more beneficial than individual. I wish we had more of the collective discussion. They are also becoming rare. I think that is becoming a real issue ... [we] are geographically spread out. When there were less classes, you had all classes: maths, sciences and English all on the same floor. There were always people around. That was a lot more productive I felt. If you wanted to chat about a class, you can ... Now, unless you make an effort to go and see someone, there is not that much opportunity to get together or even come across each other. You are more and more isolated within your own team.

Michael then describes the ramifications of the school's expansion on the potential for pedagogical dialogue:

You have your own team, that is fairly ok. I think you can survive without talking to maths or English. But I think when you are able to do that, that would give a better, overall experience to students. I think if we can remind them this is what happens in chemistry and this is what happens in maths, it helps the students. Some students would learn this by themselves. But for some students, this would be useful to cross-reference. Unless you know what they are doing in English and Maths, you are missing out on that.

This contrasts with John's justification of the subject component coordinator. Michael sees the merit of different disciplines communicating and learning from one another, but there is no time. The fact that teachers are geographically spaced out hinders meaningful collaboration.

Nadine, was probably one of the few managers who acknowledged the impact of the school increasing in size on time:

Time is an issue. I don't think it has anything to do with being an International School. It is just a big school.

While Michael acknowledges the issue of time, he explains that such time if created for collaboration would be constructive for teaching and learning. Indeed, Michael suggests that teachers now spend less time collaborating on pedagogy and curricular matters:

"Yes, definitely. Although it takes time, I think it is time well spent. Trying to develop a whole school as an organic body, I think it is one of the essential things to do. I don't think we have had enough. The times we have had it, it has been really positive, really constructive. For your own subject, you learn about how people do things in different subjects. I think, to not tap into that collective experience or collective wisdom, either you are very sure that what you are doing is 100% right or you are wasting an opportunity. I think you can learn a lot from subject head experience. People here have taught in a lot of schools and have a lot of experience. I don't know why they have not taken more notice of their input."

This excerpt comes as a complete contradiction to what John had suggested. In fact, such a perception of loss of time not only is sensed by teachers as less time to collaborate with other staff, but additionally on social relationships and friendships:

"Yes, but socially, to chat. To sit and have time to chat with colleagues, not professional. There is not enough time. The staffroom is too far. So, we all stay in our little classrooms. We never really have the time to go across." Jessica

Amongst secondary teaching staff, there seems to be a strong affiliation to subject teams rather than cross-curricular. This contradicts efforts to 'force' collaboration amongst teachers. No

other study pertaining to International Schools described the nature of collaborations amongst teachers to draw comparisons. However, in the US and UK where leadership theories that encourage leaders to create a culture where collegiality amongst staff promotes collaboration that adds value to teaching and learning (Day et al., 2010; Harris & Jones, 2017; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2008; Muijs & Harris, 2006; Stoll et al., 2005). However, this has not been met without scepticism, particularly as Hargreaves warned that in some cases, collegiality is contrived rather than authentic (Hargreaves, 2000). Muijs and Harris (2006) in their study on teacher leadership in the UK have concluded that time can be a major impediment to teacher leadership and collaboration. At BLS, both time and size of the school act as impediments to teacher collaboration.

7.3.3 Continuity management becomes a burden

As shown in chapter six, and previously in chapter three, International Schools (BLS included) have a high turnover of staff. Given that for an organisation, its weight in the field is determined by its accumulated capital, a high turnover in staff could hinder an organisation's growth. This is particularly so because new teachers need to be trained, leaving teachers may have 'tacit' know-how particular to the school that the school has not capitalised on. All of which is costly to the school. Knowledge continuity management KCM, therefore is ensuring that turnover is not detrimental to the organisation. Knowledge continuity management is defined as:

“the efficient and effective transfer of critical operational knowledge - both explicit and tacit, both individual and institutional - from transferring, resigning, terminating, or retiring employees to their successors.” (Beazley et al., 2002, pp. xiv–xv)

For schools, Kelly (2004) notes that they can improve KCM through first establishing what type of capital is of most value to the school. It can then ensure that structures are in place to minimise wasting time on practices that are not of value for the school. At BLS, the most valued

capital identified in chapter six is cultural capital in the form of a British education by British trained teachers. I have discussed in chapter six how parents have felt that teacher turnover does indeed have a detrimental effect on the teaching in learning. In this section, I describe the structures in place to ensure knowledge continuity management, followed by a discussion of the findings.

At BLS, the main structures for KCM are the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), School Information Management System (SIMS), and schemes of work. The VLE itself seemed like a tool that was viewed as useful to expatriate teachers at BLS, new and old, to ensure continuity management. I make the distinction of expatriate teachers, since teachers teaching ministry Arabic and Islamic Studies have to use a prescribed curriculum and write their lesson plans manually in a book that ministry inspectors inspect regularly. As Josh clarifies the advantages of the VLE:

A big one is the VLE. I have been trying to make it our one-stop-shot for everything. All resources are linked to it. The school has recently changed their mind and decided they don't like it. It works really well for us. It works because not only is everything there, but, it is very easy for teachers to add their take on something. There are areas on it that we can recommend resources. We can share stuff. We can look at different teaching strategies for a particular lesson. It is a very flexible tool that we can use. Not only is it really everything that you need, other than actual physical, paper resources, to start teaching straight away. You've also got the ability to tailor it yourself and start a discussion with it. You can make it useful for everybody's teaching style, as opposed to a formal, paper lesson plan which is rigid and immovable. Which is what the school wants me to do, and I desperately don't.

Advantages of using the VLE as Josh notes are the flexibility of use. The VLE seems to be used as a resource centre. It has also been used by Josh's subject department as a virtual space for pedagogical dialogue; an impromptu space for a teacher learning community:

That is why, on the VLE, my teachers will come up with their own means to do it for each individual student. For each year group course, we have a hidden forum where we discuss things. It is there: it is differentiation and lesson delivery ideas. They can upload specific resources: you can use this for this specific student and it either worked or didn't work. Any suggestions on this? That is a resource that we can come back to year on year and tailor these things.

Whilst for Josh, the VLE seems like the ultimate flexible tool for teachers currently at BLS, it seems that the school, as a reaction to the latest inspection report are being asked by senior management to formalise all lesson plans. Many have suggested that this decision has led to work intensification, particularly since it comes with an increase in teaching demands due to increasing pupil numbers as the school keeps adding new classes to its lower years. Michael explains how while the school might have good intentions, the consequences of increasing workloads may be detrimental for the school:

Changes in policies and ways the school wants things done. I think they have good basis; I am just not sure the way they had been done has been helpful. The big thing now is your schemes of work: the plan for your teaching and how it is going to be done. How detailed that is. How well resourced that is. That is an ongoing task for teachers.

We have been fortunate because I was a course developer. Some people have been trying to renew their course and they have said: well you have got a year to get all that done for your schemes of work, your lessons. That is an unachievable task. Just completely unrealistic. That has put a real burden on a few teachers. They will come to a point where they will think: Ok, this isn't worth it anymore. This is a task that is taking too much of my time. It is not making me enjoy my job anymore.

Michael links work satisfaction to work intensification. It is well-documented that teachers who are satisfied with their job, teach more effectively and suffer less burnout (Darling-hammond, 2003; Day, 2008; Rhodes, Nevill, & Allan, 2004). Mathew echoes what Michael suggested but adds that a school such as BLS is seeking symbolic recognition rather than improving teaching and learning:

I was in some meeting with the curriculum development group where all subject coordinators meet. They were all saying we have to do an individual lesson plan for every lesson, which is very time-consuming. The reason was: we have inspections and we were rating outstanding for everything but teaching and learning was good with elements of outstanding. So, they want to prepare for the next inspection. They are aiming for outstanding for teaching and learning. They are trying to put things in place. So, we are like, great, you are trying to get a lesson plan for every lesson, but, nobody really does that. After the meeting, every SC emailed saying this is a really bad idea for these reasons.

My thoughts are, you are doing this because you want something to show. You are not doing this to improve teaching and learning. You are not doing it to benefit students. You are not doing it to benefit teachers. It is there for inspection. I think you are playing the system. You are doing it for a score. And, there are other things like that.

This discussion reveals more about the power structure in the school. Teachers, such as Michael and Mathew argue that schemes of work would not be beneficial to their pedagogic work, but rather to create an image

Looking at the document itself to contextualise what some teachers have referred to, the 2017 inspection report suggests the following aspects of schooling at BLS need improving:

1. *Continue to raise the quality of teaching throughout the school to that of the best, including:*
 - a. *setting high and appropriate challenge for all students*
 - b. *questioning to promote thinking skills*
2. *Review the need for standardised assessments at the beginning of key phases to assist in target setting and raising student attainment.*
3. *Devise and implement a vision and strategy for the use of digital technology across the whole school.*

Eric discusses at length the rationale for meeting such expectations, from management's perspective and in light of KCM:

The way it works in the UK is almost identical to what we are doing. I would say what we are doing to do is one stage better. In the UK, there is no expectation that schemes of work have to be standardised, they just need to be in place. So, if an Ofsted inspector, or an inspector, or independent schools, doesn't matter. If they want to see a scheme of work, they should be able to open a folder, whether it is a paper folder or an electronic folder on a computer; look at whatever date they are going to observe and that should tally with whatever they are going to see in class.

Teachers at BLS are UK-trained. The implication by Eric's statement suggests that it follows if teachers are UK trained, they would already be accustomed to such practice of writing schemes of work. However, Eric continues how schemes of work are of even more value at a British school overseas:

We are expecting slightly more than that. In addition to the detailed scheme of work, saying what the topic is, what the lesson will include, we want ours almost to the point that the inspector can anticipate how the lesson would look like, they can see enough detail that they would almost be able to teach the lesson themselves just from what is there. The reason we want to go to that level of detail is that, we do have teachers that join us from the UK, they are new to the school and they are new to Kuwait. Our duty is to make the preparation of each lesson as easy as possibly can be so that they can concentrate on the very real task of individualising the learning for each student. They shouldn't have to think what am I doing next week? That should be there. Teachers should be thinking: how am I going to do it best?

Eric essentially understands that such documentation is a conversion of teacher's tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge that is documented and will demonstrate to inspectors that indeed their lessons are outstanding:

That is a risk if an observation could be, let us face it, an inspection could be just ten minutes: they will walk in, they will look at the lesson plan, they will see ten-minute of the lesson, if that lesson plan didn't include what you are doing well, and you didn't shout about it in that lesson plan, then, they might just assume that is a standard lesson. We are really trying to shove it in people's faces. It is sad that we have to jump through those hoops. I also don't want my outstanding teachers to not be recognised because they didn't have it on some paperwork thing. If in that CPD we show them how to show us, then teachers, like all adults, will resent the idea that they should do the same thing twice. We are going to try to show them shortcuts into how they can do that. If they can show us they know what they need to show us, we can relax, and they can be comfortable. They will be respected for what they do.

While Eric makes the case for the potential use of schemes of work for continuity management. But what it does not address, is the need for the schemes of work to be tailored each year to different pupils and teachers as well who have different teaching styles.

It is a precarious situation for a school, on the one hand, to protect the quality of its service, it has to ensure structures are there to prevent loss of information, whilst facing possible dissent amongst staff.

From a commercial, knowledge-based institution, Beazely et al. (2002) have advocated that knowledge continuity management not only saves time and knowledge for a firm, it also provides the firm with a competitive advantage because of its efficiency and productivity. According to Beazely et al. a KCM structure needs to contain information that is job-specific, easily accessed and understood to allow the transfer to job-related competencies. They also suggest that a firm would benefit from having a CM officer, who gets a reward (monetary or other) for taking on this responsibility.

However, for a school, Kelly (2004) argues that CM should be every teachers job: a contractual obligation. At BLS, there seems to be an over-reliance on the knowledge and skills (cultural and technical *capital*) of the middle manager, which was why, in most cases, promotions occur from within. It is advantageous to promote from within due to a less disruptive continuity process. However, it places a large emphasis on the. The following excerpt with Michael illustrates this:

The problem I see with this school and other schools is there is a lack of institutional memory. You have teachers who move on from year to year. Unless things are really organised: when we first came, no one could find the end of year's report and the examination results. We were trying to organise classes for the following year and there was not enough basis to base it upon.

Things like that makes you feel like this has not been set up well. That gave for a bad start. I would assume that schools that run year on year would have systems in place that

would not allow that to happen. That lack of organisation made me a little more anxious than I would have. I did not know if what I was doing is what I should be doing. No one was there to guide me. There are things that fall between the gaps in the system.

Lina: Is this better now? Are there systems in place now to ensure a smoother transition for example if you leave or the current subject coordinator leaves?

Michael: I think it is better. However, I still think it depends on the coordinator at the time. I still think that is one of the weak points. I think, you can say, yes, I have left everything. If someone comes in September, if you are very conscientious and say this is where you find this, and this is where you find this and you have briefed your team; I am afraid it would still be somewhat of a steep learning curve coupled with everything else you have got to do and things you have to deal with. There is an information overload at the start and if you are trying to find organisational things from the previous year, then that would set you back a little.

Michael notes the lack of ‘institutional memory’ as an inherent issue with BLS. In hindsight, I should have asked Michael what he meant by institutional memory because it could have several meanings. By reading his excerpt, I could understand what he meant as being data about pupils germane to teaching and learning such as exam results. What Michael has said is informed by his own cultural capital embodied through his education and work experience. Indeed, ‘institutional’ (also used interchangeably with ‘organisational’) ‘memory’ is often cited as an essential mechanism required by schools and commercial businesses alike as a way to protect against ‘corporate amnesia’ and furthermore enhance the learning of the organisation (Beazley et al., 2002; Senge, 1992). According to Senge (1992), institutional memory converting knowledge that people have (implicit and tacit) into mechanisms that the organisation can claim ownership of. In schools, institutional memory aimed at improving performance accumulates knowledge pertaining to classroom practices (Kelly, 2004, p. 615). In one other study by James and Sheppard (2014), a self-perpetuating board

helped maintain the institutional memory of International Schools, which seems to imbue people with the importance of withholding the mechanisms of an organisation, in contrast to what Senge purports.

Kelly (2004) also notes that a school should remove bureaucratic obstacles that may hinder teacher collaboration to create a successful CM plan. For BLS, there is evidence of a lack of time, and physical space to meet and collaborate. The schemes of work is a personal effort. Teachers interviewed have not bought-in to its use as a tool for continuity management. However, teachers who do buy into this scheme, receive symbolic rewards through ‘respect’ and their appraisal will probably ensure a good recommendation when they seek to secure a new job as John explains:

When we do our references, because of our 65 inspectors, we are able to put on our references that such and such a teacher has been monitored by an approved school inspector and found to be an outstanding/good/satisfactory/unsatisfactory teacher. We put it as a statement. Our references are very powerful.

We as a school do not complete templates of other companies. We produce confidential references that we hold in a database that we never change; they stay on record. We have never, ever had a company request more information about a person that is not on that person. They are specific and contain all information that an employer is looking for in an employee. That saves an awful amount of time of doing templates and filling in forms. We always finish them with the clause: “We know of no reason why this person should not work with children or other vulnerable people.” As a consequence, a reference from us is a really valuable thing. If you worked at our school, more or less, any other school will accept you.

The differing stances between teachers and managers on the importance of standardising schemes of work is a consequence of spaces occupied by the respective parties: teachers lower than the managers, and inspectors higher still. The dominant party can enforce its will upon the dominated

agents. The demand for evidence is part and parcel of changing times, Eric notes that most resistance might come from people who have been teaching for a long time:

But some people who have been doing that for thirty years will take it for granted. They won't realise that, that is a skill that is something you should put on a sheet. The pushback is: "Oh, but I shouldn't need to improve myself." Well, unfortunately, people are going to come in and judge you, parents are going to judge you, if you are not good at articulating why this is good, it is almost like it is not good.

The paradox here seems that while teachers sought to teach internationally as a way for a better work-life balance, recently, with International Schools competing for distinction, bureaucracy in the form of teacher appraisals to meet BSO standards has seemed to intensify workloads for International School teachers.

7.3.3 Curricular and technological structures

In this 'knowledge age' is the pervasiveness of technology in our everyday lives. While technology has become cheaper, it still requires a substantial economic investment for schools to create and implement structures that support the use of technology as a daily basis.

To seek distinction, BLS management also introduced structures that made it amongst the first in Kuwait to enter the twenty first century. This is especially with respect to technology. The secondary school implements a 'Bring Your Own Device' BYOD policy, where pupils have to bring in their own laptops to school on a daily basis. Pupils, parents and teachers have access to the VLE which provides relevant information to each stakeholder. To support the VLE, as of 2003, the school provides school-wide Wi-Fi access to all its staff and pupils. The move to BYOD and full-school Wi-Fi was a 'risk that the school management took. Initially, some parents were sceptical of the success of implementing such technology and withdrew their children from the school. However, it was met

by assuring that BLS was attracting a certain clientele, one that bought into this type of distinction and matched the school's values.

And also taking the risk of introducing even though there were a group of parents who said you are spoiling our children's education, taking risks, we are moving them to school X. And they did ... Oh my God how they have come to regret that. Who can think of a school that children do not use I-pads, laptops, devices, wifi and VLE's? Now, if you suggest a school that does not have all those things you would be considered crazy.

This form of risk-taking ensured that the type of clients who had remained bought into the type of service that BLS was proposing at the time. At the time, BLS sought to differentiate itself from its competitors by creating a niche for itself in the market: it was going to be the first school to deliver a school in Kuwait to the 21st century.

While John identified this form of distinction as risk-taking, Bourdieu (2005) explains this is as an aggressive strategy by a newcomer to the *field* who find a niche in the market and occupy it first. Furthermore, the school's worth as a firm is also measured by its management's cultural *capital*. The owner may have the economic capital, but it is the management that have the cultural *capital* to understand the *fields* rules and norms and secure more *capital* for the firm.

7.4 School departures

Ultimately, the purpose of BLS is to prepare pupils to go to university. This section discusses the importance of the sixth form and structures that are in place to ensure the school maintains its reputation as a school that produces good results. I will also discuss these from the point of view of the pupils and the parents.

7.4.1 Mature students exit

Another restructuring approach that BLS was adopted was to ensure that its pupils were more mature at exit level. Some schools in Kuwait allow pupils to fast-track their IGCSE courses in year 10

and then take AS levels in years 11 and 12, to graduate at the age of 17. Whilst at BLS the change was such that pupils would only be able to do AS at year 12 and then A level at year 13. Again, that meant that BLS lost some of its pupils to other schools. John argued that such a proposal ensured that pupils graduating from school are more mature, research showing that less mature pupils drop out early, and by year 13, pupils would have had a longer opportunity to accumulate *capital* through engaging in extra-curricular activities. While John acknowledged that this move required convincing parents, which they did through publishing the prestigious university pupil destination. This was described succinctly in the school's website:

“The Sixth Form at BLS is the route to the most prestigious Ivy League (USA) and Russell Group (UK) universities such as Harvard, Cambridge and Oxford. These universities require a minimum entrance standard of four grade A or A subjects at A Level. Additionally, students are best served at interview by holding a portfolio of extracurricular achievements. For Kuwaiti students targeting such universities, the Sixth Form is the ideal platform.”*

This message seems to target to Kuwaiti pupils. Considering the school's demographic, there is a drop of Kuwaiti pupils from year 11 to sixth form (look at figure 6.2 and 6.3). For Kuwaiti pupils seeking the 'Merit scholarship' awarded by their government, the minimum requirement are passes for 2 AS levels and six IGCSEs (minimum five Cs and one D). This meant that many of the Kuwaiti pupils would be incentivised to leaving a British-style school at year 11, particularly if an Ivy league or Russell Group university is not 'for the likes of us' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 55). However, such a decision ultimately meant that BLS, while gaining symbolic *capital* in ensuring that the pupils graduating do end up in prestigious universities (see figure 6.1), BLS was risking losing economic *capital*. However, this was remedied by the creation of the 'night school' as Nadine explains:

“The reputation gets out there. I have seen that in Kuwait, because, night school, in the first year was very slow off the ground. But, the students that came to my night school went around and talked to other students and the next year, it doubled. The numbers doubled because everyone was like: “Ms Nadine and the night school are really great.” This year, the same thing has happened. We are lucky to have students this year because a lot of the students rang up the night school coordinator to say: “We will only come if Ms Nadine is teaching this year.” [laughs] Thankfully, they still signed up. Reputation in a small country like Kuwait is a big factor.”

The school’s website explains that the night school caters for pupils who are seeking to gain AS levels but not sign up for the sixth form. It was alluded to that academic achievement was linked to nationality and parenting. (see chapter six). An interpretation of such an arrangement is that while it maintains the school’s symbolic *capital* through the establishment of the night school. It also avoids it losing much of the economic capital it would have risked had there been no night school. Additionally, teachers who sign up for this programme are able to secure extra cash on top of their salary.

7.4.2 Sixth form ethos

For a lot of pupils at BLS, unlike other International School conceptualisations of the global nomad child, many were born in Kuwait (Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti), or have been living there with their families since they were children. During the focus interview, the six year 13 pupils, portrayed a satisfaction with the sixth form environment as the following exchange exemplifies:

Lina: *Lara and May you have transitioned to BLS not long ago but for the rest of you who have been here for about 15 years...*

Dima: *yeah, I am scared*

Lina: *Do you feel scared or anxious or confident?*

Imran: *On a personal level, it is bittersweet. On one level, BLS is the only academic community I have been a part of. Again, I guess it natural to be anxious about what it is going to be like, because a change from school to university will be a whole new setting. But equally, it is saddening to leave Kuwait because I was born here, but it is kind of exciting. In the sixth form, it is usually because of the people here, there is excitement about who is going where, and the excitement about what kind of activities people are going to do. There is a buzz surrounding that whole thing. That makes you excited about what is to come.*

Dima: *Most of the people in the sixth form I have known for a long time...*

Jack: *yeah, I am sick of you*

Dima: *...And most of my friends are in this school scares me*

Ahmed: *you try to stay in contact. We make groups on WhatsApp*

Dima: *It never works.*

Ahmed: *It never works because someone always has to ruin it.*

Lina: *How do you know it does not work?*

Lara: *People who have left...*

Dima: *we do not talk to them*

Lara: *we have them on our groups on WhatsApp but we never really talk on that group...*

Ahmed: *Because we are very happy with each other. For example, for me last year, I felt like I was on the side, but I feel this year I felt very happy to be with them. Like everyone in this room I felt like really happy to be able to talk to them*

For the pupils, the friendships forged throughout the schooling experience and particularly in sixth form was highly valuable. The pupils acknowledge a move to university is inevitable which could mean losing the friendships they have forged. They have embodied the fear of the unknown and unfamiliar to some extent and in one survey follow-up, one pupil has suggested that BLS needs to be

more proactive with respect to ensuring pupils have a smoother transition to university on a social level. While other research on International Schools has often examined the impact of high pupil turnover on the well-being of pupils (Hacohen, 2012), there has been no question of the impact a transition of pupils to universities abroad, particularly local pupils in an International School, where many pupils will stay in the same school for most of their schooling years.

7.4.3 Transition to university

Many International Schools' market themselves as a pathway to successfully gain access to universities, especially in the US and the UK. As a parent, Malik suggests, he feels that the school lacks a specialised career counsellor that can help their children find a match:

That is what I told BLS; I have brought it up in meetings before. They should have a proper career counselling team at this level. They should start from IG level. To talk to them about different professions and the options in detail ... To help expose the children to future career possibilities.

Latifa goes on to explain that as parents, they do not have the sufficient cultural *capital* that a career counsellor would have in showing the space of possibilities for pupils:

There are so many fields and so many ways to get to it. Students and their parents are not aware of the different options. The main thing is to create awareness. If you don't know, later you might say: Oh, I could have done that. It would save people a lot of time and trouble. If the school in year 10 when they decide on what subjects they take, they can have a tutorial or a meeting about, if you want to become an astronaut, how to go about it. The information should be available on that point. If I want to be an astronaut, where do I start from? Where do I not waste my time on?

Time is of essence. A career counsellor would have the appropriate cultural capital it seems to ensure a match for pupils and university. Latifa believes that children should be free to choose any degree at the university level and be successful. For Latifa, there is no sense of ‘this is not for us’ which could be related to the economic capital she has similar to middle classes in the UK (Davey, 2012; Reay, Davies, David, & Ball, 2001). Latifa acknowledges that some teachers are willing to help, but...

”In BLS, ok, there are teachers, and you are free to go and talk to. But, they would just be doing you a favour.”

Indeed, this sentiment of ‘doing them a favour’ was shared by the sixth form pupils I interviewed:

Lara: I just want to add that at some point this year specifically with the university hassle and applying. I felt I was quite stressed and I could have used some help of a counsellor actually. The idea of a counsellor, I know is not very common in British schools, but in American schools...

Dima: yeah...in general

Lara: No, no, no, no, some American schools have counsellors in Kuwait. I do believe that this idea is helpful because it is someone that maybe you do not want to really feel like talking to someone at home. Like your parents after all you are going to have to discuss it with them. At first, you need to clear your mind and have a set idea of what you need to think about and what you need to in terms of if it is a stressful workload or so. I felt like this year, Dr Adam helped a lot with university applications and that stressful period of this year in this school. But I would rather have had someone who that was there job rather than...

Dima: I agree

Jack: Dr Adam is not trained for that and he has soooo..

Dima: *he is busy with everything else*

Jack: *when you do need that kind of help in talking to him, you feel like taking from his time...*

Dima: *... you feel that you are bothering him*

Since many of the pupils at an International School have such varied destinations of universities in different countries, each country needs knowledge of their unique procedures and requirements. As an International School that aims at helping pupils gain access to universities worldwide, such a service to the clients, pupils and parents, as to career counselling is already provided by many International Schools, and recently, a report has suggested that career counselling is noted amongst one the essential features of an International Schools (ISC Research, 2018).

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I focused on BLS as a firm as the unit of analysis, the structures in place to achieve a competitive advantage and participants experiences given they occupy varied positions in the social space within the school based on the amount of *capital* they possess. I analysed what were the configurations of *capital* that were of value to the school and the objective structures that were in place to allow the school to secure an advanced position in the field of International Schools in Kuwait.

BLS essentially has learned from the experience of its own managers at other International Schools, particularly in Kuwait, and an understanding of the tastes of their target consumer, what sort of product they should aim at providing. Hence, most of the structures it developed, such as recruiting, which involve fast making decisions, an embodiment of the *field* manifesting itself in a *habitus* that aids managers in making reasonable decisions, seemingly on the spot. Additionally, the *habitus* of the school owner and manager structure the *field*, for example, the owner's belief that pupil's benefit from starting secondary school at year 6 rather than year 7 as in the UK.

Much of this chapter disclosed a disconnect between subjective experience and stances of teachers (particularly expatriate teachers) and those of managers with respect to the objective structures in place to create a culture where teachers are empowered, collaborate and form teacher learning communities rather than cliques. This disconnect does not come as a surprising finding given the spaces occupied by teachers and managers within the school. BLS managers talk the talk, but the teachers do not feel empowered. However, in this study, some teachers understand the rules of the game, and hence, play accordingly. This seems to be a more palpable form of symbolic violence due to the submission of participants to the symbolic power attributed to decision-makers.

Finally, BLS provides structures to allow its pupil's access to universities worldwide. This is through key roles within the school, such as the examination officer who ensures external examinations are run successfully, and through the sixth form year head who liaises university visits and communicates to pupils means to successfully apply to universities. Pupils and some parents have expressed that often they feel these structures are inadequate, particularly since the year head seems to be overwhelmed and does not specialise in career counselling as such.

Based on the findings and discussion in chapters six and seven, Figure 7.1 depicts a map of the objective relations of stakeholders of BLS. Being a native English speaker and UK-trained is valued highly as cultural *capital*. Families, the owner, and the transnational company that has come to be in partnership with BLS are viewed as holders of higher economic capitals than UK-trained teachers and school leaders. Furthermore, Kuwaiti families and families of diplomats are viewed as having generally more economic *capital*, since Kuwaiti families benefit from the Kuwaiti rentier state, and diplomats from their elevated symbolic status.

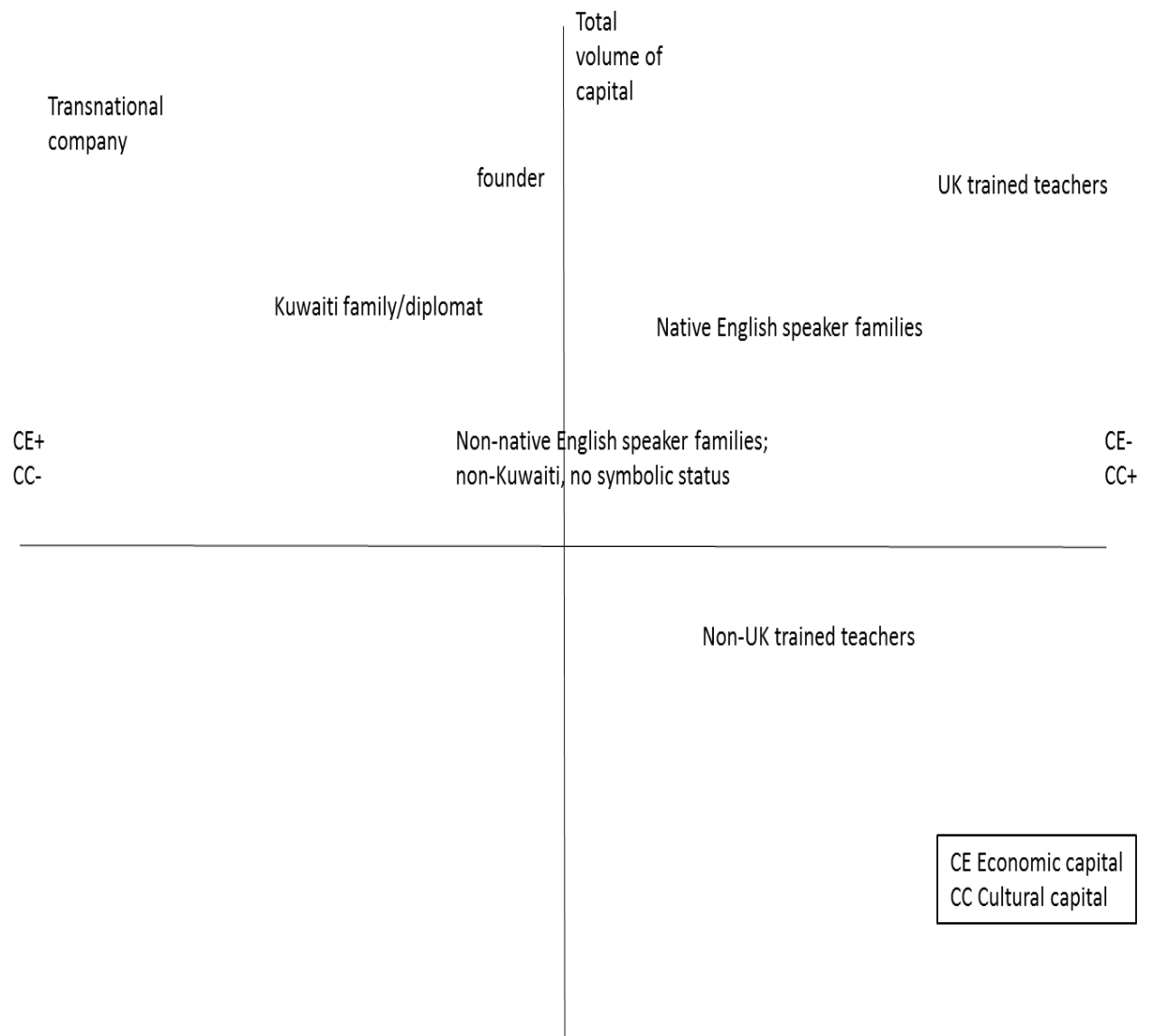


Figure 7.1 Map of relative configuration of capital of stakeholders at BLS

Chapter 8 The *field* of power within and outside of BLS

Synopsis

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first depicts the *field* of power within the firm as represented by hierarchical structures and the type of *capital* possessed by the managerial staff (Bourdieu, 2005b, p. 205). The second depicts the position of the school as a firm within the wider context of *fields* of power external to the school.

8.0 Introduction

“If the strategies of firms (most notably with regard to prices) depend on the positions they occupy within the structure of the field, they depend also on the structure of power positions constitutive of the internal governance of the firm or, more exactly, on the (socially constituted) dispositions of the directors [*dirigeants*] acting under the constraint of the field of power within the firm and of the field of the firm as a whole (which may be characterized in terms of indices such as the hierarchical composition of the labour force, the educational and, in particular, scientific capital of the managerial staff, the degree of bureaucratic differentiation, the weight of the trade unions, etc.).” (Bourdieu, 2005b, p. 205)

According to Bourdieu (2005), a firm’s strategy to maintain or improve its position in the *field* depends is related to the internal structures of power within the firm and the dispositions of the firm directors. Based on the assumption that a for-profit school in effect performs similar functions to a commercial firm, I analyse the internal structure of power at BLS based on analysis of interview data.²⁰

Ultimately, the *field* of International Schooling is a dominated field. Hence, strategies employed by the school and capital of value within the field, are restricted by dominant fields of

²⁰ I use the same pseudonyms introduced in chapter five and reintroduced in 6.0 for interviewees.

power. These are namely the state of Kuwait, ministries of education in both Kuwait and the UK and the global financial *field*.

8.1 Internal fields of power: “One or two people are making all the decisions.” Jason

BLS adopts a hierarchical management structure of faculty (see Appendix D). Based on findings and the discussion from chapter seven which depicts creation of middle management structure to help cope with increasing growth. Middle managers do not seem to be part of the internal field of power:

“There is a lot of emphasis on: here is your job, just do your job. You won’t hear from us unless something goes wrong. In that sense, there is a lot of delegation. I am in charge of my own job. The principal does not interfere in my job.” Ryan

The above excerpt demonstrates that middle management holds no power. They are told what their job is, and they are accountable to senior management. While middle managers are essential to continuity management (see chapter seven), they occupy a dominated space within BLS. Michael, a middle manager himself, suggested he does not have a say in decision-making:

“More of the latter: more top-down really. If I were to be honest, quite poor communication. It is not even top down and this is what you are doing. It is more like, this is what we want you to do, and you are left to work out what they mean by that. It has been particularly bad the last two years.”

Such a lack of communication apparently has a trickle-down effect to teachers on the classroom level. For example, Jenny has suggested that rather that decision makers at the school

could support the implementation of new policies through provision of time on their working schedule:

“I suppose, sometimes what happens is, they have their development meetings and they decide on what the focuses are for the school, and then that will get passed to us. Then, we are told that we have to do something, but we don’t get any more time to do it. We don’t get any more support, really doing it. A way of balancing that would be nice.”

8.1.1 Professional development as an exercise of power

Teachers could be told to implement new initiatives which teachers have no previous training on implementing. Ryan on the other hand suggests that what impedes implementing new initiatives is due to the absence of professional training attributed to the school’s effort at managing costs, but which is also exacerbated by the geographical location of Kuwait:

“You are asked to have differentiation in your lesson. Right, where is the training that goes into that? It is a very difficult aspect of teaching to get it right. So, right, if teachers find it tough, where is the training that goes with it? It is very much, you go and figure it out on your own. That is one thing I have spoken about with other teachers about, right, where is the training for this?

Everyone was expected to be a professional. Everyone was expected to talk about it within the subject team. But if everybody were asking questions about what to do, then that to me is a sign that this needs to be addressed.”

Ryan then substantiates his case with two concrete examples from his experience:

This school has invested a huge amount of money in SMART boards in every room. I am not sure to what extent they have been used as SMART boards and not just as a projector screen... We have had training, but it has all been in-house. I don't think anyone has come from outside of the school to show us what we can do: Right, here is how we can use this in economics. I remember going to an INSET²¹ course and it was run by a year 3 teacher. We were shown how to draw circles and squares with it. I was with my head of department thinking how we can use this to teach economics. I think that is an area that needs to be addressed from my point of view. If it is something that is going to be an expectation, then we need to be trained in how we can differentiate.”

There is a lack of off-the-job training because it is very much cost-focused. Because Kuwait is not a place where many organisations come to provide INSET trainings. A lot of staff have to go elsewhere. To do that, there are hotel costs, travel costs and living costs. There is also, who is going to cover your lessons. We don't have supply teachers like in the UK. So, there is that issue.”

Recall from chapter seven that investing on SMART boards was a way to seek competitive advantage in the market. It is not clear that whether such an investment was thought through in terms of cost of training or returns through increased client buy-in because of the symbolic capital that a high-tech school. According to Michael, which is echoed by other teachers who feel that funding of professional development at BLS is (mis)placed. Otherwise, funding of professional development ultimately should serve to increase the capital of the school as determined by senior management.

²¹ INSET: In-Service training

8.1.2 Power in the hand of the few

Previous literature pertaining to International Schools has suggested that a lack of supportive of leadership is attributed to a reason to why expatriate teachers leave their posts and advocated for such a type of leadership (Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). Mancuso et al. (2010) delineate that a supportive leadership should incorporate the following characteristics: respect, staff involvement in developing vision, collaboration among teachers, support in curriculum and resolving issues. Teaching staff at BLS seemed to want support by provision of time to implement policies, clear channels of communications and professional support to implement new teaching and learning policies. In contrast to Mancuso et al.'s findings, teachers at BLS did not all share an aspiration to share in developing vision and decision making. In fact, Jessica, notes how being involved in decision making is pragmatically not feasible particularly because of the large size of the staff population:

“They inform us, but they don’t discuss and say: “what do you think?” I don’t think they can discuss with two hundred or staff.”

Throughout the interviews, it seemed that teachers, and to be specific, expatriate teachers, were speaking one language and managers another. For example, managers spoke of empowering staff, learning communities, collaboration (‘forced’), and so on, while expatriate teachers spoke of conditions that impinged on their ability to collaborate such as time and workload, and that they merely followed orders. Waleed was quite satisfied with the status quo.

“Decisions are discussed with heads of departments who in turn tell us what to do. Since most decisions made are for the benefit of the student, why should I disagree with them? When it benefits the student, it benefits the teacher as well.”

For Waleed, he takes it for granted that decisions indeed are for the benefit of the children.

Waleed also depicts the role of middle managers, mainly that they are mediators of decision-making between teachers and senior management.

In chapter seven, several teachers expressed concern about their workload particularly as a result of the last inspection where teachers are now asked for a detailed lesson plan for every lesson along with evidence for differentiation. Two middle managers had expressed their concerns to senior management. For example, following up on the disadvantages that Josh had explained to me that are associated with the new schemes of work policy (see chapter 7) on whether or not he voiced these concerns with senior management:

Lina: This change of schemes of work that combines structure and flexibility, to a more rigid form. Was that change discussed with staff or was it more of a top-down decision?

Josh: It was discussed. Then discussion was discounted. It was imposed.

In chapter seven I discussed briefly the issue of schemes of work and continuity management. However, an elaborate analysis is not the scope of the study. Rather, in this case, I am using these exchanges to reveal the power play at BLS: who holds the power and what type of capital do they value.

The only senior manager, Richard, who acknowledged the contradictory nature of circumstances at the school: at the one hand, he understands staff frustration of being told what to do, however, if they are shown how decisions will benefit the children (rather than implied as Waleed suggested), then, he believes staff will feel ‘informed’:

“When people don’t feel empowered, when they don’t feel informed, that is when it falls down sometimes. If it does feel it has come top-down with no explanation, that is when you get a little bit of resistance. I think, as long as they can see the benefits of it and they are informed,

that is when they buy into it. People feel reassured when we say, we are going to be doing these five things. In your class, this is what will be seen, they will see you doing this really well, and they will see you getting extra support in this. These are the five things we are going to hang our hat on.

If all stakeholders are involved, then, it is easier. It is smoother. Some people at the moment, don't understand the reason behind decisions. In certain aspects, you have to tell them. In other situations, you can't. But, if they feel they have had a part to play in it and they are fully involved from the beginning, then it does make it easier."

Richard also suggests that senior management should consider dissenting voices more often

"One of the things that would help in my opinion, just an opinion, is that, voices that do not agree should be encouraged a little more, as long as the opinion is brought about in a professional manner. I think there could be more discussion. Out of that we would create new meaning for a lot of issues that would be more responsive of the needs of the children."

Considering the condensed academic year at BLS, teaching responsibilities, and the number of teaching staff, involving all teaching staff in decision making does seem pragmatically challenging. However, Mathew adds a further layer to the argument of having a more horizontal decision-making structure:

"I would like it to be more horizontal [decision making]. I know there are pros and cons. It is business. Two things that probably do not go well together: we are in business and we are an education provider. But, I understand that providing a good quality education, we are providing a product. They do not have to be antagonistic. But, when it comes to something like

space: I say, right, I have this space and I can get this much bodies in this space because everybody is a fee-payer. That is the way it goes. I understand there has to be give and take.”

Mathew insinuated that the bottom line was profit-making. He argues that the education, which seems to require more ‘soft’ management approach, could be given equal priority as a more ‘pragmatic’ for-profit commercial business one. One manager in a survey response reinforces Michael’s perception of where the school’s priorities lie and the impact that has on staff morale:

“Speaking of morale that is an area which I feel could be improved. At times they are made to feel like children themselves. It is hard with such a large staff but it would be great to do more things to show that they are appreciated. Any good business puts employees at number 1 however in BLS they are placed third after students and parents. Teachers are often reminded of this fact.”

According to this manager, the theme of the school viewed as a commercial enterprise is used. Within the field, this places the teachers below the pupils. In terms of capital however, teachers and pupils would be at opposing ends of a field. UK qualified teachers would have more cultural capital, they possess a university degree, UK qualifications, they are first language English speakers. However, pupils, particularly non-English native speakers would possess less cultural capital, but more economic capital. However, it is the pupil’s fees that pays the salaries. The sentiment that teachers are made to feel as ‘less worthy’ is further exacerbated by recognising that as a teacher, you are dispensable. As Ryan explains, that is why he does not voice concerns:

“In terms of saying there is too much pressure: what is the proof of that? They don’t know. No one has done my job before. Unless you do the job yourself, you don’t know the pressure. It is difficult to convince someone. The people in charge of timetabling will get people all the time

making requests for their timetables, so if I say something, how will they believe me? It has suited me to not speak up... I am happy doing my role. I liked the balance between admin and teaching. So, I had not wanted to compromise my position by saying I want to work on something less because they might say, ok, no problem, we will get somebody else to do it. I have got to say to myself, do I want to let go of this job?"

Ryan understands the 'rules of the game'. The creation of salaried jobs subordinated employees to positions where they do not "rebel or participate" (cite Bourdieu and Boltanski). One could argue that in other countries where unions exist, they are spaces for employees to express their rights. At BLS, and other International Schools, this is not the case. Jason explains that this is one of the main reasons why teachers at BLS could feel exploited by senior management:

"There are no unions in the school. It is kind of a totalitarian regime. So, you play ball like everyone, and you respect that. Which is fine, you sign up for it, you know that. There is nothing unfair about it... You might fall foul in that you are not protected in any sense of any kind of discrimination. Those things that exist in England: there are checks and balances, there is not someone who can fire you on the spot. That kind of thing cannot happen in England. I have no experience in any kind of professional warnings. I would say it is more political here. You would be more sensible being in no way antagonistic or disagree."

According to Ryan's statement, the teachers are subordinated and their survival in the field depends on playing by the rules. Within the literature review in chapter three, no study has associated the perception of a lack of job security nor the impact of inspections as perceived by teachers. However, social media and anecdotal evidence seem to reveal that violations are more common than is known in International Schools (Bunnell, 2014, 2016b).

Section 8.1 depicts a hierarchical structure within BLS where major policies are top-down. Furthermore, the various school divisions are fragmented according to phase level and subject discipline. This confirms what Caffyn (2010) had earlier suggested about the nature of International Schools. International Schools with similar structures as BLS do not seem amenable to a structure that supports transformational leadership as suggested (Roberts & Mancuso, 2014), particularly because of a lack of transparency and time constraints due to a condensed academic year.

8.2 External field of power

For a field to be legitimate, it must maintain relative autonomy and operate within its own logic and rules. Thus far, I delineated the logic of the field of BLS as a firm by analysing what type of capital is most valuable by the field of power within the school. However, BLS also occupies a dominated position in the social space within which it exists and thus, there are constraints on what is possible.

For Bourdieu, a school is the major tool used by the state to ‘reproduce’ social and cultural hierarchies within societies (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). However, with BLS and other International Schools, a legitimate question would be which ‘state’, if any, would be that the state of power over an International School. Furthermore, if we consider the school as a commercial enterprise and hence part of the economic field, what is the field of power here?

Based on interviews, documents and online archives (see Appendix for documents and online archives), and adapting Bourdieu’s depiction of the fields of power and their interaction with the field of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1996) which is also used in an article portraying the young artists in the UK (Grenfell & Hardy, 2003), I have traced the fields of power which are pertinent to BLS (see Figure 8.1). In this section, I discuss the fields of power pertinent to International Schooling, particularly that of BLS per figure 8.1, and how that has shaped the capital that buys value within the field.

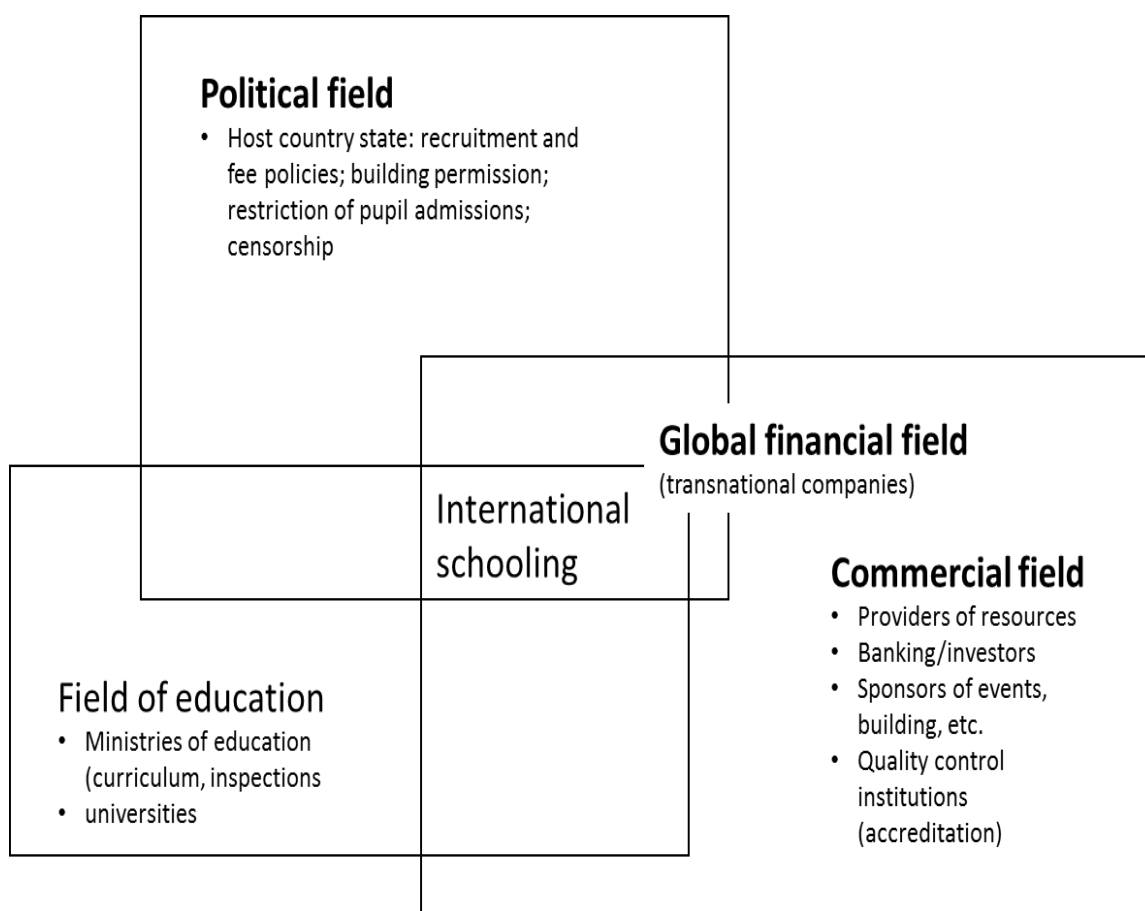


Figure 8.1 Fields of power impacting the field of International Schooling

8.2.1 The state of Kuwait

I will briefly revisit pertinent history to contextualise this section. The first International School in Kuwait was established in 1953. Kuwait was to gain its independence as a state from being a British protectorate in 1961. Before the first Gulf War, there were only 15 International Schools, which exponentially grew after the 1990 to 42 in 1997/98 to 98 schools in 2009/10. Initially, after gaining independence, the state of Kuwait required schools to be approved the private ministry of education and mandated that Arab and Muslim pupils had to be taught Arabic and Islamic studies as per the government's curricula which impinged on the school's timetabling. In contrast to public schools in Kuwait, International Schools were co-educational.

After the first Gulf war, as more International Schools started to crop up, the state became more 'Islamic' and ministers started showing disapproval of 'western' influences on youth of Kuwait, particularly since most of those schools were being populated increasingly by Kuwaiti families. One example could be the ongoing debates of separating sexes at those International Schools in the Kuwaiti parliament and imposing strict regulations on co-ed schools.

The state of Kuwait, through its Ministry of Education, constrain International Schools through fee curbing and provision of land to build or expand an existing school. With respect to setting the fees, private schools rely heavily on them to pay their expenses. These expenses vary from salaries, resources, rent and so on. The government imposed a ceiling for increasing fees despite increasing costs. Such a curb, particularly in Kuwait, was deemed as a deterrent by a financial report advising transnational companies on investing in the International School sector in the Gulf countries (Alqahtani, 2014; Capital, 2016; Hoteit, El Hachem, Erker, & Farah, 2017). Indeed, John went on to criticise such regulations as detrimental to the quality of education the school is able to deliver:

“If you have a government that interferes with that and tells you what your fees should be. It might be popular for a few years but you can't sustain it. You cannot afford to provide the same quality. You just won't be able to do it.”

John then presents the following paradox:

“The government did publish how much it spends on education. They came up with a figure of 15,000 dinars per child going to a government school. Are fees are not even near that. It must bother them that 42% of private schools are Kuwaiti. Why are VIP Kuwaiti parents sending their children to British and American schools when they could be sending them to schools funded by 15,000 dinar per student? Surely, these schools are better than the private, fee-paying schools. But they are not. Why aren't they? You are dealing with ministries of

education who cannot do what you do. If there were people in the government who would do what you do, then they would be a wonderful resource to talk to and gain advice from. You have people who cannot do this, telling you what to do.”

According to government statistics and budget reports, the most recent of which was the academic year of 2016/2017. The total number of pupils attending public schools at the time was 341,139 (CSB, 2016) with a government spending of 1,726,122,000 KD on education (Kanoon raqam (38) li sanat 2016 [statute number (38) for the year 2016], 2016). This surmounts to the government spending roughly 5,059 Kuwaiti dinars on every pupil which is the equivalent of US \$ 16, 672.16. A 2011 analysis of the public vs. private schooling in the GCC shows that Kuwait spends about US\$ 10,000 per pupil in public schools, compared to US \$5,600 per pupil in private schools (Moujaes et al., 2011). It was not evident which year they referred to and whether or not the data pertaining to private schools included private Arabic schools. What is of significance is the government is the seemingly higher spending per pupil than an International School such as BLS. However, the number of pupils attending International Schools is indicative of the paradox: despite higher spending, about half the Kuwaiti student population will opt for an International School and often cite that the latter have better facilities than the public schools. Nevertheless, despite the insinuation that the state, represented by the Ministry, though lacking cultural capital, they have enough ‘statist’ capital to impose fee regulations which is consistent with Bourdieu’s depiction of fields of power (Bourdieu, 1996; Wacquant, 1993).

Government power in Kuwait is seen as a deterrent to new entrants to the International School market in Kuwait (Moujaes et al., 2011). Not only are there strict fee caps, but also employment constraints with respect to issuing work permits that may hinder recruiting expatriate teachers due to uncertainty. For example, in 2018 the government gave off conflicting messages. Initially, there was a warning issued of an imminent ban on providing work permits to younger than 30 foreign workers. This was then postponed being effective in July 2018. Within of a few days of the latter decree,

cancelled again (Al-Shimmari, 2018; Toumi, 2018). Such uncertainty could be present risks for firms in Kuwait who rely on recruiting expatriate employees. For International Schools such as BLS who have been increasingly hiring NQTs, such a decree could be detrimental. Indeed, in their report, Moujaes et al. (2011) suggest that Kuwait is competing for talented teachers to Gulf states such as UAE, Bahrain, Saudi and Qatar, who offer higher salaries and in the case of Dubai, Manama and Qatar, a more liberal lifestyle/

Nevertheless, John is aware of the market: the school does cater for an average of 70 different nationalities. After Kuwaitis, Egyptians form the second largest population group in BLS. Typically, non-Kuwaitis do not earn as much as Kuwaitis, and with the recent oil-slump, non-Kuwaiti families are feeling the brunt especially with rising living costs and additionally new imposed government taxes they have to pay that Kuwaitis are exempted from (get citation). A dramatic increase in school fees, even if approved by the government could mean a loss in clientele to competing schools.

In the neighbouring emirate of Dubai, a scheme linking International School fees to quality was implemented (Azzam, 2017). However, a recent study showed that such a scheme has created a large gap between extremely expensive schools providing ‘added value’ experiences and low-end, poor quality schools. Such neoliberal conceptions of self-regulating markets providing checks and balances only ‘reproduced’ inequalities.

Additionally, the government mandates timetabling and subject provisions. It is mandated that Arab pupils, whose first language is Arabic, to take Arabic lessons of which the curriculum and books are supplied by the department of education. Non-Arabs, whose first language is not Arabic, must take Arabic for non-Arabs which is also supplied for by the department of education. Furthermore, Muslim pupils need to take Islamic studies and Koran classes. The language of instruction is in Arabic for Arab speakers and in English for non-Arab speakers. Although the time spent on these subjects is reduced compared to an Arabic school in the same country, it is enough to off-balance an already compressed academic years. Parents who were interviewed have expressed that by the time

external exams are approaching, their children would have not completed the set syllabus and have either had to take extra lessons after school or complete it independently.

Curriculum content is also subject to censorship. Certain content in subjects such as geography, English, history, and science are censored due to the Islamic nature of the state and the school has to comply to these rules or its own existence will be jeopardised.

8.2.2 British Schools Overseas: a piece of the pie

With British Schools Overseas gaining traction, many players have entered the field of International Schooling. Curricula and examination providers, and teaching and learning resource providers for an International School market have wanted a piece of the pie. Ultimately, the selling point of providers of a ‘British’ education materials overseas is the correspondence of their materials to that of a British education. For example, CAIE, which provides BLS with A-level and IGCSE exams, commissioned the National Recognition Information Centre for the UK (NARIC) to compare its international version of examinations to those of the UK. To which the latter concluded they were (UK NARIC, 2016).

As the curriculum and examinations dictate the knowledge of value within the field of International Schooling: ‘British’. Curriculum has long been associated clashes along borderlines between politics and education. In the UK, curricula initiatives are on par with current government changes. International Schools feel these tensions through a trickle-down effect. For example, John and Richard explained how the latest change in the UK of making do with the National curriculum levels and what that translates for a BSO whose parents are not all first language learners and most importantly, not privy to British educational updates:

“The latest example is the assessment situation. As you are aware, the National Curriculum Levels are gone. They can be replaced, essentially, by anything a school wants. I took it upon myself to interview the main school inspector, when you come to inspect us the next time, what

will you be looking for in terms of assessment? I challenge my team: I tell them I'm a parent, tell me how my child is going to be assessed? Do it in layman's terms." John

For Richard, these changes create on-site tensions: teachers would have to replace 'something that works' with changes developed back in the UK. Given that teachers in a BSO lack the support that teachers may have back in the UK.

My fear was that in the new system of objectives, things had got a little bit harder. We have had to adjust our level boundaries. Every degree of separation added a little inaccuracy. There was that kind of procedural element which was making it very difficult. And now when we source assessments from the UK, it says, if you get this much, you are exceeding and working at a greater depth. If you are this, you are within the band of expected. It matches the language and it is simpler for us.

Changes in the UK is problematic for a British School Overseas like BLS. If they are to retain the old model which was successful at BLS, the new resources would not match. Additionally, it would pose a problem for recruiting Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) who would not be familiar with the old assessment:

There was another issue. When we were doing interviews, when we tour universities which is very successful, and we source all those NQTs. I would say to them: "how are you with national curriculum levels?" They are like: "Shinoo." [what?] They have never heard of it. I think, even if they are not that difficult to pick up, to ask them to come out, retrain them, and then find out that it didn't match the assessments. It wasn't working. We would like to say we are as close as possible to the UK practice... the framework that we put over the children's achievement has changed its language."

‘British’ cultural capital is further reinforced as valued through achieving BSO status. Accreditation and school inspections are common parlance in the public sector of schooling, particularly in developed nations. However, amongst International Schools, especially those in the Middle East, this particular language has only started to pick up steam in the twenty first century (see chapter 2). Officially, the DfE launched the BSO status in 2010 (see figure 2.1). CIS had already provided accreditation to International Schools, followed by ECIS. Private institutions that are Ofsted approved to perform inspections of schools claiming to be British share a part of the financial pie. These institutions cost the school who volunteers for inspection. Status has to be reviewed every three years for a school to maintain the claim (DfE, 2016). The five approved institutions follow standards developed by the DfE which acts as the authority.

The DfE has recently published a new revised list of standards (2016). These standards were criticised as problematic through the addition of the UK Equality Act 2010. This is particularly sensitive for senior management to implement in non-UK contexts, for example, countries that criminalise homosexuality (Education, 2017). The UK government responded to allay these fears in suggesting that schools should not jeopardise their safety within their localities. However, a contender has surfaced to challenge the DfE standards. The contender is COBIS who have announced they have launched their own standards for accrediting British schools overseas (COBIS, 2016), the main distinguishing features from DfE standards are they claim to be more flexible and could be adapted to local needs. Additionally, status is maintained for five years rather than three. BLS is a founding member of COBIS. In 2017, a senior manager presented their recent experience with accreditation through PENTA in London. Towards the end of the presentation, the slides introduced the advantages of the new accreditation scheme by COBIS. The interview data did not show a shift from Penta to COBIS. Within a wider context of International Schools and the field of power, is that through the continuing expansion of the field, has created a niche for markets to benefit financially. It remains to be seen if COBIS will be successful in recruiting ‘customers’.

At BLS, the managers speak with pride of being awarded outstanding by Penta international. Not only do they accrue symbolic capital, but also more cultural capital compared to competing schools in the same market who have only been awarded a good or satisfactory grade. Concerns that have been raised have been around three main areas: constraints of time, rigidity, lack of training to meet the requirements.

The extent of the UK as a field of cultural power is evident in whole-school professional development sessions. During such one observed session, a middle manager was delivering the plenary session to secondary school teachers after a normal school day with pupils. The topic was “What does an outstanding class look like?” A video was shown on a screen that depicted lessons and interviews with teachers in the UK. The assumption that a class in BLS bears no difference to a class in the UK did not seem questioned during that session. Four teachers from the school did give specific examples of practice in their classes in BLS that were graded outstanding such as implementing differentiation and pupil reflection. Three of the teachers talked from prepared notes. The whole session (videos and teacher talk) took about thirty minutes. Teachers have described their busy days, so, it was not surprising to see little or no engagement in a professional discussion or even questioning the *doxa* that an outstanding lesson in the UK state schools will be similar to an outstanding lesson in BLS in Kuwait. Let alone to questioning the “outstandingness” of a lesson.

According to Bourdieu, the degree of autonomy of a field, in this instance that of International Schools (or British Schools Overseas) is measured in so much as it is capable of imposing its own logic on external influences (Bourdieu, 1996). British schools overseas have been autonomous insofar as they stimulated the British DfE to modify their standards to accommodate them. In the same instance, British schools overseas have to comply to these standards to receive the legitimisation of ‘Britishness’.

8.2.3 International Schooling: A subfield of the global financial *field*

During my visits to BLS, I came to know that the school has partnered with Cundria Education (pseudonym), a transnational company that describe themselves as a family of 56 schools (Education, 2019). It is not clear if this means Cundria completely owns the schools or is a shareholder or partners. This was an unexpected event for me as a researcher. I adapted my questions subsequently to understand the implications, if any, to such an arrangement, particularly from the standpoint of capital and the logic of the field in BLS.

Cundria Education, as a transnational company, brings forth symbolic capital due to its globally recognised brand name. A partnership with Cundria will mean that BLS will be part of the bigger network of schools within the already existing Cundria network. According to Cundria's website, Cundria emphasises its social capital through the collaboration with prestigious universities and other educational institutions based in the US and UK, which offers its staff opportunities to expand their professional development. Furthermore, Cundria sells itself to parents as purveyors of a tailored education using the latest technologies and innovations (Global campus) and through their partnerships offer an added value education to the pupil.

On the school level, a partnership with Cundria translated into a restructuring of some of its technical capital. Cundria wanted to know how much profit BLS was making. Subtle changes were introduced, for example, managers traveling short distance flights would not be allowed to fly business class but would have to fly economy. The bottom-line is further cutting costs than BLS already practiced (for example with respect to professional development). The partnership was due to be effective in the academic year 2018/2019; however, during the time I was collecting data, they were busy times for the school management in preparing for the transition. Emails were exchanged furiously as Cundria management wanted to understand the inner-workings of the school. An email exchange, maybe trivial, but amongst its structure, reveals the ultimate fields of power, for in those emails, which were more 'American' in that they were less formal.

Cundria, is a company registered in the Cayman islands, and has its head quarters in London, with regional offices throughout the globe. Cundria is in the International School business of which globalisation has allowed there to be such a market particularly through the “effective universality of English which dominates telecommunications and the whole of commercial cultural production.” (Bourdieu, 2005b, p. 227).

While teachers and parents struggle between a ‘British’ or an ‘American’ curriculum, Cundria does not make that differentiation (see table 8.2). Member schools include mostly British-style schools, but also other International Schools as defined by the International School Consultancy (ISC) group (see chapter two). The majority of school members have English as the main language of instruction. English could therefore be perceived as an aim and an effect of globalisation.

According to Bourdieu in 2005, the US holds a dominant position in the global economic field. This is evident by the adoption of more ‘American’ models of economy. At the BLS level, this translates for example into the more ‘relaxed’ email exchanges and cutting costs to increase profits.

BLS was approached by both GEMS and Cundria. According to John, BLS preferred to partner with Cundria rather than GEMS because the latter favours profit to quality of education. Comparing GEMS and Cundria based on their capital configuration, GEMS occupies a higher position within the field of transnational companies, due to its larger number of schools, and accumulated economic capital of its owner.²²

One of the aims globalised economic field is to weaken the state’s field of power (Bourdieu, 2005b). While the state of Kuwait seeks to retain some power in the form of fee hikes and curriculum censorship of International Schools, Kuwait as a sovereign state could be perceived as dominated by global fields not the least because its own policies and curriculum have been developed guided by

²² According to Forbes, as of 21/2/2019, Sunny Varkey, GEMS owner, is the 62nd wealthiest person in the world. His net worth is valued US \$2.5 Billion. Information pertaining to net worth of Cundria was not found.

global organisations such as the World Bank and the Tony Blair Associates (a firm that has closed in 2016) (Herb, 2014; Winokur, 2014). Abdullah expressed his concerns that this curriculum is new curriculum is watered down. This was corroborated by studies in Kuwait and reports that have suggested flaws in the knowledge base and using a top-down initiative that lacked support but cost a lot of economic capital (AlKhoja, Halabi, Abdullah, & Al-Shammali, 2014; Alshammari, 2014). For an International School pupil, especially an Arabic one, Abdullah's concern of the loss of Arabic as a language.

This discussion demonstrates the pervasiveness of the global economic field as represented by transnational companies who dictate to nations and organisations what sort of cultural capital that is of value (through curricula reforms) and proliferation of International Schools who increasingly teach in English and follow an economic model that is dictated by such companies.

8.3 The position of Arabic and Islamic studies in BLS

Based on positioning in space, the position of Arabic and Islamic studies as subjects are dominated as compared to the English National Curriculum. This is evidenced by time awarded to each subject, and lower salaries and benefits that teachers of these subjects receive. This positionality has become normalised amongst the various stakeholders. As a matter of fact, it could be the case that if the Kuwait government does not impose the teaching of these subjects, then they would make do with them as John has informed me. BLS already has a compressed schedule as compared to the UK, but is expected to cover the same content, in addition to the Arabic and Islamic Studies curriculum mandated by the government.

The locally hired teachers I spoke to, did not reveal any resentment for differential treatment. In fact, they were enthusiastic about being part of a school that according to them, the well-being of both pupil and teacher. When asked about whether the differential salary and package impinges upon her practice, Salma explains:

Let me tell you something. Even if they provide us with 50% discount, we are unable financially to support our children in such a school. We have two or three children; we cannot afford it. Even if I get the same discount as the foreigner²³, I have other financial obligations that prevent me from affording such a school.

With respect to impacting teachers: there is a contract, the terms are clear. I am free to sign the contract or not. I am not forced to accept the terms. "I [the employer] have my terms and conditions, you want to work me, if not, then you are free." There are schools that provide local teachers 50%. There are those they don't provide any discounts. Local teachers here often come from other Arabic schools, so, they have come from a worse situation. Local teachers who come here are improving their situation, so they shouldn't be upset.

Salma makes a distinction between conditions that apply for a UK-trained teacher that do not apply for her. One could question the legitimacy of this differentiation: both type of teachers have a university degree, both are expatriates to Kuwait, both have to meet similar professional expectations. However, for one group of teachers, being native English speakers and a UK qualification imbues its owner with a cultural capital that buys them a more advanced position in the field of International Schooling compared to a local teacher.

The local teachers are seemingly invisible to UK-trained teachers and management. Only one UK-trained teacher (not British) asked if I were to interview local teachers, because she was sympathetic about their receiving lower salaries. This is not to say that I interpret this perceived invisibility as a conscious act of superiority. For starters, many of UK-trained teachers do not speak Arabic, and local teachers do not speak English, therefore there is a language barrier. Furthermore, invisible barriers are created such as cultural *capital* of Arabic and Islamic studies are diminished.

²³ In Arabic, the term 'ajnabi' is used in various connotations. It could mean English, foreign, or western depending on the context.

These barriers could be institutional such as less contact time, or embodied, particularly, the taken-for-granted belittling of a nation's culture and professional practice. For example, Salma suggests that 'foreigners' are superior to Arabs because:

Foreigners, you know more than me, are a smiling people, easy to deal with. We Arabs are different. It could be that our political and societal circumstances reflect on our behaviour. They [westerners] greet people whether they know them or not "Good morning" [she used the English term]. Us Arabs, we might think it is unnecessary to greet others. We have our complexes and problems due to our dire situation. They have democratic countries with many options for employment. Wherever they go, they can find employment easily, whereas we can't. They are comfortable. If you are comfortable, you accept the other.

The troubled recent political, social and historical trajectory of the Middle East and its domination by colonial forces have become embodied in a form of resignation to accept the dominated position. Foreigners are depicted by Salma, as more respectful because they are more comfortable, although some 'foreigners' would disagree, especially in the UK with issues such as Brexit troubling the minds of many. However, what this example demonstrates is the (mis)recognition of embodied values of 'us' and 'them' due to political fields. A form of symbolic violence where a dominated position in social space is accepted as the status quo.

There were concerns however, that the Arabic linguistic *capital* and religious *habitus* is being devalued. Although the fact that they have less time to teach their subject compared to English-speaking subjects, none of the local teachers mentioned that as an issue, it had become taken-for-granted. However, Abdullah referenced the recent changes to the Arabic curriculum as a result of the government's collaboration with the World Bank would erode the Arabic language. Furthermore, Farah as an Islamic Studies teacher for foreigners approaches teaching her subject with caution

because she does not want to antagonise pupils, who for some, do not come from religious homes. It seems the teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies are struggling to exist.

8.4 Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by illustrating how through the *fields* of power, the rules of the game become accepted and taken for granted at an individual level. One of the pupils in the focus interview described the whole structure of the game at stakes at BLS:

Imran: Also, the approach of the school, whether it helps you in university. I guess it has all the merits of putting someone in the deep end first approach. I guess you learn for yourself. It is not necessarily a very comfortable learning approach, but in many ways an effective one.

Jack (interjects): Assuming you don't drown

Imran: For the protocol, on surface value, even if you do, or there is something emotional you want to open up to a teacher about. The teacher wants to make sure, well for one they keep their job and they make their bosses happy and to make sure everything stays in order, so they follow the protocol to the letter and the student does not want to be sanctioned. If the student is a good student, they will also follow protocol. So, it creates this wall between the teacher and the student, even if they do want to connect on some level."

If you replace protocol in Imran's with 'rules of the game', Imran may well be using 'Bourdieuian language'. Jack, who has been arguing that teachers at BLS lack empathy, Imran understands that all at BLS have a role to play to maintain their positions within the space of International Schooling.

In this chapter, I analysed the internal power structure of BLS. There seems to be a lack of autonomy on the part of teaching staff. This was perceived as part and parcel of the 'rules of the

game’. This is further reinforced by a lack of legal representation of the teachers, particularly UK trained teachers. Local teachers understand the rules and ‘invest’ in the game with no questions asked.

In contrast to a public or state school, an International School such as BLS, is dominated by three main fields of power: that of the state of Kuwait which places restrictions such as curbing fees, recruitment policies, space for renting and building schools, and curriculum censorship. On the other hand, as a committed ‘British’ school, BLS also seeks being accredited by British DfE recognised institutions such as Penta. The discussion revealed internal conflict within BLS and amongst accrediting institutions who view the DfE standards for BSO as irrelevant for the purpose of a BSO.

Finally, the chapter ended with the discussion of the global financial *field* as the ultimate *field* of power particularly as BLS became a member of Cundria, a transnational company.

In the next chapter, I conclude the study by referring back to the rationale of this study and contextualise it within the literature pertaining to International Schools. I refer to the main findings and interpretations of the study while acknowledging the limitations. Then I make suggestions for further research.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

9.0 Introduction

This study aimed at understanding the *field* of International Schooling through understanding motivations and experiences of various stakeholders. The case study was a for-profit International School. Other International School studies and literature have alluded to the impact of a for-profit school on overseas teacher experiences (Odland & Ruzicka, 2009), and the role of leadership (Benson, 2011; Bunnell, 2014; MacDonald, 2009). This would be the first study that identifies the case study as a for-profit institution and investigates their lived experiences of various stakeholders and how they may be impacted as such. Furthermore, the aforementioned studies tend to analyse experiences of mainly western, expatriate teachers, this study incorporated teachers who are both local and expatriate, managers, parents and pupils to capture an in-depth insight to the inner-world of an International School.

The following research questions were used:

1. How do teachers, school leaders and parents make their choices of selecting an International School?
2. What type of *capital* do stakeholders (parents, graduating pupils, teachers and school leaders) at an International School value and what types do they *not* value?
3. How does an International School use its accumulated *capital* to gain advantage within the *field* of International Schools?

My understanding of a *field* and the use of *capital* in the research questions stems from Pierre Bourdieu (1992) who succinctly explained:

“There is thus a sort of hermeneutic circle: in order to construct the field, one must identify the forms of specific capital that operate within it, and to construct the forms of specific capital one must know the specific logic of the field. There is an endless to and from movement in the research process that is quite lengthy and arduous.” (P. 108)

Chapter six addressed research question one by analysing interview and survey data of processes made of choosing an International School. Research question two is addressed in both chapters six and chapter seven. In understanding the processes of making choices, and the congruence (or lack of) of expectations and the reality of the stakeholder experience, I extrapolated what *capital* is of value. Research question three was addressed in chapter seven by analysing interview data to elucidate the strategies used by the school to gain advantage in the *field*. Evidence was corroborated using the school's website and other documents.

The originality of this study is in providing an in-depth understanding of stakeholder experiences in a for-profit International School. Additionally, it is the use of a theoretical framework that incorporates Bourdieu's thinking tools *capital*, *field*, and *habitus*, in a relational methodology.

9.1 Revisiting the purpose and research questions: contributions to International School empirical literature

In this section, I revisit the major findings and interpretations of this study. However, this is not a summary of chapters six through eight, rather I highlight new insights into the field of International Schooling that this study had revealed.

9.1.1 How do teachers, school leaders and parents make their choices of selecting an International School?

A desire for a 'British' style education was a common theme amongst teachers and parents. For UK-trained teachers, a decision to leave the UK, was due to worsening teaching conditions in state schools (particularly for those teaching in England rather than Scotland or Wales). Both UK trained teachers and local teachers were seeking more economic capital through a high salary, and for UK-trained teachers, added benefits. There was also the impression (particularly teachers who taught in England and teachers who taught in government schools in Kuwait) that International School pupils were better behaved than English pupils. This was consistent with both previous empirical

research of reasons for leaving home countries to teach in International Schools (Coulter & Abney, 2009; Hrycak, 2015) and UK media coverage of teacher retention issues (Lightfoot, 2016; Richardson, 2016).

Despite seeking employment overseas, UK-trained teachers actively sought a British School Overseas (BSO) rather any other type of school. Moving overseas involves disruptions to the *habitus* because of changing fields. Other International School research view this disruption as a culture shock (Halicioglu, 2015; Roskell, 2013). However, in this study, by viewing International Schooling as a *field*, I was better able to explain why some teachers were able to adapt better than others. Teachers, particularly UK trained teachers sought a British school because it matched their *habitus*. By moving to a BSO, there was the assumption that the teacher would be familiar to the *field*.

For parents, choice seemed to be an either/or situation. It was either an American school or a British school. For many parents, selecting a British school was a matter of principle. A British school was described as stricter, and provides a quality curriculum and teachers. Whereas an American school was viewed as loose and less conservative. Survey data however, revealed some parents dissatisfaction with the ‘British’-style being too strict. This theme reveals symbolic violence due to the (mis)recognition of the participants that ‘Britishness’, as symbolic *capital*, is of higher value than any other form of education. One interpretation of the favouring of a British school over American, is the conservative *habitus* of Arab and Muslim people that is nurtured since childhood. Additionally, Kuwait, Egypt, India, and indeed many of the nation states that form the school’s pupil population were once colonised or under the protective mandate of Britain. The ‘domination effect’ of the coloniser on the colonised permeates the parents unconsciousness in making such a conscious decision (Bourdieu, 1984; Said, 1989).

9.1.2 What type of *capital* do stakeholders (parents, graduating pupils, teachers and school leaders) at an International School value and what types do they *not* value?

For parents and pupils, the cultural *capital* to be gained from their experience at BLS. For parents and pupils, this is the institutionalised form of capital, namely an education that leads to gaining a UK based secondary degree, and extra-curricular experiences that will give them advantage over other international pupils to gain access to higher education.

Following on from research question one, ‘Britishness’ was sought after by both UK trained teachers and leaders, and parents. For teachers and school leaders, a ‘British’ type school was desirable because it matched their *habitus*, both personal and pedagogical. For parents, particularly non-native English speakers, interviews revealed that ‘Britishness’ was more than a simple education, rather it was a means to develop cultural *capital* embodied in language, taste and mannerism that were misrecognised as more valuable than their own.

For teachers, UK trained or non-UK trained, BLS offered economic *capital* gain than previous experiences. However, they also suggested that International Schools offer better financial compensations than state schools (UK) or government schools (Kuwait), they valued the cultural capital embodied in the pupils. Generally, these are pupils who are well behaved, and are oriented to learn because the pupils’ parents have bought into that.

School leaders shared similar value as teachers. In addition to economic *capital*, their values seemed more aligned with the school’s aims. School leaders more than teachers spoke of the school in a collective sense ‘we’ and ‘us’, whereas, generally, teachers at BLS did not use the collective. School leaders valued *capital* that would help the school maintain and improve its reputation as a quality school. This is mainly through ensuring that the school meets the criteria for an outstanding school during accreditation process. Furthermore, maintaining social *capital* with prestigious institutions both locally and in the UK to promulgate the school’s ‘brand’ name as one of the best.

All stakeholders valued a quality education. Quality for International School commentators is determined through an accrediting body (Bunnell et al., 2016). However, for parents, they associated quality to symbolic and social *capital*. Parents used their social networks to judge the quality of a

school. Additionally, the school fees were viewed as to reflect the quality, not the other way round. Accreditation as an important signifier of quality was recognised by the school management.

Once in the school, UK-trained teachers realised that a BSO is different to schools in the UK. There were perceived differences in pedagogical *habitus*. Parents and pupils were viewed as ‘academic’ oriented. A subtle form of symbolic violence is hence practiced by educators in moulding the pupils *habitus* to match that of a ‘British’ learner which seems to be alluded to as a pupil who is more open-minded about subject choice and modes of learning. This corresponds to findings of teachers expectations of Thai pupils (Deveney, 2005). By using the concept of *capital*, parents and pupils make career decisions in terms of increasing *capital*.

Parents increasingly view education as a means to improving socio-economic position (Ball, 1997, 2006). This has become increasingly the view of education particularly with industrialisation of society and promoted by the notion of human capital (Becker, 1975). However, as this study has shown and others, the relationship between education and socio-economic status is more complicated. Certain children are more advantaged than others according to their cultural *capital* related to parents’ education.

The findings of this study challenged the notion of the definition of International Schooling by the ISC. The different participants identified the school differently. Managers (UK trained and mostly British) identified the school as British. Although the school had a mix of pupil nationalities, they were predominantly Kuwaiti and Egyptian nationals. Many of the pupils also do seek study abroad: mostly UK, US and Canada. International in this context was synonymous with the English language, which corroborates what Hayden (2006) has suggested that the English language being the *Lingua Franca* as the impetus of choosing an International School²⁴.

²⁴ Using the ISC definition of international schooling

9.1.3 How does an International School use its accumulated *capital* to gain advantage within the field of International Schools?

Since the establishment of the secondary school, BLS's owner sought to establish a competitive advantage in the local market of Kuwait, but also expand its 'brand' name internationally as well. The owner of the school, already a holder of economic, symbolic and social *capital*, lacked the cultural *capital* of running a school. The school management were crucial in that and through an understanding of the social space in Kuwait, they were able to find a niche through which they could enter the market and compete with the other contenders. To do that, they used a combination of marketing strategies and restructuring within the school to gain distinction. Distinction was sought through the establishment of an extra-curricular programme that were affiliated with UK brands such as the Royal Ballet, recruiting UK-trained teachers only (with the exception of Arabic and Islamic Studies), and incorporating school-wide technology to support teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the school's success at accumulating symbolic capital in the form of a reputation and building its 'brand' was related to the pupil's cultural *capital* and *habitus*. Pupils go through a selection process that requires an interview and aptitude testing. Pupils who are well-behaved, disrupt classes less, and hence more learning ensues (Ofsted, 2014). Those whose parents are educated, and could speak English, would also have a head start over parents whose parents do not speak English. No other International School study has explored how the pupil selection process at an International School ensures a matching *habitus*. Usually, it has been the other way round, International School market studies seem to assume a deficit model, and that a pupil will gain from their experience and the school only gains fees (ISC Research, 2018). Whereas, this study showed a more mutual relationship, the International School, particularly one in a higher position in the field, relies on much of its success on the *capital* and *habitus* of pupils it selects.

9.2 Limitations of the study

One of the main limitations of the study is that it was a case study of one school. Criticisms of case studies pertaining to a lack of generalisability pertaining to its small sample size, often stem from a positivistic approach to research that assumes an objective truth could be sought through the controlling of variables. However, for International Schooling, it would be impossible to purport that a sole researcher would be able to conduct a study using a large enough sample as to claim generalisability.

The above limitation however, contributes to the strength of this study. Through the selection of an atypical case, a school that is known to have a competitive advantage, I was able to incorporate as many voices as possible (dominated and dominant) to understand the field of International Schooling.

Another limitation of the study is the field analysis process. The level two which involves mapping the objective positions of the participants in a social space, is typically done using Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a). It would have required data which I did not have access to, such as age, qualifications, income, nationality of teachers, managers and parents at the school. That would have been useful to visualise social groupings and patterns of behaviours. An MCA has the potential to strengthen the assertions with respect to the patterns established in the analysis of findings. Furthermore, it would have required me having the skill to do MCA, which I did not at the time of the research. However, as Bourdieu (1992) advised first-time researchers and PhD students, he did not advocate a recipe-book methodology but that did not excuse methodological ‘sloppiness’. I compensated for a lack of MCA through careful documentation of the research process, challenging assertions made using the data and other theories.

9.3 Theory and Practice

For Bourdieu (1998), “the theoretical and empirical are inseparable” (p.2). This study started with the argument from an introduction into international schooling and a systematic literature review

that to understand the *field*, a researcher would benefit of avoiding the separation of theory and practice, subjective and objective. This study contributes to the *field* of International Schooling, not only methodologically (through a novel approach), but also to the logic of practice of International Schooling particularly to the theory of growth of schools British ethos (Bunnell, 2016a) through the understanding of practice of choice-making of parents and teachers. Furthermore, it highlights the experiences of stakeholders in a for-profit school to understand the purpose and means to gain competitive advantage. In contrast to other choice-making studies and experiences in International Schooling (Ezra, 2007; MacKenzie, 2010; Mancuso et al., 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Savva, 2015), this study produced a more nuanced understanding of the *field*.

Participants in this study highlighted the ‘Britishness’ as *capital* of value when selecting the school. ‘Britishness’ was portrayed as a combination of higher standards (than local education options), means to an end (university entrance), and provision of extra-curricular activities (added-value). What my findings reveal is that justifications of the choice-making is the (mis)recognition of the value of ‘Britishness’. This was embodied in a taken-for-granted stance assumed by UK trained teachers and managers that they are indeed delivering a ‘better’ education, and by parents who feel that a ‘British’ education provides their children with the ‘magic wand’. The dominant position that the UK occupies in social space culturally facilitates this form of symbolic violence and misrecognition.

This study argues that the growth of International Schools, particularly with a ‘British’ ethos, is due to (mis)recognition that English and ‘Britishness’ embody more valuable cultural *capital* and values than developing countries. This is more aligned with a globalised view of English language or language imperialism. According to Bourdieu’s understanding of *habitus* as a set of durable set of dispositions, if parents, especially of developing countries (mis)recognise English and ‘Britishness’ as *capital* of value, then the demand for English speaking schools and native English speakers will continue to rise. Furthermore, Britain as a previous colonising power seems to retain its domination

effect through subtle forms of symbolic power through the appeal of its education. Capitalism and globalisation also contribute to the persistence of symbolic power amongst English speaking nations.

Some academics suggest International Schooling, in theory, should be a medium to promote peace and tolerance (Bunnell et al., 2016; Hayden & Thompson, 2013). This theory has found little significant empirical evidence to support it (Baker & Kanan, 2005; Belal, 2017; Dunne & Edwards, 2010; Hayden, Rancic, & Thompson, 2000). Others have noted that in practice international schools impinge upon the pupils, particularly those who are non-native English speakers in third-world countries (Emenike & Plowright, 2017; Ezra, 2007; Grimshaw & Sears, 2008). Findings of this study suggests International Schools such as BLS do not promote international-mindedness, rather, it promotes 'British' morals and values as suggested by school leaders such as discipline. This demonstrates the relational aspect of this research. BLS is marketed as a school that promotes 'Britishness', parents and teachers make their choice of school based on this *capital*, but it is only recognised as of value because of the symbolic violence of the dominance of British cultural *capital*.

This study also contributed a nuanced understanding of how BLS gained competitive advantage within the *field* of International Schooling. This advantage was reflected by increasing pupil enrolment over the past ten years, improvement in accreditation BSO status (from good in 2013 to outstanding in 2017), and a partnership with the transnational company of Cundria. MacDonald (2007) has provided a theoretical framework of helping International School managers gain competitive advantage derived from the commercial sector. MacDonald advises managers to differentiate their service to gain a competitive advantage. This study contributes empirical evidence to how BLS actually achieved this advantage in practice through invested economic and social *capital* in its technical and commercial *capital*. These were namely: responsive recruitment processes, creation of middle management roles to support senior management, taking risks, ensuring that pupil selection and exits meet high standards to maintain a reputation of helping pupils achieve high academic scores and university entrances.

Maintaining a competitive advantage however, was accompanied with implications to the lived experiences of stakeholders that this study was able to reveal. The implications included the precariousness of the teacher experience, and a fear of impinging upon quality.

This study affirms Bunnell's (2016) depiction of the International School teacher as a precariat. Drawing upon Guy Standing's (2011) notion of 'precariat' as a person who does not feel fully as a citizen (Bunnell, 2016b, p. 543). Bunnell suggests that International School teachers face several insecurities such as a segmented labour-market, job (lack of long-term contracts), representativeness (often no legal protection from unions), and so on. This study confirms the notion of 'precariat'. However, UK trained teachers recognised this as a concern through avoiding confrontation with management. However, UK trained teachers are at an advantage to the non-UK trained teachers because of their symbolic *capital*. Indeed, for local teachers in BLS, the struggle to prove themselves is not only to management, but to parents and pupils, particularly because they are in the most part teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies, both of which have less value than a 'British' curriculum.

In other instances, there were pronounced forms of symbolic violence such as that expressed by UK trained teachers who feel their professional judgement was undermined by a drive by senior management to increase pupil enrolment (increase profit) and adhere to accreditation standards. The fact that the school was for-profit school contributes further to symbolic violence felt by parents, pupils and UK trained teachers; the perception that certain aspects of schooling may be overlooked if it does not contribute to a profit, economic or symbolic. The fact that the local teachers had no qualms with the aforementioned reinforces their dominated position with the *field* of International Schooling.

Caffyn (2007, 2010, 2011) had argued that International Schools are not collaborative organisations. According to Caffyn, micropolitics in International Schools fragments groups within the school leading to enclaves. Whilst Caffyn's portrayal of micropolitics could be applied to BLS, Using a Bourdieusian approach to the study, the International School is understood as a space of struggles for *capital* amongst the various stakeholders. Evidence from this study that many

participants were aware of the for-profit nature of the school and that the bottom line was making profit and they understood that some practices such as increasing pupil intake or manipulating pupil graduation data are all part of the game.

This study contributes to the theory of defining the stakeholders in an International School. International School literature typically divides teachers between local and expatriate or overseas (e.g. Odland and Ruzicka 2009, and Zhang and McGrath 2009). While this study showed that teachers at BLS were divided per contract, overseas and local. Further scrutiny shows that local teachers in Kuwait are mostly Arab expatriates. Furthermore, their stake in teaching and learning seemed peripheral, especially since they were allowed less teaching time and the curriculum they taught was developed with the help of the World Bank and no teacher input.

Pupils in International Schools were also labelled as member of elite society (Waterson, 2015), globally mobile (Grimshaw & Sears, 2008). It has been acknowledged that increasingly 'local' pupils are attending International Schools due to a rising 'middle class' (Bunnell et al., 2016). This study shows that many pupils attending BLS are in fact expatriates who have lived in Kuwait since their early childhood. Additionally, many families invest most of their economic *capital* in an International School, and not part of an elite class. Also, the notion of middle class does not seem to apply well in Kuwait (Herb, 2014).

International Schools have traditionally been depicted as more autonomous than state schools (Bunnell, 2014; Hayden, 2006). However, using a Bourdieusian *field* analysis reveals that a school such as BLS is not dominated by several *fields* of power. First is the state of Kuwait. It curbs school fee hikes, therefore as a business, it is not able to freely price the value of its service according to its brand name like Apple could to its I-phone for example. Schools have to abide by its recruitment policies which could restrict a school's choices to recruit teachers from the UK. The state also enforces schools to abide by its laws, that are generally related to the implementation of Islamic laws, or political, such as censorship of the term 'Persian Gulf' on maps.

Secondly, an International School adopting a curriculum is subject to experience the *field* of power of the respective nation, in the case of a British or American curriculum school. For a school to be labelled as BSO, it has to be accredited by one of five DfE approved inspection organisations. A BSO has to assimilate and embody ‘British values’ as determined by the Ofsted standards. A BSO would have to be using British curriculum, and teachers that are able to teach that curriculum.

A deeper investigation reveals a more complex image. The Ofsted’s standards have been challenged by the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) as being on the whole insensitive to the complex nature of BSOs. COBIS has of 2017 established its own accreditation scheme. At a school level, in practice, the uptake of accreditation by International Schools has been increasing, according to this analysis, mainly due to its symbolic capital. Competition amongst accreditation bodies, could on the surface mean more choice for schools, but reflects a struggle within the *fields* of power over domination.

The partnership of BLS with Cundria during the data collection phase also presented a unique opportunity for an academic researcher to witness the beginning of the process in the field. Although data was limited, there were changes already set in motion within the technical structures of the school. During the initial phases involved Cundria gathering much intelligence and data about the school, particularly about profit margins and finding ways to cut ‘unnecessary’ cost. Cundria through its symbolic *capital* and social *capital* competes with other transnational companies in the *field* of International Schools. Cundria markets itself as a family of schools dedicated to providing a quality education. Cundria is registered in the Cayman’s island, a tax-free haven. It is not hard to see how, Cundria, does not answer to a state, but to the global financial *field*. This does take International Schooling to a different level with respect to what *capital* is of value. The debate of British and American style education seems irrelevant here. Cundria partners with all sorts of International Schools, they all share in common: English is the main language of instruction and they generate economic gains for the company.

This study contributes to the methodological approach to International School studies and education in general. This study uses Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus*, *capital*, and *field*, as well as a relational methodology has allowed an analysis that goes beyond atomising the various stakeholders and the school. Furthermore, treating the school as a firm and a *field* was a novel contribution. Inspired by Bourdieu's *Economic anthropology* (2005) to form an in-depth understanding of the motivation, modus operandi, of a for-profit International School. This was novel approach whereby I combined Bourdieu's understanding of the firm as a *field* with his conceptual tools to understand the social positions, position takings of the various stakeholders and of the school itself. As Bourdieu suggests, how he depicts a *field* has implications for social science that goes beyond individuals and firms, but brings forth a history and socialisation that other theories such as rational choice theory (RCT) ignore. For example, one study that investigated decision making of international school teachers during a recruitment conference using RCT was not able to explain many of the instantaneous decision making processes that contradicted the notion of the participant as a rational actor, making calculated decisions based on information gathered (Cox, 2012).

9.4 Implications for practice

It seems from this case study, that a for-profit school, particularly one that recruits UK-trained teachers has to manage many challenges. One of the selling-points of BLS is its 'Britishness': employing UK trained teachers, British curriculum and adhering to British Schools Overseas (BSO) standards. Implications of such practice means that a high turnover of such teachers is to be expected. Structures to manage turnover, maintain a quality education (as dictated by BSO), while at the same time increasing profit by increasing pupil intake, has led to some teachers (particularly UK-trained) and parents to feel that the quality of education is compromised. BLS attempts to tackle these concerns by creating middle management positions such as performance manager, assistant headteachers to create support for both staff and parents. However, there seems to be a lack of transparency and disconnect amongst stakeholders that permeates the entire hierarchy. Teachers are

feeling the stress and it is permeating to pupils who feel disconnected from their teachers. In practice, International Schools could address these concerns by ensuring transparency amongst stakeholders.

The process of accreditation in International Schools and its implications need to also be addressed. While it provides symbolic *capital*, many parents are still not aware of its role and purpose, and teachers feel that it is not suited to their practice in International Schools. The Council of British International Schools (COBIS) has recently made efforts to break from the DfE model of BSO accreditation in order to adapt to the nature of International Schooling (COBIS, 2016). International Schools, particularly those seeking a ‘British’ status need to ensure that all its stakeholders understand the value of accreditation. Additionally, the process should not be to the detriment of the quality of experiences by the various stakeholders.

International Schools are often viewed as creating leverage for pupils in developing countries to attend universities, mainly in the UK and the US. Certainly this is the case for BLS. Data from this study suggests that pupils and families would benefit from more experienced, and specialised college and university advisors or counsellors.

9.5 Future research

Since this study was a case study of a British school, a similar study in an American school overseas, in Kuwait or a country in the Persian Gulf, would be relevant to compare the findings with study. Similarly, a comparative study with a non-profit International School would be useful to challenge or to conform findings from this study, particularly with relation to a sense of increased work intensification that was palpable by UK trained teachers, and the presence or lack of symbolic violence due to (mis)recognition of the value of International Schooling.

A future study would benefit from tracking people who were pupils at International Schools, particularly from countries that have witnessed a proliferation of International Schools (such as UAE, China and so on). This tracking would include collecting data with respect to the International School attended, university attended, degree(s) attained, job, income, nationality, parental information

(occupations, nationality, income). Data collected would be analysed for patterns amongst trajectories and backgrounds in order to form an understanding based on empirical data rather than assumptions.

A future study could focus on how other International Schools, particularly for-profit schools, balance their priorities for school improvement (as well as reputation), and the impact this may have on teaching and learning.

9.6 Turning the tools of research on the researcher

“To adopt the viewpoint of reflexivity is not to renounce objectivity, but to question the privilege of the knowing subject...to account for the empirical subject in the very terms of the objectivity constructed by the scientific subject (notably by situating it in a determined place in social space-time)” (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 207)

For Bourdieu, reflexivity is the crux of social research. As the quote above suggests, reflexivity is not a mere reflection upon biases a researcher may have, but as Grenfell (2019) argues, it is turning the same elements of research upon oneself. Grenfell outlines a ‘three-level’ method approach (similar to that outlined in chapter five), where the researcher enquires about their own relation with others in the specific context of study, their relationship to the *field*, and the *field* of power. In International Schooling, with symbolic violence seemingly embedded in the *field*, researchers need to exercise more reflexivity, particularly since many of the researchers themselves are first language English speakers, and usually Anglophones (one only has to look at the list of names in the literature review in chapter three).

This PhD journey has been very much about studying the relationships of the participants in the *field* as it has been of my own relationship to the *field* of International Schooling specifically, and education in general. Having worked in an international school myself, as a researcher I knew I will bring forth biases to my own study due to ‘blindspots’ to what may seem ‘commonsense constructs’. For example, I started off the PhD journey naively using preconstructed terms such as ‘international school’, local/overseas, ‘school improvement’, and so on without questioning their origins. Using a

Bourdieuian approach made me conscious of the taken-for-granted use of these terms either by myself, or in the literature. In order to break from the pre-constructed, I used Bourdieu's (1992) advice in retracing the history of a problem posed by social research (although I concede with Bourdieu in that this is never achieved completely). With respect to International Schooling, I traced the history of its conception and I included both academics (such as Mary Hayden, Jeff Thompson) and marketing intelligence (the likes of International School Consultancy).

I continued this exercise during interviewing, transcribing and analysis. In practice, breaking with the pre-constructed was a challenge. For example, I found myself using terms in interviews that I had a taken-for-granted conception the participant would be familiar with. For example, with Arabic speakers such as local teachers and parents, I used a term that is used in common parlance to denote an International School, which translates literally from Arabic as "foreign school". Scrutiny of using the word "foreign" in common everyday language tends to be used to denote English first language speakers and Europeans; it is not used for example, to denote Indians. This made me aware of how I position myself in the general social space as an Arab; that in itself makes me in a dominated position in terms of cultural *capital*.

I was also influenced by the polarised doxa of the *field* of education, which seemed to be divided with respect to empirical research between positivist and interpretive research. The latter I found apologetic to what seems to be a more rigorous science in the former. Furthermore, International School research seemed to adopt either or stance of research. Researchers who partook empirical studies did not seem question their positionality with the *field* of International Schooling, despite many being first language English speakers.

The fact that I am a novice researcher places me in a dominated position in the *field* of educational research. However, being a PhD student at a Russell group university I believe contributed to my success in securing a participant school for my study. When emailing the schools to partake in the study, I used the university's email. I knew this had significant symbolic *capital* to gain

International School's acknowledgement that I am affiliated with a Russell group university that is socially recognised with respect to research and knowledge.

During the journey, and thanks to Bourdieu, my supervisors, I realised that my views were shaped by my own perception of common language of social research. I embarked on the research with the naïve assumption I could resolve issues in teacher turnover in International Schooling by doing a case study. At the end, this journey has transformed my gaze towards 'seeing' social problems in a different way. For example, a simple question such as why did you choose this particular school evokes a complex depiction of a *field* of struggles.

Declaring the need to maintain a reflexive position and acting upon it was a challenge throughout the study. I was questioning myself and positionality at every step of the study. This is what a rigorous science is about. However, it was time consuming and at times frustrating. I was in doubt of not doing justice of adequately providing a relational analysis of my findings and using Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' to their full capacity, and fearful of what Grenfell (2013) suggests a 'weak form of constructivism'. At the end of the study, I do not claim that I have perfected my practice, however, this fear I also acknowledge is part of the *scientific habitus* that seeks perfection and completeness in a science that is fuzzy and complex (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a).

Bourdieu (1989) encourages first time researchers to enjoy research, get their hands messy by directly engaging with the object of study. It is easy to forget to have fun as a PhD student because of the high stakes involved. I did enjoy the data collection phase, particularly because many of the participants were surprised that anyone would be interested in their lives and experiences. I discovered that understanding a single International School, goes beyond the walls of school and the time of study. The journey to this point was challenging but does not end here.

Appendix A: Information Sheets and Consent Forms

Email inviting school gatekeepers

To whom it may concern:

My name is Lina Khalil. I am a PhD student at the University of Southampton, UK. I am researching International Schools in Kuwait and in particular building capacity amongst staff.

I am writing to you to seek preliminary approval to conduct a case study at your school during the academic year 2017/2018. The case study will involve school observations, interviews and document analysis. My study will contribute generally to a growing body of research on International Schools and in particular address a gap in the research pertaining to building capacity in International Schools. The identity of the school and its 'participants' will be made anonymous and data collected will be kept confidential.

If you agree in principle to host me in your school, I will then apply for ethical approval from the University of Southampton to conduct the research, and then I will write to you more formally seeking formal approval from your school.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to e-mail me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks in advance,

Sincerely,

Lina Khalil

Sample negative response

Dear Ms Khalil,

I am not sure what you mean when you say 'building capacity'

Also where are you from? Are you researching more than one school here in Kuwait.

In addition we are essentially a family business and that might be contrary to your research.

I have lived in Kuwait for a long time and find there is very little confidentiality and surely you will publish your findings.

Whilst we do regard educational research pertaining to learning as very important I am not sure how we would feel about this,

My best regards

Deputy Director

Pupil Information Sheet

Study Title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher: Lina Khalil

Ethics number: 25515

Dear pupil and parents (legal guardians of minors), please read this information with your parents carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate, your parents will be asked to sign a consent form. Please return the consent form to your form tutor.

What is the research about?

I am a student at the University of Southampton. I will be collecting information towards my own PhD study. I am interested in understanding the nature of International Schools and to contribute to a growing literature on International Schools.

My study will focus on what are the skills and resources available to such a school as well as eliciting stakeholders perspectives on how these skills and resources help them (or otherwise) to achieve the outcomes as declared by the school mission.

Why have I been chosen?

You are chosen to participate in this focus study because as a graduating student intending to study in an English-speaking university, your insight is essential in understanding how prepared you feel to transition to university.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will be divided in two parts. You can choose to participate in both, one or none.

First part: Focus group discussion with other students intending to graduate this academic year (2016-2017). I will be asking you to join the group at a specified time and location as

appropriate by head of the sixth form that will be communicated with you. I will be inviting 12 pupils (selected at random) to participate. During the meeting, I will ask two questions. After each question you and your colleagues will be allowed to answer and comment on each other. This discussion should take more than one hour I will also ask your consent to be tape-recorded. You may refuse, however, all records will only be accessed by the researcher. This focus group will take place in April 2017.

Second part: Online survey. If you consent to participate in the online survey, I request your personal e-mail on the consent form. You will receive a link to a short online survey to know how well you have transitioned to university life. The survey should not take more than five minutes. You will receive this survey 15 January 2018.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Your contribution is essential to this study. By understanding your perspectives on what you deem important to your success, you will not only be contributing to a growing body of knowledge but also helping inform International Schools.

Are there any risks involved?

Although there are no physical risks involved in participating in this study, it may be that some participants express anxiety when involved in focus groups. However, I will ensure that participants feel safe to express their opinions.

Will my participation be confidential?

This study is in compliance with the University of Southampton's ethical policy. The focus group records will be stored in a secure location accessible by myself only. Transcripts will contain pseudonyms.

I will not be able to offer complete confidentiality over the focus group interview because participants may discuss this later. However, I will ask participants not to disclose the discussions to people beyond the group.

The online survey will not ask for names. You cannot be identified by participating in the survey. Your emails will not be stored after submitting the surveys.

Both the focus group discussion and results to the survey will be saved and password protected. Only I will have access to the information.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to withdraw from the group interview at any time prior to data analysis. As for the online survey, once submitted, you may not withdraw.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely event of something occurring that is undesirable to you, you may communicate your concerns with the Head of Research Governance at the University of Southampton at (02380 595058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk.

Parent Information Sheet

Study Title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher: Lina Khalil

Ethics number: 30135

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form which you can return to your child's form tutor/classroom teacher.

What is the research about?

I am a student at the University of Southampton. I will be collecting information towards my own PhD study. I am interested in understanding the nature of International Schools and to contribute to a growing literature on International Schools.

My study will focus on what are the skills and resources available to such a school as well as eliciting stakeholders' perspectives on how these skills and resources help them (or otherwise) achieve the outcomes as declared by the school mission.

Why have I been chosen?

You are chosen to participate in this focus study because as parent of a child at this school, your insight at what motivates you to enrol your child at this school and your perception of how the school has successfully met your needs is essential.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will be asked to complete an online survey and/or interview. If you consent to participating, please provide an e-mail that I can use to send a link to the online survey and/or invite you to participate in an interview. The survey and interview ask information about what motivated you to pick this school and your satisfaction with different aspects of the school.

The survey should not take more than half an hour to complete.

The interview should last anywhere between half an hour to an hour. The interview will take place either in school or any place you choose that will be quiet. I will e-mail you once I receive your consent form to negotiate location.

If you consent to participating, please provide an e-mail I can send a link to the survey at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk or on the signed consent form. The survey link will be sent to you soon after I receive your consent form. I am looking to collecting all data by the end of November 2017.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

This study may not contribute to you personally; however, by understanding your perspectives and experiences, you will not only be contributing to a growing body of knowledge but also helping inform practices of International Schools, a key player in today's global education field.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no potential risks involved by participating in this study.

Will my participation be confidential?

This study complies with the University of Southampton's ethical policy. All information will be stored in a secure location accessible by myself only.

You cannot be identified by participating in the online survey.

If you do participate the interview, your participation will be confidential. Names will be converted to pseudonyms

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time after you have signed the consent form to participate. Please note the following:

- Once you have submitted the online survey, you may not withdraw your submission. However, your responses will be anonymous
- If you participate in the interview and wish to withdraw your participation, you may notify me within 4 weeks of the interview date

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely event of something occurring that is undesirable to you, you may communicate your concerns with the Head of Research Governance at the University of Southampton at (+44 2380 595058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk.

Staff Information Sheet

Study Title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher: Lina Khalil

Ethics number: 25515

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I am a student at the University of Southampton. I will be collecting information towards my own PhD study. I am interested in understanding the nature of International Schools and to contribute to a growing literature on International Schools.

My study will focus on what are the skills and resources available to such a school as well as eliciting stakeholders' perspectives on how these skills and resources help them (or otherwise) to achieve the outcomes as declared by the school mission.

Why have I been chosen?

You are chosen to participate in this focus study because as a member of staff (teaching, curriculum coordinator, career counsellor, and public relation manager) you play a major role in contributing to the skills and resources at the school in order to achieve its mission.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will be divided in two sections. You can choose to participate in both, one or none.

Section 1 (Questionnaires): You will receive a paper questionnaire in an envelope. The questionnaire asks information about school education (professional development, appraisal and feedback) as well as your beliefs and attitudes towards education in general and working in this school

in particular. The questionnaire should not take more than half an hour to complete. I will be coordinating with the headteacher for distribution and collection of the questionnaires between the months of October and November 2017.

Section 2 (Interview): The interview is used to understand your perspective better. The interview should not take more than an hour. If you consent to participate in the interview, please contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk to inform me of a time and place suited to you during the months of October – November 2017. Alternatively, you may inform me when you see me around the school campus. I will be inviting six teachers at random from each division (primary and secondary) to participate in the interview. Additionally, I will be inviting the public relations manager, curriculum coordinator and career counsellor to conduct an interview as their insight is essential. Prior to the interview I will ask if you consent to be tape recorded. You may refuse, however, all records will only be accessed by the researcher.

At the end of the interview, I will be asking to schedule a second meeting as a follow-up to share my transcription of the interview and if it accurately reflects your perspective. This should not take more than ten to fifteen minutes. You may modify your responses at this stage. You may also request to withdraw at this stage as well.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Although this study may not contribute to you personally; your contribution is essential. By understanding your perspectives and experiences, you will not only be

contributing to a growing body of knowledge but also helping inform practices of International Schools, a key player in today's global education field.

Are there any risks involved?

Although there are no physical risks involved in participating in this study, it may be that some participants express anxiety during interviews. However, the interview has been piloted to ensure that all questions are appropriate and to ensure that the interviewer has the appropriate skills to make sure the participant is at ease.

Will my participation be confidential?

This study is in compliance with the University of Southampton's ethical policy. All information will be stored in a secure location accessible by myself only. Transcripts of interviews will contain pseudonyms. Transcripts will be password protected and only accessed by myself.

The questionnaire will not ask for names. You cannot be identified by participating in the questionnaire.

What happens if I change my mind?

Once you have submitted your questionnaire you may not withdraw because it is anonymous. However, you have the right to withdraw your interview participation prior to data analysis.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely event of something occurring that is undesirable to you, you may communicate your concerns with the Head of Research Governance at the University of Southampton at (0044 2380 595058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk.

Senior Management Team Information Sheet

Study Title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher: Lina Khalil

Ethics number: 25515

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

I am a student at the University of Southampton. I will be collecting information towards my own PhD study. I am interested in understanding the nature of International Schools and to contribute to a growing literature on International Schools.

My study will focus on what are the skills and resources available to such a school as well as eliciting stakeholders perspectives on how these skills and resources help them (or otherwise) to achieve the outcomes as declared by the school mission.

Why have I been chosen?

You are chosen to participate in this focus study because as a member of the senior management team you play a major role in contributing to the skills and resources at the school and shaping its culture in order to achieve its mission.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The study will be divided in two sections. You can choose to participate in both, one or none.

Section 1 (Questionnaires): You will receive an online questionnaire. The questionnaire asks information about your role as a manager at the school. The questionnaire should not take more than half an hour to complete. I will be coordinating the distribution between the months of October and November 2017.

Section 2 (Interview): The interview is used to understand your perspective better. The interview should not take more than an hour. If you consent to participate in the interview, please contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk to inform me of a time and place suited to you during the months of October – November 2017. Alternatively, you may inform me when you see me around the school campus.

Prior to the interview, I will ask for your consent to be tape recorded. You may refuse, however, all records will only be accessed by the researcher. At the end of the interview, I will be asking to schedule a second meeting as a follow-up to share my transcription of the interview and if it accurately reflects your perspective. I could be asking some additional questions that could arise from my observations or document analysis. This should not take more than half an hour. You may modify your responses at this stage. You may also request to withdraw at this stage as well.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Although this study may not contribute to you personally; your contribution is essential. By understanding your perspectives and experiences, you will not only be contributing to a growing body of knowledge but also helping inform practices of International Schools, a key player in today's global education field.

Are there any risks involved?

Although there are no physical risks involved in participating in this study, it may be that some participants express anxiety during interviews. However, the interview has been piloted to ensure that all questions are appropriate and that the interviewer has the appropriate skills to make sure the participant is at ease.

Will my participation be confidential?

This study is in compliance with the University of Southampton's ethical policy. All information will be stored in a secure location accessible by myself only. Transcripts of interviews will contain pseudonyms. Transcripts will be password protected and only accessed by myself.

The questionnaire will not ask for names. You cannot be identified by participating in the questionnaire.

What happens if I change my mind?

Once you have submitted your questionnaire you may not withdraw because it is anonymous. However, you have the right to withdraw your interview participation prior to data analysis.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely event of something occurring that is undesirable to you, you may communicate your concerns with the Head of Research Governance at the University of Southampton at (02380 595058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Where can I get more information?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at L.khalil@soton.ac.uk.

PARENT CONSENT FORM

Study title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher name: Lina Khalil

Ethics reference: 30135

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (version 3, August 25, 2017) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

☐

I agree to take part in the online survey only.

☐

I agree to participate in the interview only. I consent to the interview being voice recorded.

☐

I agree to participate in both the online survey and interview.

☐

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research.

☐

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw before submitting the survey or the interview without my legal rights being affected.

☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for this study. Emails will be destroyed once the surveys and interviews have been completed.

Name of participant (print name)

Email

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM CONSENT FORM

Study title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher name: Lina Khalil

Ethics reference: 25515

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (version 3, April 25, 2017) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

☐

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study

☐

I agree to complete the questionnaire only

☐

I agree to participate in an interview only and be audio recorded

☐

I agree to complete the questionnaire and participate in an interview (audio recorded)

☐

I agree to being observed during staff meetings

☐

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research

☐

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw my interview data at any time before data analysis without my legal rights being affected; however once my questionnaire is submitted I may not withdraw

☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

STAFF CONSENT FORM

Study title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher name: Lina Khalil

Ethics reference: 25515

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (version 3, April 25, 2017) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

☐

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for this study

☐

I agree to complete the questionnaire only

☐

I agree to participate in an interview only and be audio recorded

☐

I agree to complete the questionnaire and participate in an interview (audio recorded)

☐

I agree to being observed during staff meetings

☐

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research

☐

I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw my interview data at any time before data analysis without my legal rights being affected; however, once my

☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for this study.

Name of participant (print name)

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

PUPIL CONSENT FORM

Study title: Use of capital in an International School in Kuwait: a stakeholder perspective

Researcher name: Lina Khalil

Ethics reference: 25515

Dear parent, you are requested to read and sign this consent form as a legal guardian of a minor participating in this research study (see the pupil information sheet)

Dear pupil, please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

I have read and understood the information sheet (version 4, April 25, 2017) and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

☐

I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be recorded and used for the purpose of this study.

☐

I agree to participate in the focus group only and for the group interview to be audio recorded.

☐

I agree to participate in the online survey only.

☐

I agree to participate in both the online survey and focus group (which will be audio recorded).

☐

(Only provide your email if you would like to participate in the online survey)

My personal email is _____

Your email will not be stored after submitting the online survey.

I understand that my responses will be anonymised in reports of the research.

☐

I understand my participation is voluntary. I may withdraw from the focus group at any time before data analysis and/or from the online survey before submitting the survey but not after without my legal rights being affected

☐

Data Protection

I understand that information collected about me during my participation in this study will be stored on a password protected computer and that this information will only be used for the purpose of this study.

Name of participant (print name).....

Signature of Parent.....

Signature of participant.....

Date.....

Appendix B: Data collection tools

Interview protocol: teachers

Gender	Male / Female	Date __ __ __ __ __ __
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ General purpose of the study ✓ Aims of the interview and expected duration ✓ Who is involved in the process (other participants) ✓ Why the participant's cooperation is important ✓ What will happen with the collected information and how the participant/target group will benefit ✓ Any questions? ✓ Consent 		
<p>Warm up [demographic & work history]</p> <p>Can I ask some details about you and your job?</p> <p>Job Title _____</p> <p>Highest Educational Grade attained ____</p> <p>Years worked in this school __ __ yrs __ __ mths</p> <p>How old are you? <input type="checkbox"/> Under 30yrs <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Over 40yrs</p> <p>Do you have other work experience in International Schools? Where and for how long?</p> <p>Do you have work experience in your home country?</p> <p>Let us start by talking a bit about why you decided to teach in International Schools. NOTE: this is a warm-up to get the interviewee to feel comfortable. Can be followed up with "small talk" such as "When was that?" or "How did that motivate you?" etc.</p> <p>Can you tell me how you became interested about this school in particular?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Explore further, if needed with: Did you find that particular mode of communication (advertising/word of mouth...) useful to apply for a teaching job? In what ways?</p> <p>Now I am going to ask you some questions about your experiences and perceptions as a teacher in this school.</p>		
Domain	Topic and Probes	
Recruitment Induction	<p>1. How were you hired to work at this school?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. <i>Explore further, if details are not given:</i> ask about where they were hired: recruitment fair/agency/locally?</p>	

<p>Transition PD provision</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Did you feel that the information given to you during recruitment with regards to job expectations reflected accurately the reality of your job? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probes</i>: would you make any suggestions for improvement? How was that helpful/unhelpful? 3. Can you tell me more about your induction process/orientation at this school? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompts</i>: When did the induction process start? How conducive was that practice to your learning about the how to do your job more effectively? Were you partnered with a mentor/buddy? What went well, or did not go so well? 4. Some have said that induction should in fact be considered as part of PD, would you agree? Why or why not? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probe</i>: (If teacher has had experience in home country, ask or relevant importance of induction/PD in International Schools as compared to home country) 5. Would you say that this school's PD provision meets the needs to ensure teachers are more effective at achieving the school's mission? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompts</i>: What are the school's strengths in this domain? Suggestions for improvements? b. <i>Probe</i>: How safe do you feel in trying something new/could fail? 6. Take a look at the following chart (show cue card depicting the chart below)? Where would you place this school? <div> <pre> graph TD A[High social cohesion] --- B[Low social cohesion] C[Low social control] --- D[High social control] A --- B C --- D A --- C A --- D B --- C B --- D C --- A C --- B D --- A D --- B </pre> </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Explore further if the subject does not elaborate</i>: good relationships with other teachers (community of sharing); feeling appreciated & supported by management; influence on decision making; sense of security
<p>Intellectual capital (Teacher/ Pupil)</p>	<p>The previous questions focused on structures in the schools that support teaching and learning. I will move on now to talk about the intellectual capital (skills and knowledge) possessed by the teachers, pupils and you as a manager.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What skills do teachers in this school bring in with them to make sure the school achieves its mission? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probes</i>: 1st language and relation to instruction; What are the strengths and limitations? What do you think is the role of your teaching expertise in ensuring that future teachers at this school continue with the same success? What have you learned at this school that you can transfer to a new situation?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. If you leave school at the end of this academic year, how would you describe your role in ensuring that the person who takes after you transitions smoothly? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompt</i>: contractual agreement to ensure knowledge continuity? 3. You are working with pupils from diverse backgrounds, did that have an impact on your role as a teacher? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probes</i>: explore further to understand what went well and challenges b. <i>Probe</i>: (if they have experience teaching in home country) what are differences and similarities of teaching pupils in ISchs as compared to home country? 4. Similarly, you have to work with teachers from different nationalities, how has this impacted your role as a teacher? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probes</i>: explore further to understand what went well and challenges 5. (for career counsellors) what are the skills and resources required to be successful at matching pupils in this school with higher education options? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probe</i>: perceptions of degree of success; indicators; challenges/successes
Social capital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you perceive the strength in social ties amongst teaching staff in this school? What are some of the strengths and challenges? Do you feel it impacts your teaching and learning? Do you suggest any improvements?
Relationship with parents and community?	<p>Furthermore, an important stakeholder in any school are the parents and the extended community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In your opinion, what are parents' expectations of teachers at this school? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompt</i>: university admission/learning English/international education... 2. How involved are parents in the teaching and learning of their children? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probe</i>: teacher perceptions: has that benefited/challenged your teaching? Fee-paying school: does this give parents more sense of ownership; any suggestions 3. What type of communications have you had with parents? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Prompt</i>: were they all formal/informal? Teacher/parent initiated? 4. What are ways that this school has been actively involved with the local community? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Probe</i>: How has this benefited the pupils learning? Did you play an active role? Any suggestions for improvements?
Financial capital	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support teaching and learning, a school needs resources (books, computers etc.) that require financial capital. How effective are the resources provided to support the teaching and learning process? <i>Ask participant to elaborate more if they do not explain.</i>
<p>Closing</p> <p>Is there anything else that impacts your professional life that I might have missed??</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summarise ✓ Thank participant ✓ Provide extra information and contacts to participants 	

Interview protocol: managers

Gender	Male / Female	Date __ __ __ __ __ __
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ General purpose of the study ✓ Aims of the interview and expected duration ✓ Who is involved in the process (other participants) ✓ Why the participant's cooperation is important ✓ What will happen with the collected information and how the participant/target group will benefit ✓ Any questions? ✓ Consent 		
<p>Warm up [demographic & work history]</p> <p>Can I ask some details about you and your job?</p> <p>Job Title _____</p> <p>Highest Educational Grade attained ____</p> <p>Years worked in this school __ __ yrs __ __ mths</p> <p>How old are you? <input type="checkbox"/> Under 30yrs <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Over 40yrs</p> <p>Do you have other work experience in International Schools? Where and for how long?</p> <p>Do you have work experience in your home country? (Ask if they have teaching experience only or teaching and manager experience and in what capacity)</p> <p>Let us start by talking a bit about why you decided to become a manager in International Schools. NOTE: this is a warm-up to get the interviewee to feel comfortable. Can be followed up with "small talk" such as "When was that?" or "How did that motivate you?" etc.</p> <p>Can you tell me how you became interested about this school in particular?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Explore further, if needed with: Did you find that particular mode of communication (advertising/word of mouth...) useful to apply for this management job? In what ways?</p> <p>Now I am going to ask you some questions about your experiences and perceptions as a manager in this school.</p>		
Domain	Topic and Probes	
School culture Recruitment	<p>7. In your own words, can you describe the school's mission?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. <i>Follow-up:</i> how do the school's goals and objectives help achieve this mission? How do you measure success in achieving the school's mission? Who is involved in developing and reviewing the mission, goals and objectives?</p>	

<p>Transition</p> <p>PD</p> <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>8. (If the school has a strategic plan) Who is involved in creating the strategic plan?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompts:</i> how is the strategic plan and school mission related to teaching and learning practices in the classroom?</p> <p>9. Take a look at the following chart (show cue card depicting the chart below)? Where would you place this school?</p> <div> <pre> graph TD A[High social cohesion] --- B[Low social cohesion] C[Low social control] --- D[High social control] A --- B C --- D A --- C A --- D B --- C B --- D C --- A C --- B D --- A D --- B </pre> </div> <p>a. <i>Explore further if the subject does not elaborate:</i> good relationships with other teachers (community of sharing); feeling appreciated & supported by management; influence on decision making; sense of security</p> <p>10. As a manager at this school, how would you describe your influence on the school's culture?</p> <p>a. <i>Explore further if subject does not elaborate.</i></p> <p>b. <i>Probe:</i> how does that influence teaching and learning?</p> <p>c. Can you give examples of some school routines that reflect the culture?</p> <p>11. The school governing body often plays a culture in a school; what role does the governing body play in shaping the culture? Can you provide examples?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe:</i> How involved are they in decision making/influence teaching and learning?</p> <p>12. Another factor that often impacts an organization's culture, is staff turnover, would you describe this school's staff turnover is low, average or high? Explore further if participant does not elaborate</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt:</i> what are structures in place that ensure that intellectual capital/knowledge brought in with the teacher does not leave the school when they do?</p> <p>13. Can you describe your role in ensuring a smooth transition for new teachers coming into your school?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompts:</i> what are structures in place? Did these evolve over time during their tenure? If so, how and why?</p> <p>14. In your words, how does this school define PD and its importance?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompts:</i> how is this reflected in reality? How do you as a manager support PD? Structures to evaluate effectiveness?</p> <p>b. What PD is available for managers? How do you ensure that PD available actually benefits teaching and learning? PD with other schools in Kuwait/region?</p>
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	<p>15. This school follows the [curriculum]; how do you think this particular curriculum helps the school achieve its mission?</p> <p>16. To what extent do you think the curriculum provided meets the needs of the clients of this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: can you give some examples</p> <p>17. How do you choose what subjects to offer in this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: what have been factors that allowed successful implementation or challenges?</p> <p>b. <i>Prompt</i>: what is the timetabling format? Any challenges with timetabling?</p> <p>18. For the curriculum to be implemented, you need resources to support it (financial and human); what are strengths and challenges in providing resources to support the curriculum in this school?</p>
Intellectual capital (Teacher/ Pupil/ manager)	<p>The previous questions focused on structures in the schools that support teaching and learning. I will move on now to talk about the intellectual capital (skills and knowledge) possessed by the teachers, pupils and you as a manager.</p> <p>6. What qualities and skills do you look for in teachers that will be successful at this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Explore further if the participant does not elaborate</i></p> <p>7. How involved are you in recruiting new teachers?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt</i>: interview? Travel to recruitment fairs? Offer contracts?</p> <p>b. <i>Probe</i>: How efficient is this process in ensuring the skills match the school needs? Challenges? Opportunities? Strengths?</p> <p>8. What about managers, what are skills and qualities that are essential for a manager to possess to ensure their effectiveness?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt</i>: cultural intelligence? Managing staff from different cultural backgrounds?</p> <p>9. How would describe the pupil population in this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: what skills do pupil bring in with them to the school that motivates/challenges their effectiveness? Is this influenced by selection procedure? How?</p>
Social Capital	<p>1. How do you perceive the strength in social ties amongst the staff in this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: What are some of the strengths and challenges? Their role in impacting ties; suggestions for improvements if any</p>
Relationship with parents and community	<p>Furthermore, an important stakeholder in any school are the parents and the extended community.</p> <p>5. In your opinion, what are parents' expectations of teachers of this school?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt</i>: university admission/learning English/international education...</p> <p>b. <i>Probe</i>: how do you ensure that these expectations are met or even go beyond?</p> <p>6. How does the school support concerns parents may have?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt</i>: communications: were they all formal/informal? Teacher/parent initiated?</p> <p>7. How involved are parents in the teaching and learning of their children?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: has that benefited/challenged your teaching?</p> <p>8. What are ways that this school has been actively involved with the local community?</p>

	<p>a. <i>Probe</i>: How has this benefited the pupil's learning? Did you play an active role? Any suggestions for improvements?</p> <p>9. How you describe the school's reputation in the community?</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: can you give examples?</p> <p>b. <i>Prompt</i>: what are resources and procedures that you employ to maintain and promote such a reputation?</p> <p>10. Beyond the local community; what is the nature of the school's interaction with the local government?</p> <p>a. <i>Prompt</i>: follow certain laws; censorship; hiring; accreditation</p>
Financial capital	<p>1. International Schools are fee-funded, as a manager what is your role in ensuring a healthy fiscal year meanwhile maintaining educational outcomes as stated by the school mission? (Note: check if this manager in particular is involved with allocating budget allowance or simply given a budget for division to spend)</p> <p>a. <i>Probe</i>: balancing for-profit status and educational outcomes</p> <p>2. Do you think the compensation package provided to staff is competitive enough to attract quality teachers? How so...</p>
<p>Closing Is there anything else that impacts your professional life and that of your teachers that I might have missed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summarise ✓ Thank participant ✓ Provide extra information and contacts to participants 	

Focus interview: students

- Introduction, brief description of interview setting: 2 questions will be asked. The interviewer will be a facilitator. Ask the group to develop a cue to indicate they want to speak (raise hand?)
- Re-confirm consent to participate and be tape recorded
- Confirm with students that they may not share information talked about in the interview with anyone outside the group
- Reminder that any participant can withdraw at any time during the interview.

Questions:

- When and why did you come to this school?

- How well do you feel this school has prepared you to successfully transition university: academically, socially and personally? Why or why not?
- If you were to come back after you graduate from university to Kuwait, would you enrol your children in this school? Why or why not?

Interview protocol: parents

Gender	Male / Female	Date	_ _ / _ _ / _ _
Introduction			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ General purpose of the study✓ Aims of the interview and expected duration✓ Who is involved in the process (other participants)✓ Why the participant's cooperation is important✓ What will happen with the collected information and how the participant/target group will benefit✓ Any questions?✓ Consent			
Warm up [demographic & work history]			
Can I ask some details about you and your job?			
Job Title _____			
Highest Educational Grade attained ____			
Years lived in Kuwait _ _ yrs _ _ mths			
How old are you? <input type="checkbox"/> Under 30yrs <input type="checkbox"/> 30-40yrs <input type="checkbox"/> Over 40yrs			
How many children do you have in school X? Were they enrolled in other schools previous?			
Let us start by talking a bit about why you chose to enrol your child in an International School.			
Can you tell me how you became interested about this school in particular; what helped you choose this school in particular?			
How would you describe your experience as a parent of children at this school? Prompt: academics, activities, school-home communications			
If the parent(s) have had children graduate from the school and go on to university, then ask: How well prepared was your child to transition to university by the school (be it academically, socially and personally).			
Would you recommend this school to other parents? Why or why not?			
Closing			
Is there anything else you think is important in ensuring effective use of skills and resources in this school to achieve its mission that you feel we have not talked about?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Summarise✓ Thank participant✓ Provide extra information and contacts to participants			

Interview protocol: public relations

Gender Male / Female Date |__|__|__|__|__|__|

Introduction

- ✓ General purpose of the study
- ✓ Aims of the interview and expected duration
- ✓ Who is involved in the process (other participants)
- ✓ Why the participant's cooperation is important
- ✓ What will happen with the collected information and how the participant/target group will benefit
- ✓ Any questions?
- ✓ Consent

Warm up [demographic & work history]

Can I ask some details about you and your job?

Job Title _____

Highest Educational Grade attained ____

Years worked in this school |__|__|yrs|__|__|mths

How old are you? ☐ Under 30yrs ☐ 30-40yrs ☐ Over 40yrs

Do you have other work experience in International Schools? Where and for how long?

Do you have work experience in your home country?

Let us start by talking a bit about why you decided to work in International Schools. NOTE: this is a warm-up to get the interviewee to feel comfortable. Can be followed up with "small talk" such as "When was that?" or "How did that motivate you?" etc.

Can you tell me how you became interested about this school in particular?

Explore further, if needed with: Did you find that particular mode of communication (advertising/word of mouth...) useful to apply for this job? In what ways?

Now I am going to ask you some questions about your experiences and perceptions pertaining to your role as a public relation manager.

Domain	Topic and Probes
Customer capital	<p>19. What is the nature of the public relation activities employed in this school?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. <i>Prompts</i>: data collection, press relations, advertisements, local government liaison, community service activities</p> <p>20. From your experience, can you describe the barriers affecting effective links to the local community? <i>Explore further if participant does not elaborate.</i></p>

	<p>21. Does the school employ specific methods to measure or check for customer satisfaction (parents/pupils)?</p> <p>a. If yes? Ask to elaborate on methods used and the role the data plays in informing processes in school? If not, why not?</p>
<p>Closing</p> <p>Is there anything else you think is important in ensuring effective use of skills and resources in this school to achieve its mission that you feel we have not talked about?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summarise ✓ Thank participant ✓ Provide extra information and contacts to participants 	

Questionnaire: Teachers

Background Information

These questions are about you, your education and the time you have spent in teaching. In responding to the questions, please mark the appropriate box.

1. What is your gender?

Female

Male

☐₁ ☐₂

2. How old are you?

Under 25

25-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60+

☐₁

☐₂

☐₃

☐₄

☐₅

☐₆

3. What is your salary status as a teacher?

☐₁ Overseas

☐₂ Local

4. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Please mark one choice and write in the space provided the country issuing the degree.

☐₁ Bachelor degree _____

☐₂ Masters degree _____

☐₃ PhD (other postgraduate degrees) _____

5. How long have you been working as a teacher?

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

This is my
first year

1-2 years

3-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

More than
20 years

☐₁

☐₂

☐₃

☐₄

☐₅

☐₆

☐₇

6. How long have you been working as a teacher at this school?

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

This is my
first year

1-2 years

3-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

More than
20 years

☐_1

☐_2

☐_3

☐_4

☐_5

☐_6

☐_7

7. How long have you been working as a teacher in International Schools (including this one)?

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLING

	This is my first year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	
More than 20 years							
	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5	<input type="checkbox"/> _6	<input type="checkbox"/> _7

Please respond freely to the following questions:

- 8. Why did you choose to work at this school?**
- 9. What were you happiest about working at this school?**
- 10. If any, what are the most challenging aspects of your work at this school? What are suggestions for improvement?**
- 11. With respect to your professional career, where do you see yourself in five years?**

This is the end of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Questionnaires: managers

Background Information

These questions are about you, your education and the time you have spent in teaching. In responding to the questions, please mark the appropriate box.

1. What is your gender?

Female Male

☐ 1 ☐ 2

2. How old are you?

3. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Please mark one choice and write in the space provided the country issuing the degree.

☐ 1 Bachelor degree _____

☐ 2 Masters degree _____

☐ 3 PhD (other postgraduate degrees) _____

4. How long have you been working as a school leader or part of the senior management team? (include experience in this school)

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

This is my
first year 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years more than 20 years

5. How long have you been working as a school leader at this school?

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

This is my
first year 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years more than 20 years

- 6. How long have you been working as a teacher in International Schools (including this one)?**

Where possible exclude extended periods of absence (e.g. career breaks).

This is my
first year 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years more than 20 years

Please respond freely to the following questions:

- 7. What makes a good International School leader?**
- 8. Why did you choose to work at this school?**
- 9. What were you happiest about working at this school?**
- 10. If any, what are the most challenging aspects of your work at this school?**

What are suggestions for improvement?

- 11. With respect to your professional career, where do you see yourself in five years?**

This is the end of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Questionnaire: parents

Background Information

These questions are about you, your education and your position. In responding to the questions, please mark the appropriate box.

1. What is your gender?

Female Male

☐1 ☐2

2. How old are you?

Under 40-49 50-59 60+

☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4

3. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

Please mark one choice.

☐1 High school degree

☐1 Bachelor degree

☐2 Masters degree

☐3 PhD (other postgraduate degree)

4. What is your nationality? _____

5. What is your first language?

6. How many years have you been living in Kuwait?

This is my

first year 1-2 years 3-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years

7. How many children do you have enrolled in this school? _____

8. How many years total have you had your child(ren) enrolled in this school ?

Please respond freely to the following questions:

9. Why did you choose to enroll your child at this school in particular?
10. What does the school do well in preparing your child(ren) to go to university?
11. If you could change one aspect of your child(ren)'s schooling experience what would it be? Why?
12. Would you recommend this school to other parents? Please explain.

This is the end of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Questionnaire: Students

Rate your feeling of success on a scale of 1 to 100 in university:

1. Academic
2. Personal
3. Practical

Please answer freely to the next two questions:

4. How helpful was your school in preparing you to transition to university?
5. If you could make any recommendations to the school you were in in order to help better students for university, what would it be?

Appendix C Themes and Codes

Choice		35	329
Leaving the UK wanting more and better	Instances where participants indicate wanting a change due to personal or professional circumstances	21	54
Appeal of salary		12	21
Better behaved students		5	6
better weather		1	1
better working conditions		2	2
in International Schools			
escaping personal problems		4	5
experiencing different cultures		6	8
moving around in the UK is not normal		1	1
stagnant positions UK vs overseas		7	7
wanting stability for children		3	3

positive experience teaching	2	2
UK		
Practice used to select a BSO	26	56
Information of BSO not	1	1
readily available		
risk or reasonable	3	4
behaviour		
use of social capital	16	25
going in person to	5	5
get a feel		
Using anecdotal	13	20
evidence		
Using recruitment	2	3
agencies		
using social media	3	3
Using your own cultural	12	20
capital		
Doing your own	1	1
research		
Finding opportunities	5	7
at International Schools		
Using TES	3	4

using the school's	6	8
website		
promoting the school	20	67
commercial capital	20	67
structures		
Accreditation	6	7
brand differentiation	7	19
and distinction		
BSO status	1	2
Innovation & risk	5	11
taking		
involvement in	3	3
events nationwide and		
worldwide		
recruiting customers	2	3
recruiting staff	7	17
recruiting for	1	1
cultural change		
Using PR as a bridge	3	5
Reasoning for a British	Justifications of	11
school Symbolic capital	parents and staff of choosing	20

	a British school rather than		
	any other school		
downplaying importance	2	4	
of money			
Maintaining links to the	6	7	
UK			
Means to an end	2	2	
prefer British	2	6	
provision of English	1	1	
Reasoning for selecting BLS	29	130	
best option available	1	6	
Challenging oneself	3	3	
Economic advantage	11	29	
affording to travel	3	5	
Good package	9	24	
Matching <i>habitus</i>	0	0	
Curriculum provided	1	4	
match			
matching culture and	2	3	
ambitions			
school has a holistic	8	10	
approach			

Physical proximity	5	7
Structures of the school	20	40
BLS responded quickly	11	13
curriculum and subject provisions	1	2
extra-curricular activities	2	4
having a secondary department	1	1
nothing to lose its a one year contract	3	4
Managers promote and recruit	9	14
wanting a school with NQT training	2	2
Symbolic aspects of a good quality school	16	44
British artefacts	4	6
Embassy children went there	1	1

fees measure of	2	2	
quality			
Good PENTA report	1	1	
good reputation	12	25	
Longevity	2	2	
quality teachers	4	4	
well-run school	2	2	
teaching couple get jobs	1	1	
at same school			
Contradictions	32	117	
Britishness	19	39	
British vs American vs	10	24	
international			
comparing BLS to public	3	3	
schools			
High standards	5	10	
Language capital	3	7	
negative point system is	9	20	
stressful for the children			
Rounded and rigorous	Curriculum is highly	20	43
curriculum	appraised as well as all the		

extra-curricular activities that			
the school provides			
out-of-the box		4	8
teaching methods			
provision of extra-		17	29
curricular activities			
pushing for academic		8	8
excellence			
shapes students <i>habitus</i>		12	21
Values		9	14
CPD		4	7
challenges		2	2
Does not provide enough	Has an element of not	3	6
	enough time as well not just		
	resources		
Provides enough		2	3
Issue of time		4	4
have enough time		3	3
Induction is		3	3
overwhelming			
Need more time		10	21

schemes of work as	2	4
tools of exercising power		
Schemes of work	1	1
make lives easier		
work intensification	10	20
pushback from older	1	2
teachers		
more business or more school	12	25
Detrimental to quality of	9	18
education and relationships		
insufficient resourcing	3	3
money goes into	5	9
providing a quality education		
Nature of relationships	Instances showing that	
	parent feedback is taken into	7
	consideration and in others	8
	ignored or not taken into	
	account	
A feel of lack of support	12	19
parents from the	1	3
school		

students from	5	15
teachers		
teachers from	8	10
managers		
buttering up	1	1
Conditional sense of	2	6
support by teachers to students		
efficient and supportive	19	35
modes of communication		
positive and supportive	2	3
sixth form ethos	4	14
Quality of teaching and	11	23
learning (added value)		
Cutting costs	5	5
Fees and quality of	12	34
teaching		
High standard	11	26
Inconsistent	8	16
increased size impacts	3	3
negatively on ability to		
collaborate		

Increasing student	10	23
population impacting on quality		
intense student workload	1	1
Large turnover	14	32
Narrow-focused and	7	16
limited		
need for a career	5	21
counselor vs does provide		
poor school facilities	3	4
recruiting teacher	2	2
challenges		
student leadership	2	4
opportunities		
Quality of the clay	8	11
high	17	36
not so great exaggerated	6	8
<i>Habitus</i>	31	255
Adjusting	Instances of practices	23 59
	of adjusting own <i>habitus</i> to	
	the new field	
characteristics help	2	3
students transition to uni		

expat enclaves	2	2
Matched <i>habitus</i> between individual and the school	11	12
nonchalant attitude	1	1
not speaking up, dealing with it	7	12
structures help adjusting to life in host country	14	28
you get comfortable	1	1
Mismatch	Instances where the existing <i>habitus</i> is in conflict with the field of International Schooling	19 53
fear of going stale as a teacher	1	2
feeling cynical	3	4
Life in Kuwait	mismatch with cultural practices; heat/climate...both physical and personal	15 20
life in UK	1	2
With International School practice	10	25

Pedagogic		This code represents	29	122
		instances of established		
		<i>habitus</i> or expected <i>habitus</i>		
		that relates to the International		
		School context and is role-		
		specific		
Parents			25	83
	academic and result	Want their children to	10	13
	oriented	be proficient in subjects they		
		take; teachers are seen as		
		means to understanding the		
		content of subject		
	matching with		2	6
	International School practice			
	parenting habits	Indulging their	13	26
		children; involvement in		
		decision making; allowing		
		children to be independent		
	Parents are		13	18
	customers			
	parents seen as		2	2
	bullies			

supportive of	12	18
teachers		
Students	18	39
academic oriented	5	9
Dependent on	16	27
teacher for knowledge		
dual identity	1	1
re-adjusting	2	2
unconventional route to	5	7
teaching		
young teachers	4	11
feeling of homesickness	1	1
lack of experience and	4	4
travel		
lack professional attitude	1	1
open to new ideas	3	5
Misrecognition	18	51
Faith in British institutions	14	33
Kuwait is a warzone	3	5
misconceptions of	1	1
International School experience		
West vs East	4	12

Patterns	Excerpts that show contradictions on the same issues	25	151
characteristics of a good manager in a British school overseas		19	54
being flexible		2	3
being innovative and creative		2	2
challenging staff		4	8
encouraging growth			
parent pleasing		2	3
retaining staff and expertise		1	1
showing empathy and support		6	13
supporting but not being too close		1	2
characteristics of teachers		21	72
successful overseas			
confidence in teaching		3	8
Local expertise		3	5

passion for teaching and caring for pupils	expressed eagerness to teach or willingness to engage pupils and learn to maintain and/or motivate pupils	13	25
Resilience and acceptance	Ability to let go of the day-to-day frustrations and not let them impact quality of teaching	13	34
Experience teacher as parent		7	25
School		36	381
budget for school activities		9	10
Cultural		29	138
Embodied		10	12
diverse student body		7	7
multilingual admin staff who have lived in Kuwait		1	1
school ethos		4	4
Institutionalised		25	115
compartmentalisation of subjects		3	3
curriculum		9	19
			325

Formal teaching	3	5
structures		
implementing change	7	9
from the UK		
Professional <i>capital</i>	Describes job	22 77
	descriptions and expectations	
	of staff; their workload	
New roles in	7	14
response of school		
growth		
opportunities for	10	26
promotion		
professional	5	5
autonomy		
teacher	7	11
workload		
tutor groups	3	8
use of mark	1	1
schemes		
use of	7	12
technology to support		
teaching		

Specialisation	2	2
subjects starts at year 6 not 7		
Objectified	7	11
school building	7	11
history	4	5
technical and organisational	34	228
affiliated academies	1	1
continuity management	17	40
importance of	5	5
retaining knowledge		
lack of institutional	3	4
memory		
relying on middle	10	24
management		
standardising	3	5
schemes of work		
VLE helps teachers	6	7
know what to teach		
CPD	15	62
creative ways to save	10	15
money		

devolved CPD		1	2
budget			
focusing on PENTA		2	2
training			
has to be useful to		5	7
the school			
having a CPD		3	4
coordinator			
No INSET days		3	3
Devolved budgets for		11	13
resources			
differentiated package		1	3
evolving structures		8	14
getting pupils ready for		9	23
unis	Instances describing		
	the school actively getting		
	students ready, either		
	through intensified workload,		
	creating personal statements,		
applying to unis	matching university to student		
	profile		
applying to unis		1	1

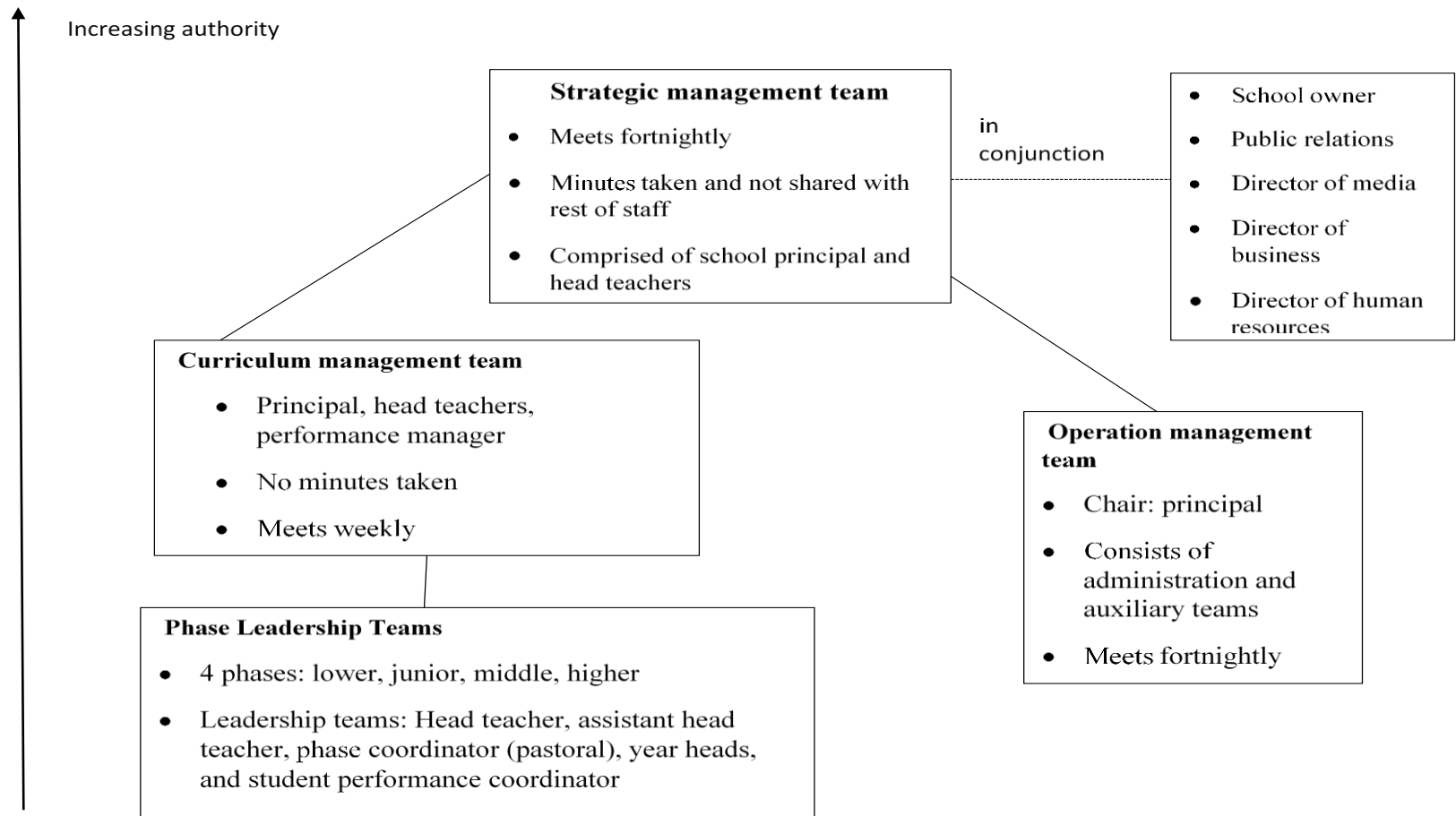
strategic choice of IG	1	2	
and A-level subjects to			
match career			
Student assessment	Internal and external	3	4
student selection		8	18
Quality control		14	47
performance		9	23
management			
role of inspection		9	16
staff handbook		5	8
school calendar		5	9
school language		3	6
tutoring		6	10
Social Capital		28	102
blurred lines school and home		9	9
External partnerships		5	7
lack of school		1	2
collaboration in Kuwait			
Partnership with Nord		4	4
Anglia			
no parent forum		1	1
not a fluffy organisation		1	1

Pragmatic relationships means	5	7
to an end		
supporting parents by	email, meetings,	10
providing different venues of	presence on playground	22
communication		
teachers sharing and		18
collaborating		52
Symbolic capital		17
artefacts of prestige		9
measure of success		5
academic excellence		7
easy transition of students		2
abroad		
happiness		3
increasing enrolment		3
number of extra-		2
curricular activities		
Professionalism	Staff speak of	6
	instances of what strikes them	9
	about the school being	
	professional and knowing	
	where they stand	

Symbolic power		22	70
Hierarchical structures	decisions made at top	7	10
	with little or no evidence of teacher input; teachers informed to change practice with little or no support		
bureaucracy		4	4
culture shapers		10	22
delegated leadership		4	5
discipline staff		3	3
top-down management		11	19
symbolic violence		18	57
changing the <i>habitus</i> of	Instances where trends	4	10
parents and students	show that parents are changing their <i>habitus</i> from choosing 'traditional' subjects to 'less traditional'		
Exploitation no employee protection		4	14
Government interference in school policies and teacher lives		6	16

lack of transparency	2	2
Orientalism	2	4
prejudice	2	9
Putting the student first	1	1
speaking of the school as a business	3	3

Appendix D Hierarchical structure of BLS



Appendix E: Sample completed survey (parents)²⁵

ID	Gender	Age	Country	Yrs in Kuwait	1st Language	Other Language	Children in school	Yrs Experience	Education	Country of degree	Reason to enrol	School does well	Change	Recommend school
P-01	F	40-49	UK	1-2 years	English		1	3	Other	United Kingdom	Recommended by my sons school in Dubai	Nothing yet	Stop handing negatives out all the time. Petty and mainly unnecessary	No. I think the campus is shabby and overcrowded and it is very poorly administered
P-02	M	40-49	UK	6-10 years	English		2	9	High-school diploma	United Kingdom	Reputation of academic achievements. Choice of after school activities (sport / IA etc)	Work ethic Being part of a multi ethnic school and class environment	High attrition of teachers which can be both good & bad but has an impact during later years such as GCSE's in terms of continuity in teaching.	Yes. Students are pushed hard academically, they are encouraged to demonstrate many other area's of personal development and excel in non classroom activities.

²⁵ Please note: some of the parents who have completed the survey don't have English as their first language. Hence, there are some grammatical and spelling errors that I have kept as is because language (fluency and accuracy) is a measure of cultural *capital*

P-03	M	40-49	Australia	3-5 years	English	1	4	Bachelors	Australia	Best option available at the time.	Strong academic focus - drive the kids quite hard.	Very maths and science focused - need to have more for kids that are not this way inclined.	Important to understand that BSK is on par with other international schools in KWT BUT it is also fair to say that when the benchmark is compared to other international schools outside KWT the facilities, opportunities and overall quality of education falls short of what I would expect from an international school. My 3 kids have been in international schools in europe, asia and the middle east and the KWT offering is significantly behind what we have experienced elsewhere.
P-04	F	40-49	US	6-10 years	English	1	7	High-school diploma	United States	Curriculum and school policies and regulations	The classes and the expectations and regulations that my child is held to.	I wouldn't change any aspect.	Yes, BSK is a great learning and teaching experience for my child. He has grown immensely and academically.

P-05	F	40-49	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic	2	11	Bachelors	Egypt	Most conservative school in Kuwait .	Nothing	Change the school . Better teachers quality for the fees paid .	No
P-06	F	30-39	Egypt	First year	Arabic	2	1	Masters	United Arab Emirates	I researched before applying and it is one of the best schools in kuwait. It is very academic and successfully apply the British system	They provide the academics needed. They also allow the students to participate in workshops and seminars.they provide advise regarding universities especially in the higher years	Three things need to be changed, first, enhance school facilities and resources, provide more and diverse extra curricular activities and cancel the negative system as punshiments is not a way of learning	I would as so far my kids are happy and no problems have been faced

P-07	M	50-59	Australia	6-10 years	English	2	10	Masters	United Kingdom	It came as a reputed educational institution when I came to Kuwait.	More out of school study rather than in class.	More interaction with the teacher who should volunteer there support rather than have the child do independent research which could at times create a misdirected approach.	Most probably
P-08	F	40-49	South Africa	16-20 years	English	2	4	Bachelors	South Africa	Both are creative & the subjects offered are not only Science based as they don't do well in these subjects.	Teaches them how to study independently & prepare for exams	Real life experiences	Yes if their children are on the creative/arty side

P-09	F	40-49	Egypt	11-15 years	Arabic	1	12	Bachelors	Egypt	Its reputation as a strong school that offers high-quality education	Instills in students a sense of hard work, responsibility, discipline, high professional standards and work ethic, to some extent encourages research	The school needs to be more flexible in its rules and more keen on the psychological well being of the students	I do actually recommend the school to parents for children up to Y6 or Y8 at the most. After that, I advise parents to switch to another High School or even better, leave the British system altogether because it gets way too stressful for students starting Y9 onwards.
P-10	M	40-49	Canada	16-20 years	Arabic	3	10	Bachelors	United States	Prefer British system. This schools is on par with KES & NES----yet has more sports- so i chose BSK.	all rounded	make it a bit cheaper...!	yes,, all rounded education
P-11	F	50-59	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic	2	11	Bachelors	Kuwait	Good reputation , one of the best British school in kuwaitrgiving them go	Giving enough time for revising the topics before exam , also the Cambridge syllabus is one of the best	Nothing	Yes, cause it is one of the best in kuwait, I believe

P-12	M	40-49	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic	1	10	Masters	Kuwait	Reputation on academic stand	British curriculum	None. I am satisfied	Yest. Great curriculum in British education
P-13	F	40-49	UK	11-15 years	English	2	10	Bachelors	United Kingdom	It was the first school to respond to our inquiry.	I am dissatisfied with the preparation as I feel there is not adequate support.	I would love to eradicate the cliquey, hierarchy aspects of the school.	Unfortunately I would not. The standard of education has considerably declined and management focus more on the business aspect rather than education.

P-14	F	40-49	More than 20 years	Arabic		1	3	Masters	Bahrain	<p>1- first they have British curcalime which is the same one in the uk</p> <p>2-My friends recommend me for this school because the best and oldest privet school in Kuwait</p> <p>3-they have quietly teachers and experience</p> <p>4-Near to my house</p>	<p>1-They give my child Subjects that he happy to do it in the GCSE and fit to his potinshial</p> <p>2-they do some trip to help my child to be come more indibendent</p>	<p>Less subjects in the GCSE so the children will be moe focus and they can get good grade</p>	<p>They are quietly school and good school to deal with parents and children</p>
P-15	F	30-39	6-10 years	Other	Urdu	2	1	Bachelors	India	<p>Its a reputed school and has a good level of education</p>	<p>High standard of teachers</p>	<p>Timings as the children can also study in the time and can relax in the morning</p>	<p>Yea, because of its standards</p>

P-16	F	50-59	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic	1	1	PhD	Egypt	Because all the people told me that the school is good.	There is good teachers and they teach my child properly.	Nothing cause he's learning good qnd he is anderstanding	Yes because it is one of the best schools in kuwait.
P-17	M	40-49	Jordan	More than 20 years	Arabic	2	11	Bachelors	India	Because of the British system that school have	Nothing. My son in IG this but he donâ€™t know what and where should complete the university	Change the school or select an American system	For early ages , yes but for ages above 12, I prefer American school
P-18	F	40-49	Egypt	3-5 years	Arabic	2	1	Masters	United Kingdom	Good reputation	Self research	Nothing	Yes because it's a strict school allowing children to develop their learning and social skills

P-19	M	40-49	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic		3	4	Bachelors	Kuwait	To prepare them for the competitive market and have a better chance in future recruitment!	Communication skills and self confidence	The school is very strict with their House points an negative points system which puts a lot of pressure on the students and lower the confidence level ! Old school type of system! Definatly need to be changed. New teachers abusing the system as well !	No, prefer the American system. Less complicated system !
P-20	M	40-49	Tanzania	1-2 years	Other	Kiswahili	5	2	PhD	Tanzania	It is one of the best international schools in Kuwait	The School prepare the kids in both academic and extra curricula activities	None I can think of	Yes I would.
P-21	F	40-49	Kuwait	More than 20 years	Arabic		3	12	PhD	Ireland	Heard its one of the best British schools in Kuwait	Research, projects and outside courses		Yes despite expenses

P-22	M	50-59	Lebanon	More than 20 years	Arabic	2	6	Masters	Lebanon	English school Close to home	research mental readiness	more frequent small tests	yes strong control, emphasis on being the best, strong management
P-23	F	40-49	United States	1-2 years	English	2	2	Masters	United States	This school offered high quality education opportunities and many extracurricular opportunities.	The school causes them to think about their schedule and when assignments are due in order for them to learn time management and priority setting.	I am very happy with this school and cannot think of anything I'd change about it.	Yes, I've already recommended this school to several parents that are new to Kuwait. I emphasize the order and discipline that is kept as part of the British system. I also mention the arts, design and technology and extracurricular opportunities that are available.
P-24	F	40-49	Egypt	11-15 years	Arabic	2	4	PhD	Egypt	The only language school in Kuwait that present clear curriculum and well organised	Teaching them how to get information on their own ... I think the main role of the teacher is to assess students	I would change the teacher staff .. they are like machines following marking schemes .. they are not creative	Unfortunately education in Kuwait is very poor.. it is the only option we have

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