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Bravery, Accountability, and Praxis:
Decolonizing International Education

by

Amanda LF Molnar

A thesis
presented to Lakehead University
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Education

Orillia, Ontario, Canada, 2020

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

Molnar, Amanda LF, *Accountability and Brave Praxis: A Grounded Theory Study into Decolonizing International Schooling*. Master of Education (Education for Change), September, 2020, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

International education operates in a fundamentally post/colonial paradigm. This study aims to amplify the voices of a diverse group of students, learning at Green School, Bali (an international school environment) around their experiences of education, community, and reflective practices within this colonial landscape. Specifically, it aims to answer the following question, "What is the impact of high school students' implicit (non-curricular and out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own metacognitive processes at the Green School?"

This study was completed using a participative model of Grounded Theory, combined with Critical Action Research in which students were taught about research in education, then participated in group interviews, which were adjusted as needed based on their responses. From there, students worked with the researcher to code and analyze the interview data, and finally to propose guidelines for potential solutions. Their voices are paramount to this research.

The results of this study suggest a number of categories in which international schools should ask deeper questions and implement changes in order to both decolonize and build community. Specifically working towards true accountability for all community members, empowering diverse voices and trusting them with this power, providing transparency around decision making and finances, and finally, asking the right questions and implementing a Brave Praxis. The recommendations and conclusions section of this study includes questions and supportive protocols for teachers and administrators to adapt and utilize in group discussions in order to spark change in their communities. It is meant to be both a practical and living document.

KEY WORDS: International Education, Decolonization, Holistic Education, Pedagogy, School Policy, Accountability, Community, Praxis, Sustainability

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This thesis was written and submitted by Masters Student Researcher, Amanda Molnar, all personal pronouns (I, me, my) refer to her. All other parties in this process will be referred to by name or title.

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Positionality Statement

I am a cisgendered, able-bodied, White woman, who grew up in a middle-class household, where both of my parents spoke academic English. My race, body-size, and linguistic background did not hinder my studies or grading. I have attempted, throughout this work, to view and analyze my own bias and my own perspective on the cultures in which I have lived, taught, and learned. I am a teacher of international education and a teacher educator who has the immense privilege to live in Bali, Indonesia and teach at the Green School, thus I am faced with the challenges presented in this research every day.

Research Problem

International education operates in a fundamentally post/colonial paradigm. Schools, whose languages of instruction and ways of knowing are primarily of European and eurocentric origin, strive to provide learning environments that build up “whole students” and prepare them for higher education. The Green School in Bali, Indonesia, aims to create a “community of learners making our world more sustainable” (Green School Bali, 2020) while developing students’ core skills, primarily adaptability and critical systems thinking.

The experience of and interplay between in-school and out-of-classroom (home) learning for English as a first language, other international, and local students is vastly different, specifically in wellbeing, identity, and metacognitive learning areas. Home learning, for the purposes of this thesis, includes the social and cultural capital that learners gain outside of the classroom with their families, friends, and communities, through socialization and acculturation. There is a limited base of knowledge in the impacts of out-of-school learning on students’ community engagement (support, sense of belonging, and feelings of safety in school) in these, the most personal of classes. With the rise of global independent international schools and their prevalence in Asian countries in particular, additional research into this area is paramount to successfully decolonizing international schools.

Drawing upon critical anti-racial, post-colonial, and feminist theories set within the broad framework of educational thought, and utilizing a grounded theory methodology, I undertake to chip away at the following question:

What is the impact of high school students’ implicit (non-curricular and out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own metacognitive processes at the Green School?

Chapter 1: Introduction

We're in a bubble. I guess being here, you're in a beautiful jungle, you've got solar panels, you've got bamboo, you've got like, you see that and what, it's a big bubble of the community. And I think that stepping outside that bubble is important.
- Eva (grade eleven)

Being an international teacher and expatriate can feel like walking around inside a bubble. Of course, you can see out and others can see you, but you can never get quite close enough to touch what is real. Perhaps this is not a unique experience to those of us who live and work in places and cultures that are not our own; even wandering the streets of my tiny, sleepy hometown in southern Ontario sometimes feels like an exercise in disconnection. How can we ever truly know what it feels like to view the world from inside someone else's shiny barricade. These bubbles protect us, of course, and in the case of living and working as a Western foreigner in a country previously dominated by White colonialists, they tend to confer a certain amount of privilege. But, as high walls and guarded gates can provide security, they can also serve to imprison us, breeding disconnection from the outside world.

International private schools outside of the West tend to feel and look like they are separate from the surrounding communities and places in which they find themselves. The people that walk through the gates, the food cooked inside, the languages spoken, and the topics of conversation are often distinct from what you would find if you walked a few hundred metres down the road. Especially in the so-called developing world, these schools can tend to encourage this bubble-making, as they position themselves as superior, in many ways, to the education systems already in place in these countries. Their marketing alludes to the benefits of a Western education, to the number of foreign teachers on staff, and to the opportunities and benefits that are afforded to students of such a prestigious institution. Once inside, this bubble can feel safe to those of us who see ourselves in the curriculum and target market of the school, but can feel impermeable to those who are trying to balance their outside lives with what they encounter in these schools.

One of my close friends straddled this line for many years as a local Indonesian student at Green School Bali. She speaks of coming home to her village and asking too many questions of

family members about the whys and wherefores of her own culture. Or of heading back to school and still not finding the answers she was looking for. Listening to her, with tears in her eyes, talk about how she was grateful for the experience, for the benefits that a Western education gave her, and in the same breath lamenting that she did not have a place in the world anymore, I found myself angry. She could not find belonging with her rich, White classmates or in her village. She is of two worlds and none at the same time. My friend entered the bubble as a pre-teen and grew through her formative years trying to pop in and out of it, but eventually she had to choose and found herself stuck. It is her tears, her late-night rants of frustration, and her sassy commentary on such a deeply nuanced topic that pushed me further in this research when I found myself weary.

These bubbles we find ourselves in do not serve us. They separate us and blind us to the experiences of others. They disconnect us in our classrooms and close us off from rich, meaningful, and deep learning experiences. Most of all, they continue to propagate colonial ideals that devalue the communities that international schools claim to be supporting. It is because of this that I have chosen to research decolonization in the international schooling context, and have chosen to highlight the voices of students who find themselves in the thick of the bubble, both inside and outside of the shimmery walls. It is my hope that their words, ideas, and experiences can position us all to ask the right questions, take the right action, and maybe even find ourselves outside, our feet on the ground, with nothing in between us but fresh clean air.

Definition of Topics and Terms

In order to provide the foundation for a review of literature on decolonizing education in 2020, it is important to start with historical contexts, as we did not arrive in the fraught situation we are in spontaneously, and there are an indescribable number of factors that have led to today. Colonization, the subjugation of peoples, has been a part of human existence for millennia (Kohn, 2017), but, for the purpose of this review, I will be focusing on modern imperialist colonization and its impact on education today. The terms 'colonial' and 'imperialist' are often conflated or substituted without discretion, so in order to gain clarity, I will use the Stanford definition and terminology of colonial/ism, which is, " a broad concept that refers to the project of European political domination from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries that ended with the national liberation movements of the 1960" (Kohn 2017).

Colonialism was not just a practice of physically taking over lands, but was, and I believe more importantly, cemented in the minds of subjugated peoples; this “colonization of the mind” has allowed colonial legacies to be perpetuated through societal structures long after the heyday of modern imperialism ended (Illich, 305). As we look at modern education institutions and curricula, we have to bear in mind that no part of humanity escaped the grasp of colonial violence:

The “modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal western-centric/Christian-centric world-system” has privileged the culture, knowledge, and epistemology produced by the West inferiorizing the rest. No culture in the world remained untouched by European modernity. There is no absolute outside to this system. The monologism and monotopic global design of the West relates to other cultures and peoples from a position of superiority and is deaf toward the cosmologies and epistemologies of the non-Western world. (Grosfoguel 2011, p. 24).

Grosfoguel argues, and Illich, Pete, and Martin agree, that colonialism created a complex world, in which our many intersectionalities, identities, and histories shape ourselves as educators, researchers and students, and that these contexts can not be ignored in the work (Illich, 187).

Many educational researchers use the term ‘postcolonial’ to describe the state of modern schooling, but I will choose, in the course of this paper, to continue to use ‘colonial’. Living in former colonies over the course of many years (Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Indonesia) has forced me to conclude that colonialism will always be present, never post. We, as educators, need to decolonize iteratively, by taking into account historically constructed societal structures that continue to be maintained, strengthened, and reproduced. Decolonization was and is not a finite process, it continues. It must continue (Tom et al., 2017).

I also lean towards the beautifully written description of modern identity in schooling that Madden, Higgins, & Korteweg (2013) provide in their comprehensive work when both reviewing other literature and considering the creation of my own: that there is a complex hybridity of power, oppression, and dominant ways of knowing that is enhanced, not diminished, by the fundamental structures of eurocentrism, and Whiteness that globally pervade. Madden et al are speaking from a Canadian Indigenous context, but, through my readings and personal experience, I believe the power dynamics of Whiteness and European privilege are no less relevant in international contexts.

In order to delve into the specific educational paradigm that exists at Green School, Bali, it is important to define international education, in contrast to multicultural or diverse schooling. Hill (2007) acknowledges that multicultural and international education often intersect, to varying degrees of efficacy, but that they are not one in the same. His definition of international schooling argues that true international schools have no nation, and that they are better poised for intercultural understanding, due to their global context, but they frequently fall short. I agree with the basic premise, but propose an expanded criticism: that international schools, although they are poised to provide connections between national and racial groups, are inherently colonial in nature. International schools represent a colonial legacy through their linguistic, financial, and curricular positioning, especially in post-imperial countries.

In my years of teaching, learning, and building community in international schools, I have come to believe that **International schools, as has previously been stated in this paper, are fundamentally colonial in nature. They are not only legacies of imperial times, but serve to reinforce the dominant societal power structures and inequalities that were put into place during that era.** This is not something I write lightly. Before beginning my three-year journey in Malaysia, I explored the colonial context for education there, including the (limited) research into its impact on students' identities and beliefs about schooling (both local and international) (Molnar, 2015). This research proved to be fundamental to my pedagogy there, and was subsequently both confirmed in ways, and challenged in others throughout my teaching practice (Molnar, 2017). Malaysian society, systemically, is divided into four racial groups: Malay, Chinese, Indian, and "other" (Molnar, 2015). This divisiveness plays out linguistically, culturally, in government policies, and, on a more micro level, in the way that students engage with learning and learning communities (Molnar, 2017). Malaysian parents spend, on average, \$25,479 on each of their children's education (HSBC Holdings plc), which is more than many wealthier countries, including Canada and the UK. This is a massive proportion of their income, which, in 2016, was an average of approximately \$15,000 per year (Uzir Bin Mahidin). Malaysian families that do not belong to the Malay ethnic group, often choose to pay to send their children to international schools, because there is a massive value placed on education, and the legacy of British colonial rule has them trusting more in foreign institutions than their own, local schools (Molnar, 2015).

While practicing reflective teaching and praxis in Malaysia, I came to see the violence of education that Illich (2017) describes first-hand; listening to students' stories, noticing their

struggles with language, and feeling their disconnection from content and community caused me to pivot my teaching strategies and, more often than not, admit my ignorance. Listening to them is the most important act I took throughout my time there. International schools and their frequent choice of English as a medium for instruction and lack of support for students' first languages is the biggest marker of their colonial nature (Bokhorst-Heng, 2007). This further exacerbates the disadvantages poised against local students in international contexts. It increases the privilege of students who see themselves culturally and linguistically reflected in curricula and teaching. In my classroom, we created a forum for our community to support learning in their home languages through a collaborative multilingual dictionary; students and parents noted, over and over, that they were better able to connect with each other and the content (Molnar 2017). This is not proof of a practice that can combat colonial violence in education, but simply additional testimony for its existence.

As a teacher and administrator at Green School Bali, I have been privy to deep, intellectual conversations about the direction of the curriculum, structures, and strategy that make up its bones. I have also sat, walked, and worked with students as they shared their struggles, triumphs, and fears. Throughout my time, it became more and more clear to me that students and teachers were facing some of the same challenges, and attempting to fight for change in the same ways. They were looking to have their voices truly heard, to be seen and valued, and to find spaces where their unique skills and talents could shine. In particular, I frequently found myself in after-hours conversations with colleagues about whether we were actually engaging with and supporting the local community, and listening to my Indonesian colleagues as they described their own unique fight for justice within our systems. I noticed that those same local staff often ate separately from the expatriates at lunch, and never bought coffee at the on-campus cafe. I kept coming back to a brief interaction I had with a wonderful student, who said the only place she felt truly safe and comfortable was in her Indonesian exam preparation class, conducted only in Bahasa Indonesia, and separate from her foreign classmates. There were so many pieces to this puzzle, and although I am a curious and engaged educator, I knew I needed more voices to find any sort of salient path forward.

In the past year, the students seemed to grow more and more frustrated with the inconsistencies between the marketing and image presentation of the school and what they were

experiencing on the ground. Although there are exceptions to this, especially when it came to student-led or democratically-designed projects, frustration was definitely becoming the norm. I also noted that many students were gravitating towards self-directed learning, and courses that were allowing them to shape their own education in ways that empowered them. They more often chose teachers that developed flexible classes with real world action and applications. In my wellbeing classes, when students had the opportunity to help design the curriculum beforehand, I received uncountable responses with topics, questions, and suggestions. They wanted to be engaged.

However, just like I had heard from many of the teachers, the students felt as though their feedback was falling on deaf ears. That although they were frequently surveyed or participated in forums, the real power lay elsewhere. They were looking for change, but did not yet have a platform with any real teeth to make changes to the inequalities and inauthenticity they saw in the system. Faced with this, I decided to shape my research in a way that not only gave them a voice in the school, but would hopefully allow their experiences to positively shape other communities around the world. I wanted to facilitate their learning around research in education, help them to see how we make broad changes to schools and school systems, and then provide space for them to participate in the process itself. We took the time together to understand the different research methodologies, the ethics involved, how to analyze data, and then how to present it once it was completed. The students who signed up for my class wanted their words to be presented in a way that would inspire change.

Letting their voices lead the way was certainly not the easiest approach I could have taken to analyzing the impacts of colonialism on international education. It required humility, and the grace to admit that although I have more years of education under my belt, I was definitely not the expert in the room when it came to the student-participants' experiences. As much as I could hypothesize and speculate, what really mattered was how they saw it all. It is for this reason that I chose to use grounded theory as my research methodology, creating a space for open group interviews with students that both they and I reflected on continuously. It allowed me to change interview questions on the fly, based on the direction they were taking conversations, and allowed them to advocate for what was important in their lives at the moment. Subsequently, the students and I analyzed their data together and created a framework for recommendations that might come out of it. This process necessitated flexibility and quick thinking, but was also extremely

joyful. I would say that the interviews and analysis that took place in this class were some of the richest and most inspiring days of my teaching career.

It is my hope that this work amplifies the voices of those amazing students and brings about change, not only in our own community, but in school systems around the world that are struggling through similar challenges as a result of the historical systems that got us to where we are today. This work aims to not only bring their voices to the front, but to serve as a resource for teachers, administrators and students who want to ask critical questions, advocate for new practices, and continue to reflect, especially in the face of colonialism. It is my dearest ambition that this piece of work, that has taken a large piece of my heart (and some of my lifespan), not sit on a dusty shelf, but be used, critiqued, discussed, and revamped over the years, that it becomes a living document and takes on a life of its own.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Scope of Literature Review

Throughout the process of reviewing the available literature around decolonizing international education, I attempted to keep my mind open to resources that were both specifically applicable to the topic at hand and those that supported facets of decolonizing that could potentially be viewed through an international lens. As well, the body of work on decolonization has been extremely iterative, building on the work of amazing educators and activists for decades; therefore I did not limit my research by time period, although the majority of the works included here come from the past twenty years. Predominantly, and especially in the context of Canadian higher education, the focus of decolonizing resources is on the prevalence and dominance of White, euro-centric ways of thinking and knowing that have systemically subjugated peoples of colour and Indigenous communities for centuries. These resources are rich and varied and I found them to be extremely useful when setting the positionality of this research, and for finding my own voice and perspective in this extremely complex narrative. The scope of the writing herein includes a look at dominant colonial perspectives related to what we teach, how we teach it, and who is being valued and validated in our classrooms. I also chose to include, as part of the “how” portion, a more practical assessment of policy-level and pedagogical tools that are currently being researched and implemented in classrooms in order to both decolonize and promote community.

Availability and Limitations of Reviewed Literature

The wealth of information that has been expertly produced around the topic of decolonization is difficult to quantify. There are an incredible number of studies, books, and other media resources on the topic, from many different perspectives. The more I read, the more I wanted to know. Of course, given the current political climate, decolonization and anti-racist education practices are both extremely relevant and talked-about; that is not to say that they are more important now, but just that they seem to be talked about more and more as the years go on. This is a good thing. With the vast array of supporting literature available to me, the real limitation here is that I had to pick and choose what to include in this study. It is at this point that I

must claim the first and most important limitation: although there has been a great deal of work done around decolonizing education within the context of specific countries and their citizens (i.e. Canadian school systems and the diverse students that attend them), there has not been a lot of research done into what this looks like in international schools. International schools exist in an odd intersection of colonialism, diversity, freedom, and privilege, which gives a different perspective than traditional government-funded curricula and systems. This limitation is particularly important because it leads into my justification for research, because I could find little on how private international schooling systems were tackling their inherent privilege and colonial nature, I hope to provide a starting point for future studies on this topic.

Criticisms of Dominant Colonial Perspectives

Colonialism is not something that exists only in history books, neutral and scientifically observed from a safe distance. It is all around us, and perpetuated in our social systems on a constant basis. It takes only a few reflective moments to begin unpeeling the layers of structural privilege and oppression that have been perpetuated by years of entrenched colonial ways of thinking. As I defined above, colonialism really is about the Western (White) world inferiorizing the rest (Grosfoguel 2011, p. 24), and this began during a time when European powers attempted to expand their empires by taking over lands previously occupied and self-governed by diverse peoples the world over. The topic of colonialism could fill books and books, and in fact, it has. So, it is helpful here to get very specific, very fast. When we look at colonialism in the context of education, it might be easy to start out thinking that our curricula have been developed over years with the input of highly-respected and educated teachers and academics, and thus the ways in which we teach and what we learn in school are not colonial in nature anymore. This would be a mistake. There are no neutral texts, and the axiological choices we make, at the policy level and at the micro level in our classrooms all have been influenced by the soup of colonialism we have been stewing in for centuries. As an example of the impact of colonialism's historical legacy at work, I will offer up the seemingly simple concept of timetabling and mandatory classes in high school. How we decide what is most important for students to learn, and how long they should spend learning these topics shows what we value in their education; this choice often, in the Western world lends itself to math, English language literacy, local history, science, and often, government. When we dig into this, the perpetuation of traditional, euro-centric ways of knowing and displaying knowledge (objective testing, essay writing, socratic discussions) becomes

clearer. Even something as simple as the formality between teachers and students, where students call their teachers by honorifics screams of class structures from long-ago times. Digging deep into most systems at play in the Western world often uncovers uncomfortable truths about the axiological decisions that shape our daily lives: policing, beauty standards, and news media are excellent examples of arenas where the historical legacy of colonialism is alive and well, and negatively impacting the lives of millions (although they are not the only ones).

Colonialism in schooling places value on topics, ways of knowing, and groups of people in a way that is detrimental to the diverse groups of students and teachers that fill classrooms in 2020. This is true in the context of local government schooling, but I feel, is especially so in international schools. When an institution opens in a former colony or less-developed country that is driven by a euro-centric (often English-language) curriculum, there are a number of colonial implications that come along with its appeal. Less-developed country is a term that in and of itself is colonial in nature. *Developing towards what?* Firstly, there is the idea that the schools that already exist in a country, staffed by its citizens (often racialized peoples) are not sufficient for international expatriates. Secondly, that an international school is a good opportunity for local students and teachers to skill themselves “up” and learn to be more Westernized, thereby improving the lives of people in the community. Finally, that this type of education, for local students, is a gateway to the more prosperous and civilized West, a way for them to potentially escape the lives they would have had in their communities if they were not graciously given this chance. These implications are not innocuous, they play into the way that human beings in school systems are treated, paid, and silenced. It is those three uncomfortable implications that have led me to deep-dive into the research and see where my students and I can add perspective and potentially small solutions to this complex problem.

Content

Colonialism has drastically impacted the ways that we construct “truth” in what we teach. The “what”, “how”, and “who” in our classrooms are soaked in systemic structures that impact the way students and teachers engage with the material and those around them. The modern dominant worldview, according to Sensoy & DiAngelo (2012), is that the “knowledge we study in schools is factual and neutral”, but in actuality, we need to be critical of the contexts that have

produced this knowledge and its subsequent subjectivity. They provide a succinct description of the non-neutrality of texts (and by inference, knowledge itself):

There is no neutral text; all texts represent a particular perspective. All texts are embedded with ideology; the ideology embedded in most mainstream texts functions to reproduce historical relations of unequal power. Texts that appeal to a wide audience usually do so because they reinforce dominant narratives and serve dominant interests. Expect there to be social consequences for challenging dominant ideology. (210)

Western curricula often present a world that can be analyzed and interpreted using the scientific method, which does not account for many of the intricacies and ways of knowing that are so integral to other cultures' worldviews. We, as conscientious educators, strive to know the humans in our classroom as best we can; we try to reflect them in the curriculum, but, more often than not, these additions and modifications are cosmetic, lack depth, or are tokenizing. There is a major difference between celebrating the festivals and eating the food of the students and teachers in your community, as is my experience at international schools, and honouring the ways that they build knowledge, truth, and connection (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 142). I have heard this referred to as "Saris and Samosas Syndrome" (unknown), the idea that we want to enjoy the beautiful, easily relatable aspects of a culture, without delving into its complexities or its contradictions (both internally, and potentially with our own viewpoint). This tokenization can cause disconnection between members of learning communities, making some students feel on display for the benefit of others, while still striving to meet an ideal that does not reflect them.

Privilege

Privilege is defined differently depending on the values of a society; the things that a society values are often referred to as "cultural capital", giving privileged groups of individuals benefits that others lack.

The concept of cultural capital—or the high-status goods, standards and credentials used in social exclusion—is among Bourdieu's most popular contributions to educational research (Lareau and Weininger, 2003; Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007). Like economic and social capital, cultural capital can be accumulated over time and converted to other resources. Importantly, an individual's location in social space is associated with access to and acquisition of material and symbolic resources (Lin, 2001, pp. 33–40). In other words, a dominant class student likely enters college with not only a wealth of economic capital but an abundance of cultural capital as well (Martin, 426)

This privilege takes many forms, from linguistic advantages, to the more direct and obvious monetary benefits of high socioeconomic status. Just like with traditional capital, having money

affords you the opportunity to invest and grow your wealth; cultural capital grows over time and reinforces class lines. Elite private schools actively work to increase students' cultural capital in order to help them succeed within the current cultural paradigms of society, but because of this they play a large role in reproducing social inequality (Martin, 226-452).

The privilege that exists in international schools does not just create a chasm between the community within and the community without. Students who come from less-advantaged backgrounds, who are on scholarship, or who are children of teachers may not connect with their peers in the same way as students who fall in with the socioeconomic, linguistic, and cultural norms (Joseph 2006, Bokhorst-Heng 2007).

As teachers, we need to be extremely cognizant of the pain that can come from confronting privilege. According to Tara Meister, "There is a discomfort that comes with discovering that we are not what we think or that our successes do not come from a natural right or hard work, but from deep-seated racial realities that allow people to achieve and move differentially." (Meister, 86-101) Privilege is something that all people struggle to confront, because it implies that we did not achieve success from our own volition, but rather from some born-in advantages. Human beings want to believe that they are the master of their own destiny, and that the world is a fair and just place. Our work in this regard needs to therefore be sensitive to this pain, and acknowledge the potential emotional toil that facing advantages can cause. I believe that the only antidotes to disconnection and shame are wholeheartedness and empathy (Brown 2017), which means that our communities need to focus on these concepts as we move through this process.

Practices Shown to Decolonize

Policy Level

School policies around supporting staff, curriculum content, pedagogy, assessment, and community set the tone for the culture of the learning environment. When I refer to "policies", I am referencing both the explicit documentation around procedures, and also the implicit display of values through leadership and organizational action. This means that both a human resource document detailing the holidays that teachers receive, and also a decision made around the appropriateness of a field trip to a local school for autistic children would both be considered "policy". Nel (2014) argues for the democratization of policy through transformative autonomy: giving teachers the power to engage in critical discussions about curriculum and government with

their students. They argue that by empowering teachers in their autonomy in the classroom, students will be subsequently empowered to participate in their own education, leading to more participative citizens (Nel, 2014).

This is all well and good, and, in my experience, trusting teachers is an excellent stepping stone to positive organizational change, but this empowerment does not exist in a vacuum. There are incredible complexities between teacher and student identities, between community and school, and between curriculum and all stakeholders involved that need to be taken into account. Nic a Bháird (2013), in her deep dive into staff-community relationships emphasizes the importance of understanding power dynamics in participatory frameworks. She describes how critical it is to encourage flexibility, real listening, and adaptability to unintended consequences in the implementation of top-down policies, including and especially those that are aimed at promoting community building or empowerment of previously marginalized groups.

I consider these implications as a critical practitioner because of my core belief that the identities and ways of knowing of all community members should be valued and reflected in policy and content in order to build strong, supportive communities. Educational policy is inherently political, and when we ask “whom does this directive serve?”, the answers that follow often lead us back to eurocentric and colonial aims.

No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption. (Freire, 54)

When we combine this beautiful reflection on democratic pedagogy with Nel (2014) and Nic A Bháird's (2013) work on implementation in modern contexts, the logical conclusion is that we must find ways to listen as deeply as possible to the unheard voices in our communities, and when those voices are missing, find ways to support them in their self-advocacy. We can not use the policies that brought us here to get us out.

There are many descriptions of what this shift in policy-setting in schools would look like, but if we are to truly accept the intersectional nature of education, a universal framework would be contradictory. **For me, a system of reflective questions that support praxis and critical, democratic policy-setting is the logical step from the work of the above mentioned**

authors. These questions are a tough sell for many of the stakeholders in our systems: people and institutions who have invested financially, emotionally, and with their time in the current methodologies of teaching and learning. If we look to the pluralist and abolitionist models of inclusive pedagogy presented by Anderson (2017), (which propose to either include all philosophical perspectives or reject the idea that we can ever create “canon” that is neutral) it is clear that in order to find space for the voices of historically marginalized groups, we either need to confront the current models with an alternative one that reflects other worldviews, or we need to throw out the system that is currently in place and work, on equal footing, to develop one that lacks colonial legacies altogether. This is obviously an extremely onerous task, but one that bears consideration, especially in international schooling contexts, where flexibility and adaptability are more easily implemented, in contrast to large, government-directed systems (Hill & Boxley, 2015).

Aside: Reflections on Implementation in the Green School Context

Green School Bali develops curriculum from within classrooms and within teacher communities, empowering those who are doing the work to have their voices heard in policy. This process involves a great deal of conversation and participatory reflection in order to ensure that documentation reflects practice and practice reflects previously developed values. I have been in many meetings where teachers, administrators and students are encouraged to provide their input into content and pedagogy in our classrooms. If you were to watch a meeting where teachers are deep diving into values based education, for example, you would see a great deal of creative friction, meeting protocols being followed that encourage multiple perspectives (Southern Maine Partnership), and student reflections being read and categorized. The work of the Southern Maine Partnership that I am referring to here centres around providing structures for discussions and idea-sharing that promote an equalization of voices, creative problem solving, and connection, among many other wonderful goals. Sometimes, you would see parents and students actively participating in these committees. Documents are dynamic and ever-changing, and questions are always being asked about how directives are best serving the whole community.

A struggle that I have frequently witnessed is that, in line with what Nic A Bháird described, the power dynamics and linguistic differences between different groups of foreign and local teachers often leave a gap where local ways of knowing could be truly factored in. As conscious international educators, we can try to include the knowledge of others in our

curriculum, but we are less qualified to do so than those who have real lived experience. In this case, I look to the advice of Shirin Housee (2010), and seek the input of alternative viewpoints in less formal contexts.

Community Level

Palmer (2017) talks about the fact that we often discuss what we are to teach (curriculum) and how we are to teach it (pedagogy), but we, as teachers and academics, find it much more difficult to deeply discuss who is teaching. I find this to be true, we are constantly trying to strip the identity of teachers out of the equation, an action which, in turn, often ignores the identities of students in its wake. When we standardize curriculum and assessment to the point where the human being at the front of the classroom's perspective is irrelevant, it also removes that person's ability to adapt and change based on the human beings in front of them.

When we ignore the "who" and assume that any warm body can teach the content, we begin to value teachers less and less. In one of my previous teaching posts, there was excellent curriculum, meaning that the "what" was covered, there was excellent training and resources, meaning that the "how" was covered, but teachers were hired with little regard to their fit in the community, their classroom practices, or their cultural intelligence. As well, it was obvious from their decision making that the administration of the school viewed teachers as interchangeable and disposable. When the human beings that both deliver content and build community in a school feel like they are not valued, the system breaks down and learning suffers (both inside and outside of the classroom).

Students are humans too, so they notice when teachers bring a self that is overworked and fighting for recognition into their space. I believe that the same logic can be applied to teachers who feel undervalued, feel that the curriculum does not reflect their identity, or are suffering in any other way. When we fail to recognize the "who" in the classroom, we are leaving out a big piece of the puzzle. By acknowledging and supporting the diverse groups of humans that make up our schools, and providing the freedom and space to bring their whole selves, we can strengthen the bonds between them, further supporting efforts to foster a love of learning, spaces for safe expansion, and critical, democratic pedagogy.

Aside: Reflections on Implementation in the Green School Context

As a teacher-learner at Green School, I feel as though my whole self is being supported in many ways. Professional development, often delivered by teachers, supports wellbeing and creativity, as well as classroom teaching methods. Teachers are encouraged to bring their passions in to work and to their classroom, teaching courses on everything from the History of Capoeira to Feminist Media Studies (my personal contribution). Local (Balinese) teachers are encouraged to teach classes that include Balinese language, culture, and ways-of-knowing, and they are celebrated for doing so. We also encourage students to propose and teach courses (with a teacher advisor), leading to classes that teach science through interactive board games and classes that centre around student action for change at school. The school supports the development of self through practice in diverse and unique ways.

Pedagogical Level

Reflective Practices

Many of the pedagogical frameworks that I read and analyzed as part of this review focus on the reflective practices of teachers and students as they interrogate their reality and attempt to decolonize their learning. I am choosing to focus on three such frameworks: Dialogic Education, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Pedagogies of Absence, Conflict, and Emergence.

Praxis is part of the fundamental base of my teaching philosophy, and has been integral to my evolution as a teacher and learner. Like most students of education, Paulo Freire was part of my induction into social justice work, but, before jumping headfirst into the world of international education, I had little idea how often I would reference his work, or fall back on his findings in order to support my own reflective practice. His concept of Dialogic Education is just as relevant now as it was when it was written:

Freire's pedagogy was characterised by his striving for all participants in the teaching/learning process to learn through critical conscientisation. Learning in this education process is characterised not by individualism, but by fellowship and solidarity, for example, through "culture circles" practising a collective, dialogic exchange of reflections. This collective learning takes the form of praxis – the cycle of conscientisation/action/reflection/action. A key aim of this kind of learning is to reflect on, challenge and act on the terrible material conditions endured by the poor – including malnutrition, unemployment, poverty, illness. As Torres points out, Freire was concerned with the role of popular education for transforming the public

sphere into a space of increased equity (Hickling-Hudson, 2014)

The above-described cycle of (simply) thinking, doing, reflecting, and doing again better is one that provides an excellent framework for social justice education work. Freire provides this base, to which we can add listening to stories, engaging with community, interrogating the non-neutrality of curriculum (something he focused on as well) (Freire, 2018), and bringing ourselves into the classroom. We attempt to make positive change, and acknowledge that the cycle is never-ending, we will never reach a perfect classroom or perfect teaching methodology, but if we iterate relentlessly while honestly reflecting, we can approach a system that does more good than harm.

In order to implement a thoughtful, reflective, and actionable practice, while acknowledging our own intersectional limitations on the true understanding of others' experience, additional frameworks are necessary. The Pedagogy of Absence, Conflict, and Emergence (PACE) provides an excellent support system for educators to frame their decolonizing efforts in the classroom:

PACE includes articulating the conditions shaping who and what we are. It involves taking responsibility for thought and ideas, making it part of a decolonizing process. This effort includes scrutinizing various sociohistorical and economic-political experiences shaped by coloniality and considering the intellectual contributions that have emerged from diverse struggles for decolonization. As such, PACE involves a decolonial historical realist approach that rejects the relativism embedded in the idea that history will always be partial as it is always told by the winner.. A decolonial realist approach defends that one cannot deal with contemporary problems without taking into account the historically constituted structures within which they continue to be produced. (Tom, 2017)

PACE, as a reflective framework, supports educators in their quest to look at education in broader contexts (Tom 2017) and use their considerable power in classrooms to create spaces that are actively critical of historical structures. This is a good starting point, and an excellent resource for teachers, but focuses mainly on historically-impacted topics of instruction, rather than ways of knowing or being.

Culturally Relevant Teaching is a disruptive methodology that builds on the work of Freire and others, and supports work around PACE. Illich et al. (2017) describe Culturally Relevant teachers as the following:

Culturally relevant teachers, rather than positioning minoritized students as deficient, encourage them to utilize their funds of knowledge in the process of

developing “a community of learners” (Ladson-Billings 1995, p. 163) that includes the teacher “self” in the equation. The teacher, alongside the learners, collectively explores issues of social inequality that they all experience with the aim of deepening the understanding about the transient nature of knowledge (curriculum, resources, the purpose of schooling and social change) and of co-constructing critical consciousness. In this way, CRP serves to disrupt the dominant idea of the White teacher as racially neutral while at the same time challenging the assumption of the white teacher as knower imparting wisdom upon racially diverse learners. (Location 403)

The beauty of this system of teaching is that it is adaptable to all teaching environments, even those that are seemingly outside of the norm for struggle or inequality. As I have maintained before, the work on the “self” in the classroom community brings teachers and students together in their quest for deeper learning, benefitting all parties through connection. As well, as we challenge the idea of White teachers as neutral and other parties as “other”, especially in international education, we work towards removing the barriers to connection in our mutual work towards equality.

Actionable Practices

There have been seemingly infinite pedagogical practices proposed over the course of the past twenty years aimed at fostering real connection and promoting equality in classrooms. I have chosen to focus on those that had the strongest impact on my teaching and learning. These authors have proposed ways of approaching learning communities that bring teachers and students together, acknowledge the differing realities in the room, and support students in their action towards broader global change.

The first approach comes from Parker J Palmer (2017) and involves a radically different structure to classroom instruction. In the past, classrooms were teacher-centric, with instructors being the bearers of truth and information in the classroom, standing at the front, delivering never-questioned lectures. There is a lot of talk now about the student-centred classroom, which celebrates the diversity in learning styles and lived-knowledge of the learners in the room, moving teachers to the role of facilitator and support. Palmer proposes a model where we put the subject at the centre (Palmer, 104) and acknowledge what is often so ignored when we stand in front of a class of students: that, given the size and scope of all there is to know, we are much closer to our students in our knowing, that we are to knowing everything. In other words, we are not experts.

When we do this, we are able to stand alongside our students and work towards deeper knowing together, which, in turn, connects and binds us in a way that standing and delivering never could.

Pedagogically decolonizing, as was noted in my discussion of community, must involve listening to, and learning from, the voices in the room (especially those less heard). For this, I turn to stories. The thread that binds articles around community-based pedagogy and reflective teaching practice is the inclusion of stories in our classrooms, both hearing and producing (Meister, 2017; Tom, 2017; Taylor, 2011; Stock, 2013; Somerville, 2010; Bokhorst-Heng, 2007). Stories work in many different ways to validate individual identities and ways of knowing in ways that simply changing the names from White to diverse in a textbook could never achieve. Stories themselves are a way of knowing that is not often captured in traditional, “objective” schoolbooks (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012); this is particularly important in the context of international education in Asia and colonial education in conquered lands (i.e. Canada). Stories also diversify what identities we can bring into our classroom spaces; when teaching about racial tension in the United States, I turn to videos, articles, and podcasts that highlight the voices of those in the struggle, I do not attempt to filter them through my own, White, perspective. Finally, when students feel as though they can own their own story, and celebrate it through their coursework, they can reflect upon and share the intersectional identities that make up who they are; stories are not bound by curricula, they can present as art, video, music, or writing, they give space for the whole self to show through in learning.

Conclusions

Approaches to Research

In addition to the content of these many studies, I chose to reflect on *how* the researchers chose to study and present their participants through their work. It was important to me to sit with the way in which such a personal and emotional topic was written about in each of these cases and reflect upon the way it made me feel. As I have previously stated, I take a very involved stance to teaching, learning, and researching, and it is extremely important to me to present the words of those who are most impacted by this topic at the forefront, rather than my own privileged perspective, so my reflections capture this desire. Firstly, I found that many studies left me feeling disconnected from both the author and the participants or subject.

Ogbu and Simons (1998) presented their work on Voluntary and Involuntary Minorities in a way that felt cold and othering to me; their research and conclusions were incredibly valuable to framing my own work, but the way it was written left me wanting more. A number of other authors, including Asher (2009) showcased their clear outside position as the paper writer, presenting an “us vs them” perspective that I aimed to avoid. In many cases, as I was reading these incredible studies with stories of attempting to dismantle colonial structures and improve the lives of students and teachers, I felt disconnected from the content and people involved. As I planned to write this paper, and throughout the process of writing, I constantly returned to this thought as motivation to write from my own heart, from the words of those who participated in the research, and from inside the content, rather than outside looking in.

In reviewing the work of Madden, Higgins, & Korteweg (2013), Friere (2018), and Asher (2009), I found positive practices that would help frame my research and writing. Madden et al. took a broad look at their topic, attempting to balance the views of all stakeholders, rather than looking at one group in isolation. They also presented their research as being done with their participants, rather than on them, leading to a way of writing that was more storytelling than reporting. This created a closeness in the writing that spoke to my own personal philosophies. Paulo Friere's work is canon for educators who are looking to make a change, and his way of writing sets a high standard as well. I particularly connected with the way he used and included language that reflected participants' home culture and reality in his work.

Throughout this thesis, you will note that I include the student participants's words verbatim, with the “likes” and “ums” that are so common in teenage parlance. It was important to me to capture them as they are. I also worked to ensure my language was accessible to them, as they will be reading and reviewing this work (full disclosure here, my inadvertent love of verbosity sometimes gets in the way of this). Reflecting on one's own biases and agendas as part of the research process is something that I took away from Asher (2009) and strived to continue to do throughout this process. Finally, as with most of my life, both personally and academically, I find the work of Brene Brown to inform and guide as I aim to live a brave and vulnerable life. In this case specifically, her willingness to let study participants guide the research, regardless of whether the direction is difficult, personally confronting, or seemingly unwanted gave me strength when writing some of the more bold sections of this study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Justification for Further Research and Methodologies

Reading and analyzing existing studies has a tendency to both illuminate answers to researchers' burning questions, and also add to their lists of areas of desired exploration. Throughout this process, I have found myself both learning deeply from the experiences and perspectives of others with deeper knowledge (both lived and studied) of this subject matter and also feeling, with frustration, the immense depths of the topic that I will never be able to fully descend. It is for this reason that I think including the questions that have framed my literature review and will subsequently guide my navigation of grounded theory research to be an ideal starting point.

The big questions that, as a teacher-researcher, I ask myself in my practice and in my studies throughout the daily and yearly praxis of development have been shaped by years of study and reflection. These are questions for which the answers will constantly evolve, they will ostensibly never be answered:

- What does it mean to be a good teacher? For whom are "good teachers" good? (Illich et al., 2017)
- What outcomes are we looking for from our school communities? How do we measure "success"?
- Where should our focus be as educators?
- What knowledge is true? Moreover, how do we value ways of knowing and truth? (Palmer 49)

Aiming to keep these questions in mind as we navigate the depths of existing written knowledge and open our ears, hearts, and minds to the wisdom of our students, peers, and participants will help maintain focus, when there are so many other important issues to tackle.

The smallness that grows within me, the more I study about disparities in education, is succinctly summarized by a beautiful quote by Parker J. Palmer (2017), where he is referring to the vastness of knowledge:

The subject knows itself better than we can ever know it, and it forever evades our grasp by keeping its own secrets. If this were not the case, the process of knowing would have long ago come to a halt. Why did we not settle for the pre-Socratic view of the nature of the physical world or the medieval view or the view of early modern science? Why are we pressing, even now, on the view we hold today? Because at the center of our attention is a subject that continually calls us deeper into its secret, a subject that refuses to be reduced to our conclusions about it. (107)

This smallness is due to the many questions that we attempt to answer, but are constantly refining. The way that Gibson (2007) and Hill & Boxley (2015) discuss the potential disentanglement of capitalist ideals and values from education leaves me exhilarated, but wanting. Nel and Nic Baird's (2013) writings on hierarchies between teachers and students and within educator-activist communities, especially in developing countries, draw conclusions around whether flattening organizational structures and formalities would reduce the systemically oppressive power dynamics. This work is critical to advancing in the realm of decolonizing education, but it still poses more queries as it "answers" others. Furthermore, as I ask myself how we can truly value the identities and voices of all humans in the classroom and how we can live and learn the stories of marginalized groups without tokenizing them, as I learn from the research of Korteweg (2013), Housee (2010), and Hickling-Hudson (2014 & 2006), the question only gets bigger the more their words light up the dark.

This thirst for additional illumination is what drives my studies in decolonizing international education. How do the choices that we make as educators, community members, and policy makers fit in with the answers to these questions, both as we would respond, and as the other, just as relevant, stakeholders would respond, if they were posited to them.

It is because of these questions that I have chosen CAR and Grounded Theory as my research methodology. Because I believe, as so many do, that I have many more questions than answers, and the path to answers (or deeper questions) lies in working with students as researchers, students as community members, and putting my wholehearted self into the process.

Methodological Choice

As I have previously discussed, many of the approaches to educational research that I have encountered have left me feeling disconnected from both the researcher and the participants. This, in turn, lends itself to conclusions or further questions that also feel separate from the inherently connected nature of teaching, learning, and researching. It is for this reason that I have chosen to focus my methodological approaches on a combination of Critical Action Research (CAR) (Kincheloe, 2003) and Grounded Theory (GT) (Hull, 2013), because I believe it is paramount to interrogate the ways of knowing, perspective, and perceived objectivity of myself as a teacher-researcher, and also acknowledge the inherent wisdom of my participants in leading conclusions, rather than relying on existing bodies of work or my own biases.

By using Grounded Theory to structure the data collection of the study, and CAR methods to better implement community integration and social change, the research positions itself within the paradigm, rather than outside of it. Grounded Theory research begins with a substantive, not grand, concept that is specific to the practice at hand and allows the participants, through discussions or observations, to dictate further questions and conclusions. This is in contrast to traditional qualitative research, where the researcher-expert determines the questions and the participants are passive responders in the process (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This participant-led approach pairs well with CAR to make a more robust teacher-researcher method. Christine Davis (2008) describes CAR succinctly in her work for the SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods:

Critical action research, often conducted at the community grassroots level, typically takes as its mission social critique—the study of marginalized, oppressed, disenfranchised, or disadvantaged populations—with the aim to promote social justice among these populations. Critical action researchers do this by questioning the social implications and moral issues of action and by seeking shared understanding of the social action.

Critical action research seeks to empower people by involving them in the study of the social processes that have constructed their submissive positions in society. In the process, critical action research moves people with issues such as illness, disability, and poverty toward equal status with the people who are studying them. Thus, critical action research models a more equal or democratic distribution of power in community. The aim of critical action research is twofold: (1) improved understanding of a social phenomenon and (2) social transformation at a community or

organizational level resulting from reflexivity and self-reflection about the hegemony in the research relationship and in the community or organization. Critical action research requires seeing things through the worldviews of other people and understanding, perhaps challenging, conflicting value systems .

CAR builds upon traditional models of Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) with a more robust structure. PAR studies involve researchers that are inside their communities and participants and researchers are very invested in their practices and whether what they are doing is effective or in line with their values; PAR aims to improve conditions in a specific context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), CAR specifically looks at this through a specifically social action lens (Davis, 2008). These systems of research are easily applied to the teacher-researcher model, especially when it comes to social justice transformation in school communities and in this case I have chosen to focus on CAR due to its alignment with my overarching research question.

CAR & GT together create a methodological intersection that allows for the teacher-researcher and participants to be embedded in the research in a useful, transparent, and wholehearted way. By letting the participants guide the direction of the research, subsequently critique it, and then not imposing absolute conclusions on the outcomes, the work can be more applicable to the ever-changing international education landscape. My goals for the research included having it be fluid, rather than static, willing to be updated as more parties read, review, and implement it, which means that it needed to come from a place of humility on the part of the researcher. There was no need to create the false pretense of neutrality in my work; the work we do as teacher-researchers, as teachers, as students, is never neutral, therefore the acknowledgement and critique of my own perspective in this process is paramount.

Data Collection

Based on the principles of Grounded Theory, I chose to use group interviews to conduct the research; group interviews allowed participants to expand on the base interview questions as a collective and further the discussion and data collection in a meaningful way for them (as representatives of their community). The length of these depended on the participants' engagement and additional areas for exploration. The group interviews began with guiding discussion questions that were based around the research question:

What is the impact of students' home (out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own metacognitive processes within the context of wellbeing classes?

I then used the online coding and analysis system “DeDoose” (dedoose.com) to analyze the interviews and find themes. This system was used after every group interview to incorporate the practice of “constant comparison” and to update the questions as the research progresses. The students in the class also had the opportunity to collectively code and analyze the transcribed interview data before deciding on additional interviews. Throughout the coding process, I produced reflective journals to track my own participation and reaction to the research.

Biographical information of the participants, including nationality, home language, gender/sex, age, years at Green School and other non-subjective data markers were collected using a Google Forms survey. This survey was co-created with the students, including participants, throughout the course. Permission forms were administered by a third party colleague of mine, collected and sealed for the duration of the course. I did not have access to whether students consented to being included in the study or not until after grades for the course were set and submitted.

Participants were given an interview number and asked to enter it as a unique identifier in the survey, to provide a layer of anonymity and to ensure that they could be excluded if they did not consent to being part of the study. Participants had the option to opt-in to providing information as part of this survey, request anonymity with respect to the data, as well as provide a pseudonym that would be used as part of the interview documentation and writing process.

The collected data was used to cross reference with the trends/themes in the interview data and to determine the purposeful sampling. This information was not used to inform the initial group interviews, as including it could have potentially impacted the questioning dynamics of the groups (although my own bias and that of other participant-researchers could not and should not be completely removed).

Once group interviews were completed, and the coding was substantially determined with themes and additional questions, specific participants were selected for follow-up interviews. These participants were selected based on their comments around key themes that were noted in the group interviews and also their work as researchers, coding the interviews and finding themes. They were asked questions that were used to further clarify the themes, theories, and actions that emerged out of the research. Once this analysis was substantially complete, the students were asked for their thoughts, feelings, and criticisms of the work. This portion was used to inform the conclusions of the research.

The other important facet of the research was self-reflections throughout the process, completed by me, on my own experiences of the research process. These were not reflections on the specific participants or content, anonymity will be maintained in this way. I acknowledge that my perspective and interpretation factored into my conclusions, questions, and analysis. This data was also categorized and discussed as part of the research data analysis.

Recruitment procedures

Due to the nature of the research question, convenience sampling was used. Students at Green School represent a diverse population of international students and students from Indonesia (local students). Research participants for the study were selected from volunteers from grades ten through twelve (students were between the ages of 14 and 18). It is important to note that students at the Green School select courses on a rolling basis every six weeks. Course “pitches” happen in the weeks before classes start, via an oral presentation to the high school community. During this time I pitched the course using the attached recruitment script (appendix A3). I was also the teacher of the course.

This course in particular was completely elective, as was student participation in the study. As part of the course selection process students were notified that they did not have to participate in the study in order to gain credit for the course, they could simply learn about research methodologies throughout the process. Students in the course (participants included) were taught about research ethics as the first lesson in the course in order to ensure that they were well-versed in the ethical approaches to studying human subjects.

As was stated above, permission forms (appendices A2.1 and A2.2) were administered by a third party colleague of mine, collected and sealed for the duration of the course. I did not have access to whether students have consented to being included in the study or not until after grades for the course were set and submitted. All students, regardless of consent, completed the same assignments and participated in the group interviews. Students were graded on assignments related to research methodologies by me (teacher of the course) but were not graded on anything related to their participation in the study. Grading in the course was based on assignments outside of the research in order to reduce the power dynamics of the teacher-student relationship. These assignments included a presentation on a research methodology, a reflection on ethics, and a final research paper (showcasing a mini study of their own). Students were offered credit (0.2 Advanced Literacy or Social Science) for their involvement as participant-researchers in this project or their other related work in the class. As well, students were informed that their participation or lack thereof will not have an impact on their relationship with me.

Participants were informed that at any point throughout the course, they could withdraw their consent, and had an opportunity to formally do so before I saw their initial permission forms. At the end of the course, participants were given a letter by the same impartial colleague of mine, giving them a final option to opt-out of their data being included in this study. This was held by the colleague until grades were released (approximately one week) and cross referenced with the initial permission forms.

Study Execution (How It Unfolded in the Classroom)

As was discussed in Chapter 3, the data collection (interview portion) of this study took place within an elective class that was open to any and all high school students. This presented a unique opportunity to have participants that were extremely well informed of the process that they were a part of, how the information would be used, and their individual and collective rights as part of an ethical research study. As part of the class, students prepared presentations on different educational research methodologies (including Grounded Theory and Critical Action Research) and on their ethical implications. They read and discussed ethical case studies in education and underwent a basic version of the *TCPS 2: CORE - Tutorial from the Canadian Panel on Research Ethics* (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

of Canada, 2018) which made them more aware of how they were being protected through the study design. Students were also taught how to code qualitative data and were the first point of analysis once interviews were transcribed; this process was completed in groups and through class discussions to determine the categories, trends, and themes that best represented their perspective.

Student-participants' understanding of the educational research methodologies being used in the study (especially Grounded Theory) empowered them to take the research in directions that I did not initially foresee. Their understanding that this research was truly centred on them, and that the guiding questions were simply starting points for learning about their experience of schooling gave them the opportunity to speak to issues that were close to their hearts, even if they weren't directly asked about them in the guiding questions. This empowerment led to extremely interesting and diverse data points and, as you will see, lends itself to a broader picture of the educational landscape at Green School Bali (and, I think, in international private schools in general).

Interviews were conducted over a series of days, giving me the time and opportunity to review responses and adjust upcoming guiding questions. Although I had a strong focus on looking at decolonization in reference to wellbeing and home learning, the student-participants' responses took precedence when I planned future questions. Below are some of the guiding questions from day one of the interview process:

- How does your family talk about school at home?
- How and what do you learn outside of school in your free time and on your holidays?
- What are you learning in wellbeing classes?
- What does it mean to be a community in a classroom?

Subsequently, the below questions were included after reviewing responses:

- What was your most impactful experience here at Green School?
- What does it mean to "walk the talk"?
- What does it mean to trust your teachers?
- What did you expect when you came to Green School and what happened afterwards?
- What is your experience with the local community here?

As part of the course, student participants learned about coding qualitative data and using the codes to apply systems thinking to find patterns and trends. We spent two days of class going over the transcribed interview responses, team coding, and using note paper to find potential

categories or previously unnoticed follow-up points in what was discussed in the interviews. Because of this, the data synthesization that is presented in this section is not only my own, but a collaborative effort on the part of me and twelve hardworking high school students, right in the thick of their own experience. As much as possible, I will attempt to bring to light their words and truth as close to verbatim as possible. Their analysis was vital to this process, because watching them work through the information helped to show me what was most important to them, and what patterns emerged from the inside.

Most importantly, I was pleasantly surprised at how much these student-participants enjoyed the process of interviewing, analysing and eventually proposing potential solutions to their found themes. As the class had a limited timeframe, students were advocating for more interview time, often to the detriment of their graded schoolwork (we had extra hours with the data that meant less in-class time to work on their final projects for the course). These wonderful students wanted to continue to be heard about their struggles and successes for longer, not just by me, but by each other. Their voices got louder and more certain the more time passed in our interviews, and they left class happy, excited and chattering with energy to each other. Their empowerment through the process spawned some of the best work I have seen as a high school teacher and I relished reading their own proposed educational research projects and papers at the end of the course. My love of researching in education and advocating for change was reflected back at me in these students, and the results of this study aim to reflect their passion on these pages.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter I will describe both what happened during the study (including the learning that took place around the interview dates) as well as the data that was collected and coded, both by me and the student participants. This process was incredibly collaborative, and therefore I will attempt to both present the data in a way that is authentic, transparent, and also includes the voices and perspectives of the students that were so integral to the work.

Introduction to Findings

Due to the participant-focused nature of this study, both the student participants and I used careful sampling techniques to locate and create concepts and identify patterns in the research data. When our two perspectives were evaluated alongside each other, it was a humbling experience as a researcher, educator, and professional to acknowledge that the direction I had anticipated this study to take was not necessarily the way that the subjects saw it going. I hope to convey the honest conflict between my vantage point and theirs in the following section.

During the interview and coding process, I took detailed notes both on what the participants said and what I observed and leveraged these in order to modify future questions and inform my own analysis. After interviews were transcribed, the students and I participated in a collaborative substantive coding (Hull, 2013) exercise, which I integrated into my own, more lengthy substantive coding within Dedoose. From there, I worked to find theoretical coding patterns (Hull, 2013) by following procedures outlined by Morse and Clark in the Sage Handbook of Current Developments in Grounded Theory (2019). First, I grouped codes to locate and create concepts, including a number of subcategories that can be seen throughout this study. Then I spent time reviewing how these codes showed up in the data either co-located or absent from each other, looking for patterns and trajectories over time (especially when it came to student-participants comparisons with “before” or other schooling systems). Once this was completed, I reviewed my work and looked for confirmation of the overarching themes I saw and anything that contradicted what I was about to claim in my findings (Morse & Clark, 2019).

The most frequent and most weighty categories that were threaded throughout the interviews and subsequent analysis are connected in many ways, although they may seem disparate at first. Firstly, student-participants directly and indirectly focused on the impacts of the explicit and implicit curricula at Green School on their educational experience more often than almost any other topic. This category often led to discussions of student culture and its trajectory over time. Next, often alongside discussions of student culture, student-participants showed their confusion around the balancing act that comes from having an extremely open and relationship-focused teaching faculty. The fourth and fifth categories also lead into each other in a very self-sustaining way (although not necessarily to anyone's benefit, according to the student responses); these are the students' perception of the school as "Client-Focused" rather than mission-focused and the movement away from the initial mission of the school (both over time, and in snapshot cases). Students described these two categories as "Wants vs Needs" and "Intention vs Implementation", which I found to be very clear and profound descriptions of the international schooling paradigm. Authenticity as an overarching theme fits nicely in with both of these categories, but students emphasized it as a concept of its own; after reviewing the data, I have to agree, especially when it comes to both sustainability and colonialism. On that point, the final and most prolific category of data that student-participants identified was colonialism itself. This theme is made up of a number of sub-groupings, including respect for staff, experience of local students, and cultural hierarchies, and its cohesion and pervasiveness throughout responses to almost all of the interview questions makes it a great category to tie the data together.

The intent of this research was to amplify the voices of students in their experience of international education, especially within the context of wellbeing classes and with respect to the impact of colonial hegemony. Although there are diverse voices represented in the interviews, this study does not claim to showcase the entire spectrum of the international schooling paradigm, and I definitely do not feel as though I am in a position to evaluate, judge, or place blame in regards to their experiences or the educational practices of other educators. I am aiming to describe the findings (and subsequent conclusions) with the empathy and kindness that I attempt to bring to my classroom each day.

Explicit & Implicit Curriculum

Explicit Curriculum

So they really empower like self-learning project based learning, like learning by doing and practicing all the skills and knowledge and wisdom that you learn in class outside of class, in the real world. - Rose (grade twelve)

Curriculum may seem like an esoteric concept, discussed by academics and government administrators, far away from classrooms and the day-to-day teaching practices of teachers and students, but the students in this study showed just how much they notice the effort that goes into planning strong curriculum content and pedagogical practices. They referenced curriculum in their responses so frequently and with such emphasis that it was only out-weighted by the main focus of this study (colonialism); however, they did not often mention it by name. This is an important point: students discussed the nature of curriculum and its impacts, as well as aspects of the implicit curriculum at the school (including their feelings of empowerment and self-worth), but when analysing the data, they did not see their responses as part of a broader whole. The synthesization of their discussions on my part is perhaps representative of perspective (and a love of curriculum development), but their individual points remain their own.

When asked about their most impactful experiences in high school, the majority of students discussed an educational activity that took place outside of a classroom setting. They described project-based learning, experiential learning trips, theatre productions, community-building camps, and student-led initiatives. These are all fundamental to the curriculum established at Green School Bali; these “wall-less” learning experiences are woven throughout the individual classes’ scope and sequence as well as the overall structure of the high school year. It is perhaps not surprising that stories about trips to incredible tropical islands to provide real, on-the-ground earthquake disaster relief come up as some of the most impactful learning that students could think of, but the narratives, like this one from Kadek, stand out nonetheless:

... The Lombok trip that I took last year. We went to Lombok and we helped an orphanage called Peduli Anak and we helped build gardens because they recently had an earthquake. We helped them build gardens and give them some supplies and you know, teach them. I think I was like Isabelle, she taught them how to make some bio soap. Some of us did some murals and some did the gardening and we played with the kids. We played games and stuff and bonded with them.

And it, to me it's like a really nice experience because I get to put myself in someone else's shoes and feel what they're feeling and experiencing and I feel like, you know, I could, I have more empathy for people who are impacted by natural disasters.

Students' experiences providing service or learning on the ground about topics in their classes such as ocean conservation, bio-fuel creation, and first aid were brought up time and time again in conjunction with comparative statements between Green School and other educational systems that they had been a part of; in these instances, Green School was described very favourably in comparison.

In addition to the more sensational learning that takes place off-campus, students frequently described the project-based learning within the school "walls". This was another category where Green School was consistently compared to other schools in a positive light. Students seemed to see the value in learning skills and working together in ways that prepared them for the future. The story of one local scholarship student (Indonesian by heritage) really exemplifies a typical student trajectory while in this skills-focused environment. Annisa, a twelfth grade student is planning on studying architecture next year at university and transferred to Green School at the beginning of grade ten from a traditional school in Java. In her responses she describes a number of experiences that impacted her throughout her schooling career:

The most impactful experience at Green School for me was block three in my first year of Green School where I took my first green building class and then I always take those areas of class for the next like, like a year, like one and a half year maybe. And then from there, like I learned how to use power tools and saws and like first time learning how to design with bamboo. And it's like first time of me building anything and it's very impactful for me because I feel like that's where I know what I really like and that's what I want to pursue maybe in the near future. ... Maybe I'm going to be like a different person right now and have maybe different experience in Green School. And I think also like that's significant. I really, really like that class. Also. Um, met one of my best friends in that class. So it was really nice and I get, it's so impactful. Positive experience for me.

Annisa compared Green School to her previous high school in a number of ways, with respect to curriculum, describing the change that came over her by being able to get out and learn practical skills and also the way that the school prepares you for the future. I have known her for two years, and have seen her blossom into a confident and independent young person, especially in moments when she is describing her work on bamboo architecture and practical building.

Throughout the study, students frequently described their learning experiences as "fun" or related

to the “real world”; they stressed the relevance of project-based learning to their enjoyment of education at Green School.

One of the other main components of Green School's curriculum is its democratic nature, both on the part of development (teacher side) and on the part of scheduling (student choice in classes). Student-participants stressed both the importance and unique nature of this “flexible” and “student-led” crediting system, as well as the student-led nature of classes and projects. They described teaching classes, representing the student body on the Board of Learners (Board of Directors), having choice in what they study, and creating their own independent learning plans, all with gusto and excitement, citing these facets of the learning program as impactful to them. The range of offerings at Green School includes approximately three hundred different classes per year, all aimed at inspiring students to not only learn content, but skills and values as well. The flexible crediting system is in contrast to many other high school diploma options around the world, giving students the opportunity to choose classes every six weeks rather than each year, and to choose classes based on interest rather than grade or age level. Students at Green School have the opportunity to teach courses alongside teachers or parents or develop their own independent study courses to suit their interests or learning modalities. These options were all cited by student-participants in the study as beneficial opportunities.

This shift away from rigorous, structured curriculum is paired with a weakening of the value placed on grades and grade point averages, both on the teachers' side and on the side of students and families. Student-participants, when asked about how they discuss school with their parents, often maintained that they focused much more on their emotional state and learning journey rather than on the grades that they received. Student-participants contrasted this with the education systems in Australia, the Netherlands, and Indonesia, citing that the level of competition and stress around grades at Green School was significantly less. They also maintained that this shift gave more space for maintaining their mental health, choosing classes that they enjoyed, and supporting themselves through their struggles, both within their families and within the community of teachers and counselors at the school. When looking at the data, this was the most common area in the study where students made comparisons between other school systems and Green School, they passionately described the shift in mindset and relief from stress that came from being in an environment where they were not valued based on their grades. I think one of the best examples of this is how Lara, a Dutch grade twelve student,

describes her experiences of attending Green School, returning home to the Netherlands, and then deciding to come back to Bali for her final year of schooling:

*I was talking about my experience in the Dutch education system. And this is a system where all three of my sisters are still in, two of them are currently in high school and I am in Green School by my own choice and I live here by myself... the difference in experience that I had is huge. In Holland, I felt a lot of pressure, not necessarily from my family, but I felt so much pressure from teachers, from students. Um, and also a lot of pressure that I put on myself because there is all about results and um, it's, it's basically focused on you. Let me rephrase this. **Your importance depends on how good your grades are.** If your grades are slipping or if, um, a certain subject is not sticking with you, you are a bad student and you're worth less than a good student. And this really affected me a lot.*

*That's also the main reason why I chose to come back... so when I moved back here and, um, with my previous experiences here, it's in my opinion, a lot more happiness focus. So are you enjoying school? If you're not, what can we do to improve this? And I feel like this is such a key element to successful learning **without happiness and without joy in what you're learning, it's not going to stick.** It's not all about getting good grades and memorizing certain lines of certain phrases that's not going to actually teach you anything. The way that we're learning here and then specifically like learning by doing project based learning, learning in groups in communities, but also individual learning with individual focus from teachers is extremely important for a successful education and also being able to pick your own interests and followed us interest and pursuit that future. **Having control over your own learning and control over your own classes is going to give you control over your own life and that's essentially what everybody needs in this society at the moment.***

Hearing those words reflect my own views on schooling back at me with a classroom of students nodding in agreement was definitely a moment I will never forget. Lara brought to life, succinctly and eloquently, what it meant to her (and others) to be seen as more than a grade on their report card.

Implicit Curriculum

But [we] think that this world is, so at the moment especially, we have so many different, um, industries and systems that break us apart. School should be somewhere that brings us together and just is a supportive community in school. Should be a supportive community. - Sophie (grade ten)

As I stated above, the student-participants, when coding and categorizing this data, did not identify this category as part of curriculum. They identified categories such as “self-worth”, “empowerment”, and “values”, as well as identifying whenever someone in their class mentioned

the wellbeing program. However, as I went through the transcripts on my own, and reflected upon the general patterns in their responses, it became clearer and clearer to me that these individual groups were part of a larger whole: the implicit curriculum. Geroux and Penna describe this type of non-subject-related learning as follows, “the unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying structure of meaning in both the formal content as well as the social relations of school and classroom life” (Giroux, 1979). I am choosing to use the term “implicit” here, rather than “hidden” because of the open nature of Green School; the values, norms, and lessons that we as teachers impart on our students each day are frequently discussed, dissected, and cultivated through professional development and co-learning opportunities both with our peers and with our students, and thus they are not “hidden”.

In order to get a clear understanding of the implicit curriculum being taught at Green School, excluding teacher bias (which will be discussed in its own section), I will choose to let the stories of Annisa and Putu speak for themselves. Annisa and Putu both transferred to Green School from different Indonesian education systems, but have described similar experiences. Annisa, our resident future architect, transferred from an Indonesian Catholic school; this change had her parents commenting on how she showed much more self-confidence because of the support she received from teachers. Putu, a Balinese student who has been at Green School for just over a year, described how both she and her family felt empowered to advocate for themselves within the system to teachers (in contrast to other school systems). She also described finding her passion in theatre through a class where the teacher focused on community building and local community outreach. On this note, empowerment was a prominent theme in many of the student-participants’ responses; they frequently mentioned the teachers’ ability to facilitate them finding their own voices.

Of course, not all of the students’ experiences of the implicit curriculum were positive. I have devoted whole sections to both teacher bias and colonialism, so I will choose to focus now on some of the other more negative emotions that students experienced as part of their learning journeys at Green School. Amy, a grade ten student from Australia, spent a great deal of time and energy describing an off-campus camp, which was intended to focus on “rites of passage” for grade nine students, but because it was gender segregated and student feedback was not taken into account, many female students felt let down by the experience. Her passionate telling of this camp, which had the boys learning archery, and the girls completing silent, reflective hikes (just to

name one of the comparisons), had the whole group of students engaged in a discussion about student voice, empowerment, and the unintentional takeaways that they all carried with them from such events. Needless to say, they were not impressed with the gendered offerings here, regardless of their good intentions.

Student-participants, when asked about their learning in wellbeing classes, frequently described them as more of a feeling, rather than content delivery. This is something I have experienced as a sex and relationship education teacher outside of this study; when students are asked to reflect on what they have learned in the course, they rarely cite specific content knowledge but most often cite feeling seen, heard, connected or safe during the process. Therefore, rather than including the wellbeing program data in the explicit curriculum section, I have included it here. Student participants said things like, “what I learned here, for wellbeing, is to be confident and comfortable in your own body and self” (Kadek) and “I found myself, not just in the class but who I am in the world” (Putu). They discussed the freedom of expression that they felt, the connection and bond with others that was cultivated, and the empathy that they were shown and asked to practice.

The implicit curriculum, with students describing feelings of worthiness, empowerment, connection, and (on the flip side) frustration was shown in the data through the coding and categorization process to coexist with many other of the deeper facets of this study. Students described learning values through the authenticity of the school's marketing campaigns (Authenticity Section), from the shift away from the school's mission, from teacher relationships, and especially through the treatment of Indonesian staff and students.

Student Culture

When I arrived at Green School in grade nine, I wasn't expecting to fit in because I, I showed up, um, a couple months before to visit the school and everyone was working hard. They were very “greeny” as some would say... I thought I wouldn't fit in. But the fact that on the first day I was able to connect with everyone and make friends super easily. It might've been, um, the general vibe of the place, but it might've been the fact that the school environment itself and the type of students that were showing up at Green School weren't the same type of students who were showing up five or six years ago. And I feel like, um, as the school progresses, there's a different type of student that show up to the school.. I only came for one or two years and I ended up staying for graduation because we

loved it so much and my family itself has changed its dynamic to adapt to Green School. - Henry (grade twelve)

Along with the implicit curriculum of the teachers, the student participants frequently mentioned the values and nature of their peers at Green School as impactful to their experiences in the classroom and out in the community. Culture was often mentioned in a positive way; with student-participants emphatically citing student voice and activism as key aspects of their schooling experience. They described situations in which they or their peers undertook both learning and extracurricular activities that were purely student driven, including a push to have students represented in governance, and students leading classes. As Eva put it, “the culture in the school is about, it is about being able to speak up.”

As we got further into the discussions, and students began both responding to each other and reflecting on their own responses to the questions, the tack of the answers began to change. Student culture was often mentioned in conjunction with the school mission, the client-focus of the school, and authenticity, leading to the emergence of patterns in the data. Authenticity is discussed on its own in a later section.

The first pattern was that student-participants noted, time and time again, that other students in the school were “phoning it in” or being inauthentic in their actions surrounding school values (in particular sustainability and respect). They often noted a student culture that rewarded apathy, the mistreatment of Indonesian staff, and a flouting of the sustainability practices that are so cherished by the school. Below are some key quotes from student-participants that exemplify this point the most saliently:

*Rose: I haven't had a single class about climate change. I haven't been taught any of that. Um, and I, I've also had some, I even remember first arriving here and people asked me, “**wait, do you actually care about that stuff?**” I think there's a culture that's kind of changing in the school. And it's very different to how I remember it and I don't really know where that came from, but I definitely think things are changing and it's quite sad.*

*Eva: There [used to be] more awareness raised around the issues that we teach here. Um, and I feel like I kind of felt, um, no one was really doing any, doing anything anymore. And this whole, it kind of felt like a normal school culture and I don't like that. **Like it's supposed to be different.***

*Kadek: I think it like connects with respect and like what she said about like **new kids not wanting to go and like connect with like the local people.** Like you're*

*here and like other people's country you should.. if we have an activity where we go somewhere I think you should like, you could know be have an open mind like respect, um, being there and like, you know, **engage more**.*

*Sophie: I feel like the school at the beginning I was really focused on like, Oh yeah, this is our goal and our, you know, this is what we're going to be. Um, and then now it is kind of turned into this place where usually, I mean, I'm not saying everyone, um, definitely not everyone, but **some people just come here because they have the money and they can afford to be here**. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. It's like a bucket list kind of thing. And then they just, you know, they said, Oh yeah, we just want to go away for a year somewhere around the world because we can afford it.*

*Sophie again: Another thing is that I talked to the head of high school about, um, a problem. I thought we as Green School should, you know, focus more on, on, you know, the trips without flying and stuff. And, after he said that at the assembly, I got so much hate or like, not hate, but just people are like, why did you say that? What did you have to do that? **What do you have to ruin everything?** And like, even my family was like, Oh yeah, why, why did you say that? Like, that's not cool. Like you're ruining, you know, experiences.*

As you can see from these quotes, discussions of student culture are most often paired with comments about expectations versus reality, and change over time. Each of these student-participants (and most of the others as well) either directly or indirectly mentioned that the school culture had been different (better) in the past compared to the current climate of privilege, disengagement, and apathy. Of course, as I said above, and as you can see in the students' comments, there is much more going on here than just a shift in the demographic makeup of the student body. The changes over time at the school were never mentioned in a positive light, in any of the interviews. I will reiterate this point in other areas, but feel as though the student-participants' words above speak for themselves.

Teacher Relationships

One of the major tenets of holistic and contemplative education, and one of the key philosophies that underpins my teaching practice is the importance of honest relationships between teachers and students. Connection in classroom settings and feelings of safety in learning and taking risks are real world concepts that I have explored in my writing and that form the basis of Green School's pedagogical philosophy (REAL learning, where the "R" stands for "Relationship Centred and Holistic") ("Green School High School Curriculum Overview," 2019).

Anecdotally, I have also had many conversations with students and colleagues, both at Green School and at other institutions where I have taught about the difference that a connection with teachers makes to students' experiences; I am also certain that most educators have similar anecdotes in their memories, where the relationships they form, rather than content they deliver have the most meaningful impact on students' learning and their own satisfaction.

It came as quite a surprise to me then, that the discussions between student-participants about the openness of teachers at Green School, a school where I have found teachers to be the most intentional about connection and accessible to students, were not unanimously positive. In fact, they were fairly split, with about half of the responses indicating a comfort in the openness, and half expressing that teachers were "too open" (in many different ways). Often, this split happened within one individual's response, indicating confusion between the benefits of connection and the consequences of overstepping boundaries. An example of this from Eva (grade 11) is below, where you can see her flip-flopping between the positives and negatives of teacher openness:

So yes, the teacher does have authority over a student, but this also that, um, the value in a friendship and a relationship with the teachers that is different at this school. And I think it's great, but, um, sometimes that can go too far in either direction. They can be true, um, have to feel like they have too much authority over you or not enough. And I think that needs to be aligned, drawn there. It depends on the teacher. That's the thing.

This refrain was very common from the student-participants, and caused me a great deal of pause when reflecting after each day's interviews. It asks a lot more questions than it answers. In just looking at the data, most frequently, students who cited the benefits of openness discussed the following: freedom of expression, friendship, advocacy, and support. Student's stories or anecdotes about teachers being "too open" included the following: lack of privacy (or confidentiality), forced connection (teachers assuming students will automatically feel comfortable sharing with them), teacher bias, and confusion. These codes were often seen in conjunction with one another, with students describing support from a teacher they received, but not feeling as though it was confidential, or their friendship with one teacher being a very positive factor while feeling as though other teachers simply expected their confidence and connection. What was clear from the data was that students felt passionate about the open teacher-student culture at Green School, especially in wellbeing classes, both for its supportive nature, but also for its potential pitfalls.

The one category that had a clear slant towards the negative with regards to teacher relationships was the discussion of bias. Student-participants did cite that they enjoyed class discussions and socratic teaching methods, but the most common and powerful refrains were about teachers who imposed their viewpoints on the students in their classrooms. Green School Bali has a clear mission statement, and is, in general, focused on sustainability and fighting for social justice, so liberal viewpoints tend to be the dominant norm (that is not to say that all of the human beings in the school share those views, but they do dominate the media that Green School produces, and, as a teacher, the conversations between staff). That being said, I was surprised by the number of student-participants that cited feeling like opposing viewpoints were not welcome, or that teachers behaved angrily towards their peers when confronted with ideas or perspectives that did not align with their own. Two such examples describe experiences that many students agreed with:

Sophie: I do feel that sometimes when people have personal opinions, they get shut down because they are just not accepted. Um, because we're trying to be so open and let every idea, you know, yeah ... I have had teachers that are, you know, really into feminism and like equality for both genders, but then other teachers are, um, I wouldn't say against it, but they're just less about, you know, they don't really believe in that as much as the others. .. And then I just feel like, personally I don't really want to talk anymore because I just don't want to be shut down again about my personal opinion.

*Amy: So, um, the way that I see it is, especially when I'm in a sex ed class and it's very kind of discussion based. It's not like, you know, you sit down and it's like, so this is like, you know, this, this, this. It's like, so what do you guys think about this? ... I could be sitting here and have my friend next to me go like, you know, talk to the teacher about it and say like, "well, I don't really believe in your opinion." And then it kind of turns into a teacher-student kind of argument, I guess. And everyone else in the class is just sitting there and we're like, well, what do we do now? **We're not really learning anymore.** It's more of this argument going on. We can't really say our own opinion because it's just this one and this one. And also I feel like the teachers are kind of trying to, not all of the teachers, but in most of the classes that I've been in, I feel like they are trying to push their own opinion onto us and that we have to believe in their opinion too. Um, especially talking about like, you know, mental health and like gender and identity and we could be sitting there and it's, you know, um, this is what it is and it's what is it actually that or is that your opinion? **And it's like, not "this is my opinion", but "it's what it is."***

There were many such citations of teachers bringing their bias into the classroom around topics, opinions, and even feelings towards students that I categorized as "unprofessionalism." It

appeared from the data that teachers at Green School, in the eyes of the student-participants, shared parts of themselves that were extremely vulnerable (something the students saw as a good thing), but that their viewpoints in this regard were not up for debate: they wanted to be open and vulnerable, without the risk of being challenged for it. Although, I believe, in line with the work from Parker J. Palmer (2017) that we as educators need to bring our whole selves into the classroom, there are boundaries that should be, at the very least, mindfully explored.

Client-Focus (Want vs Need):

This category came out of a very impassioned statement from Amy (grade ten) that was met with resounding whoops and agreement from the class, and a momentary freezing of time for me. It was a few seconds of pure clarity in the room that everyone seemed to share in; therefore, I will start with her words:

The school is now ... adapting to what the students want instead of, you know, what we need and what we need to learn.

As we went through the codes that became this category, the students called it “wants vs needs” or “too much parental involvement” (they are teenagers, afterall); I, however, when looking at the broader picture, saw it as something more systemic and labelled it “Client-Focus”. My experience on the teaching and administrating side of the equation has many more data points to add to the students’ reflective responses, both of which are extremely valid perspectives on an issue that international, fee-paying schools face every day: *how do we balance satisfying our “customers”, when they are asking for things that are not in their best interest, or not within the mission of the organization?*

Student-participants cited a number of instances, in addition to the one above from Amy, where client-focus steered the school away from what they believed to be good curriculum and instruction. Students referred once again to an eroding of the quality over time, as the school demographics changed, and a shift away (as I discussed above) from hard hitting subjects like climate change, towards classes that were meant to be “fun” but less substantial. They also, while touting the democratic nature of the school, questioned whether they should be the ones directing curriculum, given that they, as teenagers, may choose to manipulate the system, rather than pushing for additional opportunities for development. I definitely understood where they were coming with this one, but in my experience, students used the system to their true advantage, with the exceptions proving the rule (some students did choose to use the system to shirk, but

they were rare). Student participants referred to their peers' culture of apathy (as mentioned above) as something that would drive decisions from teachers or administrators, with multiple participants citing instances where teachers would break with the school's outward mission to keep students happy (for example, purchasing packaged junk food after a school outing meant to provide sustainability outreach). They described feelings of frustration and sadness when students' happiness was put above the mission or above making what they believed was the morally correct decision.

A great deal of time in one of the interviews was devoted to discussing the "problem" of parents on campus. Green School Bali is unique in that parents are frequently on campus grounds, meeting up with each other, taking part in fitness, enjoying the food, participating in workshops, or sometimes just hanging out. Every other Friday, there is a community assembly and farmers market that families are encouraged to attend. The school even has a coworking space for parents on campus. It is one of the things that I love more than anything about the school, it is truly a community of learners, with parents right in the mix; however, it does have its drawbacks. For younger students, having their parents on campus can be a comfort, but for teenagers, as the data suggest, this can be a challenge. A number of students suggested that parents (the true, fee-paying clients of the school) are being catered to even more than the students are, and that their needs often supersede the students who are required to be on campus for classes. An example of this is lunch tables: there are signs asking parents to not use the tables at lunchtime, so that students have a place to sit, they often ignore these, leaving children and teens with nowhere to eat their lunches. Another anecdote that students provided was about the very assemblies that I love so much: parents often take up the designated spaces for students, meaning that children may not get a space in their own assembly hall and would have to wait outside, because fee-paying parents have decided not to move. This is something I have personally experienced and it illustrates the point the participants were working to make. Reflecting on their responses, I remembered a number of occasions when parents became visibly irate with me when I asked them to move from the high school section of the auditorium, citing that it was their right to be there; the tone on campus was "don't mess with parents".

On that note, student-participants mentioned parents in conjunction with marketing and outward image (which will be discussed more in depth in the next two sections), citing that parents cared a great deal about how the school looks, and that their influence on the direction of

the school is much greater than the students or teachers. I have personally seen this on a number of occasions, but here is one students' account of an incident that stood out to her:

When I was here three years ago doing a beach cleanup and we came home, uh, and stopped at a [corner store], grabbed some chips, walked into school and immediately the next day we were told we can't do that anymore. Cause parents had complained and said, why are the students walking into our school with plastic?

When I re-listened to their responses, the student-participants' thoughts on their parents being on campus seemed to be in line with what I would expect from teenagers, a want of their own space and their own freedom during a time in their lives that is so full of change and testing new limits; however, I didn't expect them to pick up on the nuance of the parental influence on the direction of the school. It reminded me of my own experience, working with a school project that was entirely in line with the Green School's mission (promoting an end to violence against women), and having parents (both men and women) speaking out against the work we were doing. I was part of a number of meetings where parents stood their ground against our project, and the school, although allowing us to continue, permitted a contingency of fee-paying parents to spread discontent among students. This led to a change in the content we delivered over time, although we did continue to work for our cause, there was always a feeling of subversion as we did so, which was odd in a community that has a stated mission for social sustainability. The power of parents in the community was well known, and, in my experience, felt everywhere from curriculum, to college advising and transcription, all the way to the food that was sold at lunch time. Once again, it surprised me that the students, whose parents are the perpetrators of this cultural climate, were not only aware of the issue, but standing up, were also outraged by it.

Finally, there is the connection between the client-focus and cultural hierarchy. As you may have noticed, I referred above to fee-paying parents, differentiating them from scholarship parents. When asked which parents you would find on campus, a dutch student responded:

I see a lot of White parents, White, White, White, the Whitest friends, parents who have nothing better to do.

While an Indonesian student chimed in:

My parents are busy at home. Like they don't even have time if they're asked to come to school.

Students did not reference Indonesian parents' influence at all during the interview process. They did, however, mention them while brainstorming at the beginning of the course, bringing up the fact that Indonesian parents are often excluded from the conversation. Upon reflection, it is rare to see local scholarship students' parents on campus, and often the loudest voices are heard, rather than the ones with the most to say.

Mission

The audience that we have, like the, the community members have changed and their children have changed with them and the teachers have adapted. So basically the whole system has just gone from something very magical and accepting. And to some people who don't even want to be here. And that brings a lot of negativity, negative negativity. - Lara (Grade 12)

Just as a refresher, Green School's mission statement is "A Community of Learners Making Our World Sustainable" (Green School Bali, 2020); this sustainability does not only refer to environmental or climate change-related efforts, but also social, economic, and wellbeing-focused sustainability initiatives (following the Compass Model) (AtKisson, 1997). This is important to keep in mind in reference to students' comments on the school's continued and changing implementation of the mission. It is also relevant to bring up the central values of the school, which are both taught through values-based education, and also part of the lexicon of all community members; they are IRESPECT (Integrity, Responsibility, Empathy, Sustainability, Peace, Equity, Community, and Trust) ("Green School Prospectus 2017-2018," 2018). It is important to note that when asked, student-participants could easily recite the mission and the values of the school, they are very aware of the central guiding principles that shape their educational experience. As an international teacher, I have not experienced a space that holds so tightly to the mission that sparked its inception; teachers and administration alike hold the goal of sustainability in high regard and are attempting to work towards making a difference.

Student-participants mentioned the mission most often when they were discussing sustainability and connections to the local (non-international, Balinese) community. As I discussed above, many of the students had rosy views of the past, citing that the change over time for Green School had caused a deterioration of the commitment to the mission. This is something I have noticed in teachers as well, especially in conversations about this study; there were very few criticisms or comments that students made that teachers did not resoundingly

agree with. Below are a number of reasons that student-participants cited in reference to a negative trajectory in the commitment to the mission at Green School:

- Increased curriculum formalization (more structure)
- Change in values of community (increased apathy, different reasons for coming to the school, etc)
- Increased student population (school is “too big”)
- Treatment of Indonesian students and staff
- Parent influence (Client-focus)
- Decreased focus on climate change efforts (sustainability)
- Staff turnover increased (constant change)
- Increased focus on outward appearance - lack of authenticity (more on this later)

Intention vs Implementation

There is an incredible amount of overlap between data points that reference the mission, and data points that reference culture, sustainability, values, and client focus. This is important to note. Students were very cognizant of the intentions behind the school's mission and what that meant for them, as well as the actual follow-through. They called this category “Intention versus Implementation” after much discussion, with many of the students understanding that there was a lot of thought and care put into the ideas of the school, but when it came to the execution of those plans, oftentimes they fell short or were not resourced properly. It is for that reason that I will focus in this section on resourcing and values, with the next section (Authenticity) focusing on the outward, presented appearance and marketing of the school.

One of the most common points that students made in reference to the change over time and commitment to the mission and values was that staff turnover and constant change made it difficult for them to create long-lasting relationships and that, in general, the number of resources available (counselors, teachers, etc) was not remaining proportionate to the number of students. Student-participants reflected on how the shift in the community's values could be linked to the fact that the population (teachers and families) was changing continuously, with very few families staying permanently. From my perspective, the staff turnover and change management at Green School, as well as the culture of support for resourcing (from the Board of Trustees) is something that is deeply on the minds of teachers and other stakeholders. It is important to note, that once again, something that is discussed behind “closed doors” is patently obvious to the students, most of which have never been privy to the broader conversations about staff retention or resourcing.

It is also important to note that a great deal of democratic decision making is done around staffing, facilities, and curriculum at the teacher-level, but that the power to implement is often not granted; this is an example of the Intention (democratic, flat organizational structure) versus implementation (democratic discussions with little power behind them). As an additional data point, at the beginning of the course, we brainstormed ideas for research questions the students might ask if they were to do their Masters research at Green School, and by far the most common question was “Where does the money go?”, followed by “Does what Green School spends money on reflect our values?”.

Along with the actual resources and organization needed to implement the school's mission, students were critical of the school community's commitment to the IRESPECT values. As was discussed above, they spoke passionately about teachers who they felt did not respect their perspectives and who did not act with integrity. Most students mentioned that the community had shifted over time (students and parents alike) to become a space that increasingly valued wealth, privilege, and image over doing the work. Most frequently, this was mentioned in conjunction with the treatment of our Indonesian staff and students; although I will discuss this issue in more depth in the colonialism section, I will include a few data points here. Firstly, the many data points around values and their implementation (as they related to colonialism) tend to trend towards the student-participants' view that although the values are talked about, students, parents, and the board are not held accountable to them when it comes to their treatment of Indonesian staff. Below are two quotes from grade twelve students that are examples of this trend in the data:

Rose: I want to relate what your girl said about, um, the mistreatment of Indonesian staff here. Like, I want to relate that to one of our Green School values equity and how and how that relates to our like walking our talk. Like I feel like we preach so much about our values and that we practice all of them and that, that it guides our learning and stuff, but it's just like every day we see that Indonesian staff are being mistreated (by like) wealthy expat kids. It's, it's funny because I'm in a class that's a moment where, um, there was, there's, you know, a um, Indonesian man (he's gay) and everyone knows it and he's very proud it and the dynamics between compared compared to like when like a White male teaches like it's different. Like it's like the students treat the learning differently. Like they focus more when it's the certain teacher that it's like that's like White and as a male and has more authority. Then when this, you know, LGBTQ+ member, that's a Indonesian male, you know, like it's different then, it's so clear.

Lara: I think a whole lot has been said already, but just as a little summary, I'll really quickly say how I feel. I'm number 61 and I think it's absolute bullshit that we treat and pay Indonesian staff different than we pay international staff. And that's all I have to say.

It is important to note here, when looking at the data, that students unanimously agreed with the statements that Rose and Lara made. They were all nodding and emphatically chiming in when Lara made her statement about Indonesian staff's pay scales. I kept her use of language in here because I think it illustrates the gravity of the situation and the anger that she felt in that moment. My reflections on this pattern of data from the students got me thinking a lot about the nature of the school in general. About fifty percent of the teaching staff are Indonesian, but they make up one hundred percent of the support staff (groundskeepers, cleaning staff, food service workers). As well, families often employ Indonesian staff in their homes as cleaners, nannies, and gardeners. Most students are driven to school by a driver. As a social-justice minded workforce, the faculty frequently engages in conversations centred around trying to increase the respect paid to all of our Indonesian staff by parents and students, but the effectiveness of these conversations is limited, in my view, by the general cultural hierarchy that is evident not just in the school, but outside as well. I would agree with the student-participants interview responses around this topic, there is a great deal of discussion about values, respect, and equity at the school, but when it comes to the treatment of Indonesian staff, the roots of inequality are extremely deep, making it an uphill battle that has not been won yet.

Authenticity

I was just thinking about the fact that, um, if Green School did walk the talk, if it did become that one pioneer of Green Schools across the world, um, the mothership of all the Green Schools as a brand, but also as a sustainable school. One of the ones that are pushing for more sustainable education, the real learning principles, even the sustainability compass, things like that. If that was to be implemented across other schools from other teachers and educators being shown Green School, if we pushed the transparency of Green School, it would allow other schools across the world to then be able to look in and pull things out of Green School they could use. And I'm just, I'm thinking that if Green School was 100% walking the talk, then we would be able to expand that a lot quicker. - Henry (grade 12)

Henry, a student that both sat on the student council and also on the school's Board of Learners, had a unique perspective on the authenticity of Green School's marketing and overall self-presentation. In this quote, he is looking at the broader, business-model level impact of

Green School's ability to deliver on its branded image. He, like the other student-participants in the class, called this category "Walking the Talk". Some of the other students, when looking at each others' responses, called it "Expectations vs Reality" based on students' impressions of the school before arriving, and after. None of the participants mentioned this as a deliberate deception on the part of the school, but simply as a fact of marketing, but they were consistently frustrated by the disconnection between what the school says it is doing (on social media or on the website) and what they experience day-to-day.

Returning to the example of purchasing unsustainable products (single use plastic) that was given in an above section, multiple students referenced their experiences in trying to stand up for sustainable practices in the face of either teachers wanting to make students happy or other students behaving apathetically to the mission, and how they were essentially shut down in these efforts. These students expressed frustration at trying to stand up for what they believed in, what they believed the school stood for, but only really seeing it on the marketing campaigns.

I agree with all that you guys have said. I think we have tried but we're not 100% doing what we were saying - Made (grade 10)

During an off-timetable day, when parents were on campus, an impromptu climate strike was organized by the marketing team for students and parents to participate in, it was disruptive to the activities that had already been planned that day, but that were not as flashy for the cameras. On my reflection, this was frustrating to both teachers and students, who felt as though something like this was only being done to market the school, while the really hard work being done by high school students and teachers was not being showcased or celebrated.

Green School's marketing department is incredible, not only does the school host daily tours, but the team of staff in the department work day in and day out to maintain the school's brand. I have worked with them on a number of occasions and they are consummate professionals, but the students take real issue with them even existing at all (even though the marketing team may be the main reason that they attend the school in the first place). Here is Henry again with his take on the marketing department:

Green School does a lot of things that are untruthful and they're just straight up false. Um, for example, the first solar panels you see in the student entrance right above the ATM, they're not actually connected to anything. They don't work. They're just for show. Um, it's, it's pretty pathetic and there's a couple examples of this across campus, but that's just one of them.... then in a much larger scale in terms of marketing, there aren't many schools around the world that you can

name with a dedicated team of marketing. Right... [and Green School International is] looking at locations around the world that are tourist based. You wouldn't see Green School England or Green School America or Green School Australia. You'd see Green School Greece, Tulum, New Zealand. It's not places that you'd find hotspots, people. It's places that are very tourist-based and people will go for a vacation, not somewhere that you'd see, um, like a lot of people living in high populated areas.

Henry is referring to a concept called “Green Washing”, but not in those words. Green Washing is a common term to describe when organizations attempt to convey sustainable practices or ecological benefits to their products through their marketing, while not actually living up to those claims. This is something that students brought up a number of times in reference to the school. To be fair, upon my reflection, the school is doing a great deal to positively impact both its immediate environmental surroundings and educate students and parents in ways that they can advocate in the fight against climate change. The students did not all agree with me, they held the school to a different standard, or perhaps their measuring stick did not include other organizations like the ones I had experienced in my life. Regardless, they felt as though the school wasn't walking the talk.

Green washing is a common criticism in the business world, and one that has garnered a lot of attention over the past few years. The student-participants in my study went a step further when providing what I will call “constructive criticism” of Green School and frequently mentioned the marketing department's love of showcasing the school's connection to the local community. In line with the common nomenclature, I will call this phenomenon “local washing”. Again, I want to reiterate that upon my reflection, I agree with many of the criticisms that the students put forth, but think that a more balanced presentation is needed; the school does do a great deal of work trying to honour the place and the people that surround its campus. Local wisdom is embedded in curriculum, ceremonies and language are taught, local organizations and individuals are supported, and local food is celebrated; this is, of course, not perfect, and not, as Kumashiro (2004) would have us strive to be, “critical of privilege and other” (although it often “changes student and society” in many ways). Below is an example of this from two local scholarship students and their experience with marketing:

Made (grade eleven) One thing that always confuses me is that they only use a certain people's faces, you know, like I'm new here and they always use my face and there's a lot of more other LSP student that I have never seen their faces. And it's just sometimes my face and [Putu's] face.

*Putu (grade ten): Yeah...this is my experience, I like, I did something, maybe it's like I something good, but, um, they make it like... you know, they show it to everybody. Like, like that's my personal, like my personal [work], like they made, yeah. And they make it do that. Like they take credit or something. Yeah. And like, um, they show our face on Facebook and like trying to like get... I mean, yeah, of course I'm the scholarship student, but um, I, **I feel like my personal stuff is being like, is used by someone to advertise Green School.***

In longer, off-microphone discussions, these two young women explained more in detail that they felt as though their work and their contributions (including traditional dance) was leveraged more on the school's social media than students who were not local. When pushed as to why they were featured more than other scholarship students, they could not find a reason; however, another student in the class reminded them that they were attractive and dancing in most of the images. Made and Putu (along with the other local scholars in the class) expressed that they were grateful to be at the school, and so it must be that being part of the marketing was what they owed for the experience. Although I am not a local scholarship student at an international school, I can contrast this with other schools I have taught at internationally (in predominantly non-White countries), where they have the opposite slant to their marketing campaigns: featuring the few White students and White teachers at the school in order to promote a sense of prestige. Regardless, the students that were closest to the issue here politely expressed their confusion and frustration with the "local washing" that was being done on the part of the marketing department. If it is not clear at this point why this social media branding is less-than-genuine, it will become clearer in the following section on colonialism.

The final criticism that student-participants laid on the marketing and branding of the school was that it creates false expectations for families that choose to send their children to Green School; they called this category "expectations versus reality". This is, of course, a sweeping statement, but I don't feel it is my place to mince their words for them. However, I do feel, once again, that it is important to remember that although Green School is a school, it is also an organization that needs to promote itself, and that is what marketing departments are for; things in this world are rarely as amazing as marketing portrays them to be. I think it is also important to note that many students said the more they learned about the organization, the less "authentic" the marketing seemed; this, again, is in line with the human experience. The final data point I would like to bring to the forefront here is that when looking at studies they would want to

conduct at Green School, many students referenced somehow testing the marketing presentation against what was actually happening in the school; I'm not sure how you would accurately test this on a large scale, but I think it would be an interesting study.

Colonialism

As I hope has been clear up to this point, the interconnectedness of each of the preceding sections is almost too much to describe. Codes and categories overlapped so much that it was difficult to create sections at all without jumbling it all together. This spider-web of data points had me reading and re-reading guides on grounded theory in order to better understand where I should be going, and how I should describe the findings. In the end, I decided to let the students speak for themselves, and to build up the categories separately before introducing the one code that was both the most commonly discussed on its own and also the most referenced (explicitly and implicitly) in students' responses about other topics. Of course, this could be self-selection bias, as this study focuses on colonialism, and most of the student-participants have a good idea of what that means, but even when questions were decidedly and clearly on other topics, the students in the room interrogated their own privilege (or lack thereof) and the structures at play within the school.

Similarly to the meta-structure of this study, I will start with the data around more granular categories and build up to the overarching trends that came up through the interviews. Firstly, the students had a great deal to say about the way that Indonesian teachers are respected, both in general and in comparison to foreign teachers. Next, I would like to give space for the voices of local Indonesian students and their experiences of studying at Green School Bali. Finally, I will discuss the trends that were evident when going through the interview data: privilege and cultural capital. There was an immense amount of data in this category, and I have included what I could reasonably and thematically contain in a document with a word limit. As well, it is important to note that, as with any other parts of this study, it was impossible to include all voices and perspectives, so I aim to amplify the voices of those most affected, and acknowledge when there are shortcomings.

Respect for Indonesian Teachers and Staff

These Indonesian teachers are so lovely and they will do anything. They will sit with you at lunch. They will, you know, um, they will help you at break in their own free time just to get you through you know, your work if you're struggling. And um,

*the way they are treated in classes, not being listened to. Um, just people talking over them since their voices are usually not, you know, as loud as others might be. Um, which I think is really nice because that creates that kind of like calm and safe environment, just, you know, relax. Um, but I don't think that that, um, um, **I just don't find that acceptable if we treat these people (usually Indonesian women) this way.** - Sophie (grade ten)*

Sophie's comment came after a number of other student-participants voiced their concerns about the treatment of Indonesian teachers. They cited behaviours such as students simply ignoring the teachers, talking over them, and disrespecting them with rude comments; all of this in contrast to the way that foreign teachers are viewed and treated by students. It is important to note here also that multiple students brought up the gender divide between the mostly female Indonesian staff, and the foreign staff (which is decidedly more mixed gender). As with Rose's quote (included in the section above) about how the dynamics of her class taught by two teachers, one who is gay, effeminate, Indonesian, and gender-queer and one who is White, masculine and male, changes depending on who is in the room, and how the Indonesian teacher commands significantly less respect from the students, we can see that the general trend in this data is that students notice and are outraged by the treatment of Indonesian staff. They are also cognisant of the gender and social hierarchies at play.

The comments above came from mostly foreign students, expressing their anger towards their classmates and wishing that they would treat the teachers better. It is interesting to note that the local students took a slightly different perspective, one that expresses the general concept (students are not respectful to Indonesian teachers) but asks more of the teachers, rather than of the students. Here is what Made had to say about it:

*I completely agree. But also I think that most of the Indonesian teacher is not like confident enough to be strict to the White kids. And I think that's one thing that Indonesian teacher need to learn because, like I love how lovely they are, how like patient they are to all of us, but there's like **you can't just expect the students to be respectful if you're not strong.** You just let them talk like they will never learn. You know sometimes like for me personally I think that sometimes they need to be strict.*

Her thought that it may be incumbent on the Indonesian teachers to "earn respect" through strictness was echoed by Putu, who postulated that students were rude because the teachers were not loud enough or did not get angry with them when they misbehaved. Putu also added that it was the boys who did not respect the female Indonesian teachers. I would just like to

emphasize, once again, the expectation here being shifted on to the teachers, rather than on to the foreign, mostly White students by local students and, in contrast, the onus being placed on the students by their foreign peers.

Finally, the student-participants' discussion of a pay gap between local and foreign staff was also included in the "walking the talk" section, but deserves a place here as well. Lara's comment about how paying staff differently who do the same job is "bullshit" is just as relevant in this section. Although many of the discussions I have had about this pay gap with students have been off the record, my reflection is that they struggle with the injustice of it and what to do in the face of that injustice just as much as the teachers do. They frequently want to help, or offer a listening ear to their Indonesian teachers, but feel powerless in the struggle. It is at this point usually that they continue on with their lives. This is a pattern I have seen in colleagues as well; we all care, we all want to do something, but when faced with an insurmountable wall of colonial power structures, we continue to skirt the edges of it and get on with our days. Whenever I spend time thinking about this, I get angry and sad. It is worthwhile to note that this anger is calmly echoed in my local colleagues, but they are much more tactful than I would be in the situation. During a number of open-forum sessions this year that I was a part of, some amazing members of staff spoke up about their experiences fighting for equal pay for equal jobs; some staff even citing examples of teaching the exact same class as a foreign teacher and knowing that they were receiving substantially less pay. It is not part of this study for me to include the numbers here, but know that it is enough that foreign teachers could afford to drink at the on-campus coffee shop, but local teachers could not.

Indonesian Students in an International School

I like how the teachers never like, like never like asking me publicly about like am I okay like in class they'd more into like coming to me privately and like asking am I okay and anything and I just like how they make me know that I'm kind of worth it and that you know, I deserve to be here and everything - Made (grade eleven)

I am reminded of the paper by Shirin Housee (2010) when evaluating the data for this section. The article describes how students felt much more comfortable answering personal questions after class, away from large groups or their peers. I found this to be true with this topic in particular. The data I collected from interviews with local students was fairly minimal in comparison to the multi-faceted experience that they shared with me on walks to class or when

passing by my desk. The interviews had them discussing how they felt they had to earn their place at the school through being part of the marketing campaigns, that they expected the school would change their lives, and that they felt a bit separated from the general population of students. I will first dive into what they said in the interviews, and then attempt to capture a bit more of their experience through my own reflections.

Not surprisingly given the marketing of the school, Made, Putu, Kadek, and Annisa all expected to have their lives drastically changed when they started studying at Green School Bali, and for the most part, from their commentary, this appears to be true. They all expressed that the shift away from focusing on grades as an indicator of self-worth was a positive thing in their lives and that they felt their wellbeing was being supported. However, there are three main criticisms that they all shared that are illustrated very well by Made's storytelling here:

*Um, so I was in KKC for six months and then I heard about the scholarship and I immediately applied for it because it was really interesting and my parents were like totally supporting me with that because I tell them all these amazing stories that **Green School did and how it would change my life like 180 degrees...I was really looking forward to some changes my life** because in my old school it was, it was a really strict public but international standard school... And when I was, when I came here, I was really expecting people to be like open because that's what they say. We are like nonjudgmental and everything. And I was expecting myself to be myself and like, you know, wearing anything I want, um, and just express myself, you know, maybe I'll have my hair pink and everything, but when I came I was, I was faced, um, a situation where the people **expect me to be the nice Indonesian kid, the nice Indonesian** ... You don't do this. And you're like, yeah, you don't speak up, you're like really respecting the teacher and everything. But I mean we were just like a human, so we did a lot of wrong stuff. We do the ultra, the right stuff and we were not always the, we were not always a good kid, you know?*

*And sometimes even if I just wear a tank top, like the Indonesian parents would be like, "**Oh, you guys just here from one month and she was wearing like leggings or like a tank top. Oh, she's like a "bule" (foreigner) now**". And I was just kind of shocked because I didn't expect the people to say that to me, you know? ... Um, and sometimes, I'm not really separated right now, but when I first came I was like, you know, I don't want you to talk a lot because I just don't used to talk a lot. But when I first came, everyone was just like pew pew pew pew (fast talking) and, and, and **it was just kinda hard for me to fit in first time**. But everyone was very supportive.*

Made highlighted both her expectations and the actual outcome in her response, which was actually about twice as long as this (she had a lot to say) and included a criticism of the marketing

of the scholarship students (included in a previous section). The three other main points that I took away from this, and found connections to in other students' responses, were that: cultural expectations followed the Indonesian students into their international environment and held them to a different standard; local students find being in an international school somewhat isolating; and that at some point, these teenagers felt split between the world that they grew up in, and the one they needed to navigate every day. This is very consistent with conversations I have had with Indonesian students at Green School as well as former students that have long-since graduated. The push and pull of two cultures lives on with these human beings long after they leave the international school bubble.

The informal conversations that I have been a part of really solidified the trends I was seeing in the student-participants' responses. Earlier this year, I had the privilege to review data for an attempted overhaul of the scholarship program and spoke with the director at length about the strengths and weaknesses of supporting local students pursuing education at Green School Bali. He and I waxed philosophically about the inherently colonial nature of the grandiose claims of the school, especially those that were claiming to improve the lives of the Indonesian students that have "the privilege" to study for free. I also have the immense privilege of calling a student from the first graduating class of Green School as one of my close friends, and we have had the same discussions. She is Balinese and extremely outspoken, and between her, the director of the program, and me, we did not manage to come to a concrete conclusion as to what the benefits of the scholarship program are to the local students, outside of colonial and patriarchal ideas of success.

Overarching Hierarchies: Privilege

We're in a bubble. I guess being here, you're in a beautiful jungle, you've got solar panels, you've got bamboo, you've got like, you see that and what, it's a big bubble of the community. And I think that stepping outside that bubble is important.
- Eva (grade eleven)

The idea of an international school "bubble" is not unique to Green School, I have personally written about it in the context of two other schools that I have taught at, but it is important to note. The bubble being referred to is the insulation of the community and culture within the school compared to what is going on outside. When the students referred to the bubble and discussed it as a category after the data was collected, they discussed not only the

difference between the school and the surrounding physical environment, but the school and the rest of the world. I agree with this. The conversations about activism or sustainability that happen within the “walls” of Green School are often not as welcome or as understood in broader society; at the very least, they are frequently met with resistance or skepticism. Students’ discussion of this bubble often included implicit references to their own or others’ privilege, clearly delineating the “us” from the “other”. Privilege cropped up alongside many other categories and sub-categories, including:

- Curriculum (Explicit - experiential, future preparedness, project based learning)
- Curriculum (Implicit & Values - empowerment, self-worth)
- Walking the talk (sustainability, green washing, lip service)
- Authenticity + Expectations (Transparency, marketing, private school bubble, wealth)
- Gender (Gender differences)
- Negative Emotions (Frustration)
- Mission (change over time, school moving away from mission)
- Local/International Divide (Colonialism - division international and local, colonialism, cultural differences, local staff, marginalization of Indonesian community, respect for Indonesian teachers, respect for local culture)
- Student Culture (Students not involved/invested)

As is evidenced here, privilege was referenced at least once in approximately fifty percent of the other codes and categories in this study. Predominantly, students criticised the school community for not acknowledging its privilege, by tokenizing the local community and customs and at the same time treating staff poorly, or for the idea that Bali needed to be “saved”. Student-participants also frequently discussed wealth, and the immense power of their wealthy peers and their even wealthier parents.

The other subcategory of privilege that is important to note is that of cultural hierarchies. Students, especially the local students, talked around the idea that some things were valued more at the school than others during the interviews, but in discussions afterwards they were very clear about who was valued more in the grand scheme of things. The value, they said, did not lie with the people and place that were being used to market the school, but with the wealthy parents that brought in the income.

Chapter 5: Analysis

Through reviewing the work of other educational researchers prior to completing my own study, I found a number of key areas that I hoped the student-participants would address during our interview process. The depth of research on colonialism and international schooling, separately is immense, but looking at the intersection of the two, I noted a lack of specific and detailed research. From this, there are four major topic areas that I want to analyze in reference to the above data: colonialism, cultural hierarchy, iterative decolonization (praxis), and identity. Finally, I will analyze my own “big questions” based on the students’ responses, knowing that these answers are ever-changing, but that a reflection at this current juncture is extremely valuable for my own teaching practice going forward.

Colonialism

When I reflect upon the impact of modern imperialist colonization and its impact on education, specifically in the context of Green School Bali, a number of layers of trends seem to emerge. Firstly, that on the surface level, there continues to be a subjugation & exploitation of non-European (non-White) people and ways of knowing in this international school context. Secondly, euro-centric concepts of success and the idea of Western ways of being as something to strive for pervade the narrative around non-White students and teachers. Finally, the “colonization of the mind” (Illich, 305) is alive and well in the community at Green School Bali, both on the part of the foreign community members and those who hail from Indonesia.

In my literature review, I maintained that my experience suggests we are not living in a postcolonial world. That colonialism is ever present in the daily life of human beings the world over, and is especially evident in the process of schooling. When I looked at the data from this study, this came into even sharper focus, although not in the way that I expected. Student-participants spent a great deal of time discussing the lack of respect that Indonesian staff received from their peers and the significant disparity between the salaries of Indonesian staff and equally-qualified foreign staff. This is in line with what Grosfoguel (2011) describes as the West “inferiorizing” the rest; in both cases, foreign (privileged and mostly White) individuals and organizations have come into a previously colonized country and treated the local people with

little respect and exploited them for their labour. In addition to this, as the students mentioned, the fetishization and tokenization of local religious ceremonies, dances, and customs, as well as the romanticization of the school's benefits to local Indonesian scholarship students presents a less-obvious, but no less impactful exploitation of their cultural heritage, being marketed to foreign fee-paying community members as an exotic way to step out of their comfort zone and "give back".

Furthermore, the marketing aspect of the Local Scholarship Program and its focus on the Indonesian students' betterment as a result of their attendance at the school is an example of the euro-centric notions of success that pervade international school communities. Oftentimes, the reason why students with non-Western passports choose to attend international schools is in order to get to the West for their post-secondary studies or career. This idea that international schools provide superior educational opportunities and also superior education in general to the government (local) schools in the place that they occupy is fundamentally colonial. The students' responses back up the initial research wholeheartedly here, with local scholarship students referencing how they believed their lives would be improved by coming to Green School. The marketing itself also backs this up, both through the pervasiveness of the local students in the media content, and by suggesting that Green School's Local Scholarship Program is making "future changemakers" (Green School Bali, 2020). In addition to this, and something that I think was missing from other research studies, the students discussed a lot about how this presentation of their "improvement" as a marketing tool made them feel. They were acutely aware that they were featured more often than their foreign peers, and described feeling like they were being singled out in order to make the school look good. This flip side of the international schooling narrative once again showcases the violence of colonialism that was so often described in the literature.

Both through the interview process and my own personal reflections, it became extremely clear that the "colonization of the mind" that "has allowed colonial legacies to be perpetuated through societal structures long after the heyday of modern imperialism ended" (Illich, 305) is alive and well in the Green School community. The discussion of local Indonesian teachers as comparatively less strict or authoritative as compared to foreign staff falls in line with this; both in the sense that non-White groups are meek in the presence of foreigners and in the sense that there is a value judgment placed on these people based on the difference in their culture from the

West. In addition, the Indonesian students' perspective that the lack of respect that these teachers receive may be their own fault is a concrete example of internalized colonialism: these students have taken on the inferiority viewpoint of the dominant or oppressive group unconsciously. Finally, the local students' comments about their worthiness to attend the school, or their belonging, having to be reinforced by "good" teachers or peers shows their default inferiority narrative. Not only have our minds, expat and local alike, been colonized, but in many cases, the narrative is so deeply embedded that the negative storylines are upheld by those who are attempting to shake their shackles.

From here, we can look at the idea of international schooling in reference to colonialism. Hill (2007) maintains that true international schools have no nation and that they are better prepared to foster intercultural understanding, but frequently are not successful at this. In reading his work, I argued a bit further, stating in my review above that "international schools, although they are poised to provide connections between national and racial groups, are inherently colonial in nature. International schools represent a colonial legacy through their linguistic, financial, and curricular positioning, especially in post-imperial countries." As I hope is clear from the analysis above, this was upheld unequivocally through the data that I collected and reflections on my own experiences. International schools such as Green School Bali have the unique position of being diverse and without country (Hill, 2007), but the data shows that, at least in this instance, they are not leveraging these attributes to deconstruct colonial narratives, although their policies and intentions set out to do so. Rather, in practice, they are continuing to exploit the existing dominant worldviews to further the strategic, financial goals of the school.

Cultural Capital & Hierarchy

The concepts of cultural capital and cultural hierarchies are integral to any discussion of decolonization. What and who we value most, and the benefits that this value affords them provides unique insight into the impacts of colonial power structures. The students discussed this mostly in terms of privilege and wealth, and specifically in terms of the power dynamics at the school. The data showed a clear "client-focus" in the decision-making processes, where the clients were defined as fee-paying parents. This, once again, is in contrast to the non-fee-paying parents, who are all Indonesian (although, to be clear, there is a minority of fee-paying Indonesian parents). The cultural capital that affords a position of privilege to foreign parents where their

voices are heard and they have significant influence over programming and strategic decision making, as well as power to advocate for their individual children within a system was shown through the data and was in line with other researchers' conclusions. Joseph (2006) and Bokhorst-Heng (2007) maintain that children with less privilege may have difficulty connecting with students who fall within the socioeconomic and cultural norms. The interview data did not directly address this, but through other tangential work I have been doing at Green School, as well as my personal relationships with students, this was clearly the case. The frustration that student-participants expressed over the lack of respect for the local community and the flouted privilege of their peers showed a divide that existed, but was not easy for them to talk about.

The hierarchical structure of ways of knowing was another area in which the literature had a clear stance. The "what" in our teaching, the curriculum itself, is something that I hoped the student-participants would address in their responses. As you can see from the data above, they chose to look at broad strokes of the curriculum, including project-based learning, experiential activities and future preparedness, as well as the decreased focus on academics (grades) that Green School's curriculum so focuses on. They also spent a great deal of time, especially within the context of wellbeing classes, discussing the implicit portions of the curriculum and how it played into their self-worth, self-awareness, and empowerment. Although we could look at these curriculum aspects in contrast to the various curricula that exist in Indonesia or former Asian colony countries in general, I think it would be more pertinent to point out that the students did not explicitly reference feelings of alienation or disconnection from the content or teachers. I believe this is due to the individualized nature of the curriculum and instruction, which students referenced as giving them more choice and the power to investigate the topic areas that were of most interest to them and would best prepare them for their own future. So, although there was no evidence that the ways of knowing that contrast eastern and Western knowledge construction were equally valued or taught, the students appeared to feel as though their choice helped to allow them to achieve this balance on their own.

Iterative Decolonization (Praxis)

The prevailing research into decolonization suggested a need for constant iteration and reflection (which I will refer to as praxis) as a way to help mitigate the negative impacts of colonial structures (Tom et al., 2017). When reflecting on the categories and trends of the interview data, it is still clear that praxis is necessary for change, but it was not clear that Green School Bali was

implementing true praxis as it was intended. Although they are doing an excellent job of reflecting upon the current issues that the school is facing, often in democratic, bottom-up, discussion-based sessions, the implementation of new practices and follow-up from that process (to be repeated ad infinitum) is where they fall short. The students commented on their lack of real voice for change and the school's inability to "walk the talk", especially when it came to the local community. This, to me, suggests that although they are talking about being a positive force for change with respect to social justice initiatives, the actual work may not be adequately implemented or reflected upon.

This falls short of the expectations set out by both PACE (Tom, 2017) and Culturally Relevant Teaching (Illich et al., 2017). It is important here to revisit the definition of Culturally Relevant teaching that Illich et al (2017) provide in order to properly compare the data to previous research:

Culturally relevant teachers, rather than positioning minoritized students as deficient, encourage them to utilize their funds of knowledge in the process of developing "a community of learners" (Ladson-Billings 1995, p. 163) that includes the teacher "self" in the equation. The teacher, alongside the learners, collectively explores issues of social inequality that they all experience with the aim of deepening the understanding about the transient nature of knowledge (curriculum, resources, the purpose of schooling and social change) and of co-constructing critical consciousness. In this way, CRP serves to disrupt the dominant idea of the white teacher as racially neutral while at the same time challenging the assumption of the white teacher as knower imparting wisdom upon racially diverse learners. (Location 403)

There are many aspects of this definition that the data suggests Green School Bali is achieving, especially around the co-creation of curriculum; however, the active development of a true "community of learners" that takes into account all voices was heavily criticized by the student-participants. The main issue that I see, as connected to this topic, relates to what the students called "intention versus implementation", the accountability of the school to not only discuss the relevant issues at play, but make active changes that may or may not face resistance from the community groups that hold power.

Identity

Having analyzed the "what" in reference to my initial review of the existing literature, it seems pertinent to analyze the "who" when looking at classroom communities. Bringing our whole

selves into the classroom is something that I have expressed plays into my personal teaching philosophy in a big way, so reviewing the student-participants' responses about this is extremely relevant to any conclusions that I will draw. In particular, I would like to reference the initial claims I made in the review that:

Students are humans too, so they notice when teachers bring a self that is overworked and fighting for recognition into their space. I believe that the same logic can be applied to teachers who feel undervalued, feel that the curriculum does not reflect their identity, or our suffering in any other way. When we fail to recognize the "who" in the classroom, we are leaving out a big piece of the puzzle. By acknowledging and supporting the diverse groups of humans that make up our schools, and providing the freedom and space to bring their whole selves, we can strengthen the bonds between them, further supporting efforts to foster a love of learning, spaces for safe expansion, and critical, democratic pedagogy.

The "who" in the classroom should be accounted for when reflecting on decolonization and community-building, especially within the diversity of this international school context.

It is extremely clear to me from the data that my claim about students' awareness of teachers' struggles was valid; additionally, the students picked up on many of the nuanced issues facing teachers at Green School that I had not expected. They noted that staff retention was low because of a lack of support, teachers were struggling with overwork, Indonesian staff were undervalued, and that some teachers did not feel their values were in line with the school's implemented practices. However, the students did not seem to be disconnected from teachers that were struggling with school bureaucracy. In fact, this seemed to strengthen their perceived bond. Perhaps this is once again because of the democratic nature of the school's curriculum: teachers are able to offer courses based on their own interest, passion and speciality, meaning that they can bring more of themselves into the classroom, regardless of how they feel about the organizational structures that surround that process. The main dividing force between teachers and students was the bias that students were so outspoken against; describing situations in which they did not feel comfortable sharing their own viewpoints for fear of being "shut down"; this, again is in line with the literature and my initial expectations.

When we look at identity in reference to colonialism, there was something that stood out to me in the language of the data that came out of the interviews with student-participants. The broad identity categories that presented themselves with respect to both students and teachers were binary: local or international (foreign). Rather than referring to students and staff specifically

based on their country of origin or any other defining characteristic, all foreigners were referred to as one homogenous group, and all Indonesians (regardless of whether they were from Bali or not) were similarly categorized. I, in keeping with the culture that I am currently steeped in, have continued this trend, and it is something that I am critical of in my own work. When we begin with an identity that is fundamentally about race, as most of the discussions seemed to revolve around, we lose a great deal of the complexity that Madden, Higgins, & Korteweg (2013) describe, and we continue to reinforce the fundamental structures of eurocentrism that exist within that reductive language.

The distilling of identity down to locals and foreigners also seems to put the onus of cultural education primarily on Indonesian staff and students. Although there is a plethora of information out there on Balinese religious, cultural, artistic, and historical practices and wisdom, the local students described feeling a need to earn their keep by showcasing their culture. I have observed this as well, with the brunt of the work around complex festivals, dances, and integration with the surrounding community falling on Indonesian staff. Students did not directly reference what I described in my review as “Saris and Samosas Syndrome” (unknown), where we celebrate the beauty of a culture without delving deep into its complexities and contradictions; in fact, from my own reflection, I feel as though the amazing educators at Green School are doing a good job of showcasing both sides of the coin here. However, students did discuss the tokenization of Balinese culture in great detail, and their feelings of being “singled out”; which confirmed my initial thoughts that this would “cause disconnection between members of learning communities, making some students feel on display for the benefit of others, while still striving to meet an ideal that does not reflect them.”

Big Questions

In preparation for and throughout this research, I have attempted to keep four broad questions at the front of my mind in order to keep my heart open to the perspectives of others and the true aims of researching in education for change. I acknowledged there that these questions will never truly be answered, that they are used to frame decisions big and small as I navigate teaching, learning, and researching in a complex world; however, I feel it is relevant to include the student data related to three of these questions in order to provide context for the

conclusions and recommendations that follow. The final question, relating to knowledge creation, was less relevant to the students' perspectives and responses, and therefore, I have omitted it.

What does it mean to be a good teacher? For whom are "good teachers" good? (Illich et al., 2017)

On the first question, students had a lot to say. Their emphasis on respect (both from and for teachers) pervaded a great deal of discussions across a number of other categories including race, gender, personal biases, privacy, and self worth suggests that good teachers embody and earn respect in all that they do. The data also suggests that follow-through is an important quality in both teachers and administrators; that "walking the talk" is key for students being able to also believe in the mission and feel connected to the community. Although there are many other markers of "good" teachers that came out in the data, the final one I will discuss here is that the students' responses suggest that good teachers operate in such a way that students feel valued for their whole selves, rather than just their grades. With respect to the second question, the data is slightly less clear, but if I reflect on the three key areas of "good teaching" above: respect, follow-through, and whole-self validation, it is clear that a teacher that embodies all three of these things would be perceived as good to any of the diverse students that participated in this research.

What outcomes are we looking for from our school communities? How do we measure "success"?

This question harkens back to the idea of policy versus practice that has come up so much in the data. The policies of Green School set out to create a "community of learners making our world sustainable" (Green School Bali, 2020), but as has been suggested by the data, the implementation of these policies is sometimes lacking. The outcomes that the student data suggested were most important were self-defined success, student-by-student, rather than simply grades or university acceptances, on one hand, and increased prestige and income for the school on the other. Although these are not diametrically opposed ideas, in this case, one feels disingenuous alongside the other, according to the student-participants. I have to agree here. I think that the definition of success for Green School students is not clearly defined and that with so many conflicting ideas, measuring that success at this moment is not possible. This is something that could use more clarity in the future.

Where should our focus be as educators?

Student participants spoke most passionately about immersive, democratic learning experiences that they felt were preparing them for their future careers or lives. This suggests that knowing who is in your classroom and listening to their needs alongside your own professional expertise leads to excellent educational outcomes. As well, students felt strongly about learning that validated their self-worth and empowered them. As I discussed above, bringing your whole self into the classroom and celebrating your interests through curriculum and pedagogy also engages students well and connects them to both you and their peers. In reference to decolonizing and change-oriented education, the data suggests that, in line with previous research, we need to be reflective and iterative, taking action to make change and constantly reviewing for necessary modifications. We need to listen, be humble, and most importantly follow-through.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

Grounded theory studies, as I have learned, do not always go in the direction you expect them to. I find this to be the true beauty of the process. I set out, as most researchers do, with a preconceived notion of what would be important to these students, and what they would want to talk about in the interviews. Namely, I thought they would want to talk about the way their parents approached discussing learning in general and more specifically about wellbeing, and from there, I would be able to see how this shaped their views of community in the classroom. They did not follow my expectations, and I am much better off for it. The level of discussion that took place during the interview process consistently surprised and delighted me. As you have seen from the preceding chapter, student-participants were aware of many nuanced issues in the school from curriculum all the way to governance and they were not shy to share stories about how these broader structural incongruencies trickled down to impact their daily lives. Pouring over the data that they provided, as well as my own personal reflections on their words and my experiences has led me to conclusions that are perhaps broader than I expected, but hopefully are more actionable in diverse contexts.

Each student's interview responses alone could spawn case-based conclusions about international schooling in numerous different areas. There are almost too many interesting directions to take this writing in, but that is much more of a blessing than a curse. In the end, I decided to focus my conclusions and recommendations on five key areas: accountability, empowerment with trust, transparency, and finally, asking the right questions and implementing a brave praxis. Working towards change in any one of these areas would help to address many of the issues that the student-participants raised, as they are so interconnected; however, based on the interview data, small scale efforts in specific areas without broad systemic action would lead to a continued feeling of lip service. This is especially true in the area of accountability; empowerment, discussions, bottom-up feedback, and written policies have no teeth without follow through. These conclusions and recommendations were co-created with the student-participants in the course through a process of creative collaboration from Stanford University called "Design Thinking" (Plattner, 2010), which was slightly modified by me for the purposes of this study. Most importantly, the student-participants determined the requirements that any recommendation must

meet before it may be included in this writing; therefore, I will include their requirements first, so as to frame the conclusions within their wise words.

Guidelines for Recommendations

After the interviews were completed and the student-participants coded the transcribed data, we began working through the middle two stages of Stanford's Design Thinking process (Plattner, 2010). Design thinking is something I have used in my classes for years and can not recommend enough as a way to systematically promote creative and collaborative problem solving. The first stage is called "Empathize" and involves listening and learning from people who are experiencing the problems you are trying to solve; this was very thoroughly completed as part of the interview process. Following this, Design Thinking asks participants to "Define" the parameters of any solutions that could be implemented; I explain this to my students as the things that are "must-haves" for a problem to be solved. It is incredibly dynamic and discursive, with students writing their ideas on small note paper (all ideas are welcome and encouraged, even ones that they deem silly) and then working together to form groupings. From this process, the students identified the following categories and requirements for any proposed recommendations that would come out of their interviews:

Any recommendations should:

1. *Be fair to and include the voice of Indonesians and foreigners*
2. *Be representative of the needs of all genders, sexual orientation, and ethnic origin*
3. *Include input from and be beneficial to teachers and students*
4. *Protect students' privacy and ensure safety*
5. *Be mindful of boundaries*
6. *Focus on student long-term happiness and needs*
7. *Require long-term commitments and accountability*
8. *Consider the impact it might have on students' mental and physical health*
9. *Be as transparent as possible*
10. *Be sustainable*

These guidelines not only helped to narrow the focus of the conclusions and recommendations that I have chosen to include in this writing, but are, in and of themselves, excellent data points on what is important to these students when planning and implementing change in a school setting. Students submitted many different small notes that all spoke to the need for solutions to consider the needs and voices of diverse groups, rather than just one. I have included their work here to

both provide another example of their wisdom and also to provide a guidepost for readers as I progress through the conclusions and recommendations.

Following the “Define” stage, students worked in groups to “Ideate” potential solutions to the problems that they saw through the data; all of which must meet the requirements set in the previous activity. Once again, they were encouraged to share all ideas, even ones that seemed silly or outlandish, so the list of potential is both long and diverse. They included everything from “more mashed potatoes at lunch” (a good recommendation, I think), all the way to increasing the diversity on the Board of Trustees. I have included their suggestions alongside mine throughout the following section. I firmly believe, after much reflection, that if I had more time with these students in this classroom setting, their voices would be more so at the forefront of this section. I was, however, limited by the course duration and then the global pandemic that swept through in 2020. It is for this reason that I hope my writing will amplify their voices and synthesize their ideas in the most representative and honest way possible.

Accountability

This section of conclusions and recommendations is one that I believe holds the lynchpin for all others. Without accountability, the data shows, we have little to fall back on except marketing images and the best laid plans. The students called this category “intention versus implementation”, and I think their words accurately reflect the predicament that showed through their stories and commentary. Namely, that regardless of what a school or curriculum aims to do, without consistent follow-through, the intentions are for naught. This accountability was clearly important across the whole community, the students held parents, teachers, administrators, and board members accountable for their actions, and noted that in many cases, although there were policies in place, these groups of people (including their own peers) were not required to adhere to the policies and plans that were so thoughtfully put in place. The student-participants did not criticize the policies or the mission; they did not even make constructive remarks about the curriculum that was in place. Their comments were reserved for the carrying out of those documents. It is not enough to have good intentions, write them down, and hope that goodwill will encourage an entire community to fall in line.

If it is not enough, we must then ask ourselves “what more is necessary?” in order to move from this place of free-spirited adherence to policy and mission. I will first address this in

the specific context of Green School Bali, and then follow this up with some practical implementation-based suggestions and framing questions that could be used in other schooling contexts. The student-participants requested more accountability and follow through in areas such as the treatment of Indonesian staff, teacher bias, marketing, sustainability, student voice, and curriculum. In each and every one of these categories, the data suggests to me the following conclusion: **you need to do what you say you are going to do.** Of course, this looks different depending on the intentions, but it requires tough conversations and sometimes it requires bravery. Bravery because many of the people that need to be held accountable in these situations are either dear friends, or individuals who contribute financially to the organization.

Take the treatment of Indonesian staff as an example. As you have seen in the data, there are numerous ways in which colonialism and colonial mindsets have pervaded the community at Green School Bali. It is not unique in this regard; my own personal experience confirms this. The most concrete and obvious example of this is the differing pay scales between Indonesian and foreign staff (which is, again, not unique). The connection between this blatant hierarchical practice and the local washing that students talked so much about speaks to the need for authenticity. In order for Green School Bali to be “walking the talk” they would need to truly engage with the local community and value equal pay for equal work. It seems like a simple solution, but of course, there are many hurdles to reaching this, the largest of which is funding and the sources thereof.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

- 1. Are there ways in which this piece of media does not represent our actual policies or practices? How might we align one to the other?*
- 2. Are there voices in our community that get heard less frequently than others? Why might this be the case? How could we amplify them in a way that empowers change?*
- 3. What is standing in the way of changing this policy? What would it look like if we did not have this barrier?*

The microaggressions that take place on a day-to-day basis between foreign students, parents, and staff and their Indonesian counterparts are harder to define and provide solutions for. The student-participants cited examples of their peers disrespecting local teachers and often treating them as if they were maids, and their parents following suit. I have witnessed these interactions and they are often varying degrees of subtle, but indicative of underlying cultural hierarchies nonetheless. As a community, we must ask the following questions:

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

4. How might we critically engage with our whole community around privilege and cultural hierarchy? What would this look like in a perfect world?

5. How can we hold the community accountable for their actions in a way that supports and amplifies the voices and experiences of our most marginalized groups?

Neither one of these questions has easy answers. They both involve a deep dive and some more of that bravery I was mentioning earlier because, as I have mentioned, there is often a conflict of interest between the money-making side of a school and its social justice mandate. Engaging the community in the case of Green School Bali means being able to have honest conversations with parents and staff about their underlying biases. This process can often be extremely confronting and, as I have observed and reflected, drive communities further apart, rather than bringing them together. As in Nic a Bháird's (2013) study, it is important to involve the community in the planning of these discussions and empower them to truly participate, rather than absorb information (or worse, reject it) . But the final step is the most important, according to my data: there must be accountability. In order for real change to happen, there needs to be a system in place that holds community members accountable for their actions.

In the case of Green School, my recommendation would be to, with the input of the community, come up with a system of checks and balances wherein community members could participate in a restorative justice system (with increasing levels of engagement from counselors and administrators), similar to what Green School has implemented for student behaviour encouragement. However, I will make a bolder recommendation that I believe needs to be put in place for the student system as well: if a member of the community is not adhering to the set guidelines agreed to by the whole, and the system of restorative justice is not working, they should be asked to leave. This protects our community, the teachers, the students, and all of the staff. Once again, it is the costliest recommendation I could propose to be put into place, but it is so clear that accountability is what the students need to feel safe, and if I am being honest, it is what I would need as well. To know that if someone is behaving in a way that does not align with the mission and values, that they will not get away with it, regardless of how much funding they bring to the school. This is what "walking the talk" looks like.

The student-participants focused a great deal on the idea that the curriculum at the school was what inspired them, from project-based learning, to empowerment, to preparing them for their future. On the other hand, they also spoke passionately about how teachers were not

always prepared to navigate the environment of openness and democratic curriculum in a way that made them feel safe and secure. It is a tough thing to balance, as Green School Bali prides itself on the flexibility and dynamism of its ever-changing curriculum, which requires creative thinking, the polar opposite of compliance and boundaries. In my experience, teachers and administrators struggle with this balance, trying to encourage that wonderful spontaneity, while still asking for documentation and objective grading. Just like the students asked for boundaries, I have found that when teachers are given boundaries or deadlines that are enforced, they initially balk, but settle into a feeling of safety that comes from knowing there is someone else holding them accountable. It is for this reason that I would recommend that Green School Bali implement a teacher review process that includes input from students, administrators, and peers as well as a teaching observation. This should also be tied to contracts, similar to the systems that are in place in the majority of the world; with multiple unpassed reviews resulting in a discussion about how to support the teacher's continued successful employment. This is not something that Green School Bali has done in the past due to massive resistance on the part of teachers; once again, the data suggests to me a need to be brave, to hold those who play some of the largest operational roles in the organization accountable for their actions in a real way.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

6. In what ways does our teaching and learning community struggle? In a perfect world, how would administrators show up? Teachers? Students? How can we bridge the gap between these two situations?

7. What aspects of our learning program are the most important to the success of our students and the program itself? How can we foster those aspects?

8. What does accountability look like with respect to 6 & 7? How can we fairly and honestly support teachers in their pursuit of this?

For teachers specifically, the need to provide training in specific areas, especially related to specific pedagogical practices (holding difficult and diverse conversations) and student boundaries/relationships was evident in the data. This additional training, paired with accountability (in the form of reviews and tough conversations) would help to mitigate some of the concerns that the student-participants raised.

Finally, accountability on the part of overall strategic direction, especially when it relates to the Board of Trustees would involve another brave, delicate balancing act. Once again, from the data students provided and my own personal reflective experience, it is clear that there is little trust placed in the intentions of high-level decision makers at the school. It is here that I think

clarity and transparency both will support the accountability piece, and students agreed. They asked for additional clarity around funding and spending, as well as increased diversity on the Board. These are both great requests, but without detailed requirements and some way to provide a check-and-balance against those who wield the most power in an organization, these suggestions are liable to result in minimal positive change. The students suggested something interesting when it came to the accountability of teachers that may be of some use here: students as part of the interview process. To be fair, Green School Bali has always included students in the interview process for teachers, which makes for a very dynamic hiring process; however, the students' involvement in the selecting and maintaining of board members' seats has been cursory at best. If students and teachers were able to provide upward feedback to trustees when seats need to be filled (hiring) and then on an annual basis, and were given the power to remove or replace them with just cause, this could bring about a shift in school culture and power structures. I believe, and the data agrees with me, that this movement towards a truly democratic hierarchy would also cause a domino effect, impacting student culture, staff-turnover, and other key areas of criticism that the students felt were so important.

In the same vein, the adherence and accountability to the mission lies with all community members, but the Board of Trustees has the power to influence many of the strategic and budgetary decisions that trickle down to classrooms. These budgetary decisions are indicative of the true mission of the school: we value what we spend money on. The students saw this and had many critical questions about how the budget of the school aligns with the overall mission. In order for the whole community to maintain accountability to the mission, the financial statements of the organization need to be released, in Bahasa and English in a digestible format. These should also be used to provide a review of the financials against the mission by students, supported by qualified parents and teachers, as well as the Board of Trustees. Decision making around spending on programs that directly relate to sustainability and engaging with the local community need to hold up to the mission, or the mission should be adjusted to line up. The long-term systems impact of a decision like this is almost impossible to predict, but it is my humble opinion that this level of accountability would provide students, teachers, and administrators with a sustainable structure in which the mission would be at the forefront and diverse voices would be heard.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

9. *How might we provide transparency and accountability to the overall organizational structure of the school, especially at the top level? What are the barriers to this?*
10. *How does the budget line up with the mission of the school? Are there ways in which we are valuing some aspects more than others that suggest our mission in practice is different than what we have written it to be?*

The students were looking for solutions and recommendations that were fair and equitable to all community members, truly took the input of teachers and students into account, and were long-term focused. The suggestions I have provided above fit in with those requirements extremely well, and can easily be adapted to most school environments if the key questions are used to determine the needs of the particular school. I will be addressing how to use them in a constructive and implementable way in the final section of this chapter. Accountability is the anchor that holds the remaining conclusions and recommendations in place. Without the ability to truly depend on the implementation of the mission and values of the school by all community members, the idea that additional policy or structural suggestions would make positive long-term change is laughable.

Empowerment with Trust

Decentralized hierarchies (or flaterarchies), as organizational structures go, traditionally allow for increased creativity, decision making, and flexibility on the part of more employees. Green School Bali's policies and documents lay out a flat structure, where teachers and students participate in decision making, curriculum building, and strategic planning. This, on paper, does not lead to the criticisms posed by the student-participants in this study. The issue once again is that this structure seems to get muddled in its implementation. With a great deal of time being spent on providing spaces for students and teachers to discuss, plan, and propose changes to systems, and then subsequently, very little stock placed in the recommendations created by community members. This dichotomy between the participatory model and then lack of follow through is what has led to the students' comments around student voice and student culture. As well, I think it plays into the frustrations in the faculty community as well. Once again, it is an incongruence between policy and practice. In order to rectify this, the two need to line up: either modify the practice to align with the policy, or change the policy to make it more honest. We need to do what we say we are doing.

The student-participants frequently mentioned a shift in the culture of their peers and the parents in the community. This change was never mentioned in a positive light, and was often discussed in a way that suggested the community was moving away from the mission of sustainability and social justice. I have already discussed the potential impact that accountability would have on this dynamic, but without an increased level of true ownership, that accountability would only take into account one piece of a larger puzzle. The students felt that their ability to self-determine and lead was integral to their experience at Green School, but also that their words often fell on deaf ears. In order to rectify this, student voice needs to be given real power, including putting students on the boards that have decision-making authority, alongside teachers and current parents. In this way, when paired with the accountability mentioned above, the individuals in the community that both want to be there and are upholding the values and mission have the power to maintain alignment with what they hold dear. True empowerment, in this case means letting go of the reins a little bit and accepting that, as professional educators or business leaders (in the case of the trustees), we may need to heed to upward criticism. This is often hard to hear, or dismissed as invalid, but it is clear from the data that listening to those who are most impacted by strategy and implementation is integral to the success of the mission.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

11. Who wields the power in the organization? Are there ways we could support more diverse voices in finding additional decision-making power?

12. Is there a process for upward feedback and action-taking? Does it function in such a way that brave conversations are possible, especially for groups with less power?

The student-participants frequently described a feeling of cultural apathy within their peer group. This is not abnormal for teenagers, but their criticism of it suggests that this particular cohort of teens would rather be part of a community that takes action and feels empowered in their goals. Once again, paired with accountability, increased empowerment could potentially provide these students with a feeling of engagement, rather than apathy. In this case, Green School does a great job with providing students choice around their courses, direction of study, and extracurricular activities, but, as the students expressed, they often feel that their ability to make a change is hampered by the organizational structure. Further deep dives into this area are definitely necessary. It is my humble opinion that an additional full study could be done into the culture and privilege of private international school students at mission-driven schools. The questions below are appropriate for both students, parents, teachers, and administrators and

could be used to spur action into changing culture, with an engaged and empowered group of people.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

13. What is unique about our community (student/parent/teacher) and the way we interact with each other? How do we treat people who are trying to shake up the status-quo? What about groups that are not living up to our stated goals?

14. In a perfect world, how would we want to feel in this space on a daily basis? How can we bridge the gap between now and the perfect future?

As I discussed in the analysis section, the need for action to come out of reflective practice is one that Green School should be placing at the top of its priority list. Part of empowering all stakeholders means being willing to be brave with that power. That bravery comes in the form of tough conversations, both from upward feedback and also from superiors supporting their staff. This is something that Green School struggles with. Based on the data from students, the need to take action from all members of the community was extremely important, especially when it came to dismantling the colonial structures that were causing so much pain and disconnection. From my perspective, the solution is perhaps a bit more obvious. There appears to be a hesitation around providing constructive feedback to staff and deep fear around having tough conversations with parents and donors. This fear leads to a lack of clarity around performance on the part of teachers, and a lack of accountability on the part of parents. By reversing this pattern and having the necessary conversations that we all need to improve and move forward. By empowering and protecting managing staff members to provide good feedback, the culture of the organization can be one that takes action where it is needed.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

15. What do I need from you that would allow us to both achieve our goals without additional friction? How can I empower you to make a change and what can we do to hold each other accountable?

16. What barriers do I see to having an open conversation that leads to action? What is the impact to me if I do not provide this feedback?

Transparency

At almost every turn, before the interviews, during the recording process, and while making group recommendations, the students asked for increased transparency around everything from strategy, to funding and decision-making. As I have come to find the norm to be, they were tuned into aspects of the school culture that I did not expect them to be. Based on their

impassioned requests for transparency, paired with the conversations I have had with staff and my own reflections, increasing the level of timely and brave information provided by the organization to all stakeholders would provide comfort to staff and students, and allow for better decision making and praxis.

Firstly, as was discussed alongside accountability, it is important for the school to be reflective around the stated mission and potential division between it and the mission in practice. Transparency around the implemented goals of the organization from a strategic and operational level would provide stakeholders with the ability to make informed decisions and upward feedback when there is a gap between practice and policy. Of course, this is once again a brave action, as allowing for this level of feedback and honesty both is a form of accountability and a form of vulnerability. It is important here to consider what you are, not what you intended to be, as an organization and to be upfront about what that means for everyone involved.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

(For a specific context, i.e. the Local Scholars Program)

17. *What are our stated goals and mission for this activity/program? What does the policy ask us to do? How does that line up with our overall mission?*
18. *What are the criteria for success for this activity/program? How were they determined, and under the influence of which schools of thought?*
19. *What do we actually do in this activity/program? What are its outcomes, successes and challenges? How does this line up with what we say we are doing?*
20. *How can we get the two to align? Which should change, the mission/policy or the implementation?*

Transparency around decision-making, especially when it comes to programs and staffing was suggested as a need in the data. When we look at schools from a decolonizing perspective, the iterative process only works if there is informed reflective conversation, and action. In addition to transparency, empowerment, and accountability, the student-participants responses and recommendations suggested a need for planning and stability that is echoed in my own reflections. Providing increased clarity around job descriptions, resource allocations, and long-term strategic and operational plans provides structure that creates security and also allows for critical feedback. As an example, I framed the questions above in terms of the scholarship program for local students. If stakeholders, including students and parents, were to engage in a critical conversation around the program, with all of the information provided to them in ways that they could understand, I am confident that a number of action items would be revealed. I am also

confident that, once again, taking the necessary steps to make those changes would involve brave and humble work.

Finally, and most critically for first steps to pay equity for all staff, regardless of gender or nationality, the data suggests a need for transparency around the budgeting and salary process. I have already discussed this in the accountability section, but it is important to reiterate what transparency looks like in this instance in more detail. Transparency means having open documentation of pay scales for both Indonesian and foreign staff that are provided to all parties, as well as open budgeting processes that teachers are both involved in and privy to. As I mentioned above, it would be an important step to have someone who understands financial statements produce a user-friendly report that showcases key information for stakeholders. Key information, according to the student-participants is, in general “where does the money go?”, but also more specifically how much of tuition and donation payments flow into organizations owned by the founders of the school or trustees. If given the opportunity, I am sure there would be more specific questions that could easily be answered and presented by a competent financial professional. This, paired with the accountability and empowerment practices described in the previous sections would allow for both informational transparency and action where needed. It would also be a great first step in decolonizing the financial aspects of the school, and showcasing areas that may need to be reviewed or revised. If this was done honestly and with a mindfulness to future action, there is a potential that shifting financials could provide room for more equitable pay scales.

Key questions for engaging and active discussions:

21. *What key financial information are stakeholders requesting? How can this information be used to make better decisions by involving those on the ground?*
22. *What is the fear around releasing this information? What does that fear indicate if we look at it through a critical lens?*

Asking the Right Questions and Implementing a Brave Praxis

As I hope is crystal clear by now, I firmly believe that asking the right questions and taking brave action based on the responses is the most important first step to making concrete change in both this specific case and in the world of international schooling in general. The questions we ask are critical, and looking at what we are unwilling to talk about can often reveal gaps between

our intentions and practice that are causing rifts between groups or community members. When it comes to decolonization, this practice becomes even more important, because often, as I mentioned in both the literature review and the analysis, confronting privilege is difficult. It is more comfortable to avoid for those of us with the privilege to do so. To stay in our bubbles and ignore the impacts of our words, actions, and inactions on those who do not share the systemic benefits that we do. For this, we need to ask the right questions, with the right people in the room, and be unafraid of what they will say. We also need to support the voices that have often been silenced, both by overt oppression or by internalized colonialism. These two approaches together, with the all-important accountability and follow-through can lead to a more inclusive space. In education this means a space where all people feel worthy of being there, and where students and teachers of all backgrounds have the opportunity to learn from the diverse set of experiences of all.

Firstly, I will start with the “how” of the questions, as, through my research and professional life, I have encountered a number of different approaches to asking group questions. My time at Green School working with some amazing educators and administrators has opened my eyes to the concept of structured “protocols”, such as those from the School Reform Initiative (n.d.). In essence they are designed to provide a container and direction for conversation that often equalizes voices in the room. I have used them in classes, meetings, and, most relevantly, in analyzing and coding data with students for this study. Here, I will present a few potential structural changes that may allow for increased participation from marginalized groups when discussing privilege, based on the data collected in the interviews:

- S1. Provide informal settings for conversations that are not being recorded with a microphone.*
- S2. Include an element of anonymity to suggestions and feedback. Allow smaller groups to share together, without administrators present in the groups and have the individual most comfortable sharing read out the suggestions. Consider these groups and who holds the power within them when structuring the meeting.*
- S3. Give timelines for specific questions, and assign someone who feels comfortable to keep everyone on-task.*
- S4. Give questions in advance to group members, so that they can read, translate, reflect, and prepare.*
- S6. During the discussion, determine measurable goals, objectives or action items that can be tracked in the long-term.*
- S5. Assign individuals to the following tasks before ending the meeting:*
 - a. Summarizing the meeting and sending out a record of what was discussed, as well as the action items*

- b. An administrator that is responsible for the action items and reporting back on changes*
- c. Someone who can be contacted if there are pertinent comments that did not come up through the initial meeting (or if people did not feel comfortable sharing in this setting)*

Using this structure, barriers to conversation can hopefully be reduced, and accountability can be upheld. These are not small discussions and, as I have mentioned a number of times, they can not be isolated incidents. Working to combat the impact of colonization in international schools must be an iterative process. It is not easy to be so brave so often, and it takes time. Time that must be carved out from other things. Once again, this fits in with aligning action to mission; if it is important to work for social justice in our own communities, then that time will be afforded generously. In schools, it is clear from the data, that this is not only important to teachers and parents, but students as well; they want to be included in the conversation and they want to be part of the solution. It is not only a practical process, but an excellent learning experience for them. Below are a number of questions that could be used to start conversations and action around decolonizing international school communities. This is by not means an exhaustive list, but a starting point that will look different depending on the nature of the community, the region of the world it has been built in, and the mission of the school.

Questions for Open Hearted Conversations Around Privilege and Decolonization:

- 1. Where do our students feel safest at school? Is this different for students who come from the dominant social group and those who have less privilege?*
- 2. What does it mean to be a "good" student? Is this different for students depending on their race, gender, or other defining characteristic?*
- 3. What kind of language do we use at school to divide or categorize people? Does this impact the way we treat them? (Reflect in these categorized groups)*
- 4. In what ways does privilege manifest in our community? Whose voices are heard the loudest? How could we create a more equal playing field?*
- 5. What is celebrated in our community and how? What values does this reflect?*

Through all of these conversations, we need to acknowledge that dismantling these pervasive and underlying beliefs and practices is not going to be easy. It is going to feel violent and painful sometimes, especially for those people who are being confronted with their own privilege for the first time. Alongside this, the violence is going to be infinitely more difficult to manage if we are inextricably linked, financially or through power structures, to those who oppose change. It is

these questions, paired with brave action and critical review of organizational hierarchies that will allow for true revolution to happen within our communities.

Summary of Conclusions

I went into this research project with an open heart leading my critical and analytical head. I know that the intentions of everyone involved with Green School Bali are good, and that each person is working to the best of their ability with the resources that they have. That has not changed. The teachers, students, and administrators there are some of the most heart-forward and caring human beings I have ever had the pleasure to work with, but this research has shown me that sometimes, and especially in the face of deeply entrenched colonial ways of thinking, good intentions, dedication and hard work are not enough. As I was writing this thesis, the world turned on its head; a global pandemic decimated communities, economies, and human beings. It completely reshaped the way we travel and learn. Green School Bali did not escape this tidal wave of change, and has moved online, downsized, and pivoted in ways that some of us never could have anticipated. The kindness that I had seen from the community in my years there still existed on a personal level, but the business needs seemed to amplify some of the problems that I outlined in this research. The shift to an online model and the need to make quick decisions effectively put a damper on student and teacher voices, and a constant culture of fear around job losses led to decreased transparency on the part of administration. These things seemed to be luxuries, rather than rights, when the going got tough. It is for this reason that I feel the recommendations and conclusions of this research are even more timely and pertinent to the current situation, as more schools move into survival mode.

The conclusions that the student-participants and I came to through the research can be boiled down to a few simple pieces of advice. Although, as you have seen through this exhaustive paper, they can also be expanded upon in detail. Firstly, it is important to implement brave praxis in schooling; have tough conversations, make difficult decisions, and continue to reflect on them over time. Secondly, you need to do what you say you are doing, no matter what position you hold in a community of learners. Accountability and follow through are key, because it is not enough to have good policy without robust practices to back it up. Finally, the historical legacies of colonialism and privilege do not just go away because of good intentions and

wholeheartedness; we need to work hard, ask the right questions, and be brave in what we do with the answers if we want to change education for the better. Without accountability, empowerment, transparency, and brave praxis, feelings of powerlessness will pervade our communities and leave students, parents, teachers, and administrators disconnected and floundering inside bubbles of their own making. If we can work to change these systems from the inside, we may be able to step outside, connect, and build a brighter future together.

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January 28, 2020

Principal Investigator: Dr. Michael Hoechsmann
Co-Investigator: Amanda Lela Faye Molnar
Faculty of Education (Orillia)
Lakehead University
Orillia Campus
500 University Avenue
Orillia, ON L3V 0B9

Dear Dr. Hoechsmann and Miss Molnar:

Re: Romeo File No: 1467645
Granting Agency: N/A
Agency Reference #: N/A

On behalf of the Research Ethics Board, I am pleased to grant ethical approval to your research project titled, "Community-based cultural capital: international student engagement as a function of home learning".

Based on Miss Molnar's responses to the REB, we noticed that a survey will be co-created with the students in the course. Please note, this survey must be submitted as an amendment to this application for approval prior to being administered.

Ethics approval is valid until January 28, 2021. Please submit a Request for Renewal to the Office of Research Services via the Romeo Research Portal by December 28, 2020 if your research involving human participants will continue for longer than one year. A Final Report must be submitted promptly upon completion of the project. Access the Romeo Research Portal by logging into myInfo at:

<https://erpwp.lakeheadu.ca/>

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms must not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

Best wishes for a successful research project.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kristin Burnett
Chair, Research Ethics Board

/sm

Grounded Theory Research on Community Engagement & Home Learning Green School Student Interviews: Description & Consent Form

Dear Green School Student,

You are currently studying at the Green School, taking wellbeing classes, and engaging with our community. I invite you to take part in a group interview that will help to understand your experience conducting this research. These interviews will be used to develop a study into international school communities, especially around wellbeing programs; your participation will help determine the direction of the research and changes at our school.

Who are the researchers in this project?

Amanda Molnar is a Masters student who will be conducting the on-the-ground research here at Green School Bali (amanda.molnar@greenschool.org)

Dr. Michael Hoechsmann (mhoechsm@lakeheadu.ca) is her thesis advisor and the primary researcher. He will oversee the research process and is a point of contact for any questions you may have that Amanda can not answer.

Purpose:

This project is aiming to start critical action and change around the way students engage with our school community. This project aims to have your voices heard about Green School and leverage your experiences to make conscious adjustments to programming, curriculum, or structures. It is a series of group interviews, which will inform further questions and ultimately form opinions or conclusions about this research question:

What is the impact of students' home (out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own metacognitive processes within the context of wellbeing classes?

What information will be collected?

Interviews: We will host group interviews for one to two hours with between 10-15 other students. Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to be interviewed. If you choose to be interviewed you may refuse to answer any question, and you may stop at any time without penalty. You do not have to take part in these interviews to be part of the research as a student-researcher. You are also under no obligation to be a part of these interviews in order to gain credit for the course you are currently taking.

I will ask questions about your experiences at Green School in class as well as your experiences learning outside of school, but the group interviews will be directed by the participants in the session, this space is yours to discuss the things that are important to you.

Secondary Data: You will also be asked to fill out an anonymous Google Form survey to college biographical data, but through this process, you will be able to opt out of providing any or all of the information. This is not compulsory for taking part in the interviews or for receiving credit in the class.

What is required of me as a participant?

To attend class, learn about the process, actively participate in group interviews, and work to interpret the data collected as part of those interviews. Although you may request to withdraw at any point. The interview process will take place during a six-week (24 class hours) course.

What are my rights as a participant?

Risks & Benefits : No known risk is associated with participation or non-participation in the research. You will receive a credit (0.2 in Literacy or Humanities) for participating in the research process.

Confidentiality & Data Storage: You will select a pseudonym as part of the initial survey and you will also be assigned an interview number. Biographical data collected as part of the initial survey (on google forms) is optional and your choice to share data or not will also not affect your participation in this study.

Confidentiality regarding discussions about home life in a group setting can not be guaranteed, but you and other participants (as part of a lesson around ethics) will be reminded that what is discussed in the focus group should not be discussed outside of the focus group session. All interview data will be safely stored at Lakehead University for a period of five years.

Modification or Withdrawal of Consent

If you choose to consent, you may withdraw your consent at any point during or after the interview process. At the end of the course, the same person who administered this permission form will return with a letter and ask you to confirm again. At this point, you can remove your consent.

What will my data be used for?

Research results will be shared publicly with the school community and as part of my thesis examination, as well, as a student participant, you will have the opportunity to help me interpret the results and create an action plan. You will be invited to take part in the writing and presenting and to check these works for accuracy. You may also request a copy of the results via email at amanda.molnar@greenschool.org .

Researcher Information: The research is being conducted by:

Amanda Molnar Masters Candidate, Faculty of Education
Lakehead University ,1 Colborne St. W. Orillia, ON L3V 7X5
email: amanda.molnar@greenschool.org tel: 0819-3690-3766

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

MY CONSENT:

I agree to the following:

- I have read and understand the information contained in the Information Letter
- I agree to participate
- I understand the risks and benefits to the study
- That I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any time and may choose not to answer any question
- That the data will be securely stored at Lakehead University for a minimum period of 5 years following completion of the research project
- I understand that the research findings will be made available to me upon request
- All of my questions have been answered
- By consenting to participate, I have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

I consent to the interview being
audio-recorded

OR

I would prefer that notes are taken

I would like to remain anonymous
in presentations and writing about

this research

I would like my name used
in presentations and writing about

this research

Signature of the participant

Date

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

**Grounded Theory Research on Community Engagement & Home Learning
Green School Student Interviews: Description & Consent Form**

Dear Green School Board of Learners Member,

I have included the letter sent to student participants/researchers below for your approval. Research into this subject will be conducted between January and March of 2020 and shared with the Green School community in the fall of 2020. This research project is looking in to community engagement and the ethos of the Green School high school.

Your approval is requested on page 4x, after the letter.

*Grounded Theory Research on Community Engagement & Home Learning
Green School Student Interviews: Description & Consent Form*

Dear Green School Student,

You are currently studying at the Green School, taking wellbeing classes, and engaging with our community. I invite you to take part in a group interview that will help to understand your experience conducting this research. These interviews will be used to develop a study into international school communities, especially around wellbeing programs; your participation will help determine the direction of the research and changes at our school.

Who are the researchers in this project?

Amanda Molnar is a Masters student who will be conducting the on-the-ground research here at Green School Bali (amanda.molnar@greenschool.org)

Dr. Michael Hoechsmann (mhoechsm@lakeheadu.ca) is her thesis advisor and the primary researcher. He will oversee the research process and is a point of contact for any questions you may have that Amanda can not answer.

Purpose:

This project is aiming to start critical action and change around the way students engage with our school community. This project aims to have your voices heard about Green School and leverage your experiences to make conscious adjustments to programming, curriculum, or structures. It is a series of group interviews, which will inform further questions and ultimately form opinions or conclusions about this research question:

What is the impact of students' home (out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own metacognitive processes within the context of wellbeing classes?

What information will be collected?

Interviews: We will host group interviews for one to two hours with between 10-15 other students. Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to be interviewed. If you choose to be interviewed you may refuse to answer any question, and you may stop at any time without penalty. You do not have to take part in these interviews to be part of the research as a student-researcher. You are also under no obligation to be a part of these interviews in order to gain credit for the course you are currently taking.

I will ask questions about your experiences at Green School in class as well as your experiences learning outside of school, but the group interviews will be directed by the participants in the session, this space is yours to discuss the things that are important to you.

Secondary Data: You will also be asked to fill out an anonymous Google Form survey to college biographical data, but through this process, you will be able to opt out of providing any or all of the information. This is not compulsory for taking part in the interviews or for receiving credit in the class.

What is required of me as a participant?

To attend class, learn about the process, actively participate in group interviews, and work to interpret the data collected as part of those interviews. Although you may request to withdraw at any point. The interview process will take place during a six-week (24 class hours) course.

What are my rights as a participant?

Risks & Benefits : No known risk is associated with participation or non-participation in the research. You will receive a credit (0.2 in Literacy or Humanities) for participating in the research process.

Confidentiality & Data Storage: You will select a pseudonym as part of the initial survey and you will also be assigned an interview number. Biographical data collected as part of the initial survey (on google forms) is optional and your choice to share data or not will also not affect your participation in this study.

Confidentiality regarding discussions about home life in a group setting can not be guaranteed, but you and other participants (as part of a lesson around ethics) will be reminded that what is discussed in the focus group should not be discussed outside of the focus group session. All interview data will be safely stored at Lakehead University for a period of five years.

Modification or Withdrawal of Consent

If you choose to consent, you may withdraw your consent at any point during or after the interview process. At the end of the course, the same person who administered this permission form will return with a letter and ask you to confirm again. At this point, you can remove your consent.

What will my data be used for?

Research results will be shared publicly with the school community and as part of my thesis examination, as well, as a student participant, you will have the opportunity to help me interpret the results and create an action plan. You will be invited to take part in the writing and presenting and to check these works for accuracy. You may also request a copy of the results via email at amanda.molnar@greenschool.org .

Researcher Information: The research is being conducted by:

*Amanda Molnar Masters Candidate, Faculty of Education
Lakehead University ,1 Colborne St. W. Orillia, ON L3V 7X5
email: amanda.molnar@greenschool.org tel: 0819-3690-3766*

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside of the research team, please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

MY CONSENT:

I agree to the following:

I have read and understand the information contained in the Information Letter

I agree to participate

I understand the risks and benefits to the study

That I am a volunteer and can withdraw from the study at any time and may choose not to answer any question

That the data will be securely stored at Lakehead University for a minimum period of 5 years following completion of the research project

I understand that the research findings will be made available to me upon request

All of my questions have been answered

By consenting to participate, I have not waived any rights to legal recourse in the event of research-related harm.

I consent to the interview being audio-recorded *or* *I would prefer that notes are taken*

I would like to remain anonymous in presentations and writing about this research

I would like my name used in presentations and writing about this research

Signature of the participant

Date

Signature of parent/guardian

Date

Head of School/Board Member Approval:

I _____ a member of the Green School Board of Learners have been fully informed of the objectives of the project being conducted. I understand these objectives and consent to students participating in the interviews for this project. I understand that students have the choice to remain anonymous, to opt out of any question, and to withdraw from the study at any time.

Signature

Date

Recruitment Script (Orally Delivered)

Dear Students of Green School,

My name is Amanda Molnar, and I am a Masters Student in the Faculty of Education at Lakehead University in Ontario, Canada. I am conducting a research study examining the impact of students' home (out-of-school) learning on their engagement with content, community, and their own experience of learning and you are invited to participate in the study.

The research study will take place in my class "Research Revival" (Literacy or Humanities Credit) where you can also learn more about research methods, take a deeper look at our community and suggest changes to be made in the future.

Participation in this research study is voluntary, even if you take the class. You may take the class and not participate in the research with no impact on your grade.

The class will be six weeks, as is the norm, and the group interviews will take up only a small portion of the class. They will be taped, but participants will remain anonymous (you will not be named). I will be collecting secondary data as part of the study, via a Google Form, which is optional as well. Your identity as a participant will remain confidential as part of analysis and presentation of the study.

The remainder of the class time will be spent looking into research methods in the social sciences (particularly education) and analysing the data we collect to create change here at school.

If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact me at amanda.molnar@greenschool.org. Alternatively, you can contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Michael Hoechsmann, at mhoechsm@lakeheadu.ca.

Thank you for your participation,

Amanda Molnar

Green School Bali & Lakehead University
Faculty of Education
Masters Student

Appendix A4:

Grounded Theory interview questions:

The initial questions will be as follows:

1. How does your family talk about school at home?
2. What kind of discussions do you have with your family about wellbeing?
3. How and what do you learn outside of school in your free time and on your holidays?
4. What are you learning in wellbeing classes?
5. What does it mean to be a community in a classroom?

Although these questions were developed to guide the group interviews, the discussion will not be mediated to remain on topic or on the question at hand. The participants will also be encouraged to ask questions of the group, critique the initial premise, and to determine the direction of the discussion.