



**Free Agents on Underdog Teams: International Branch Campus Lecturers  
Constructing the Organizational Integration of their Individual and Campus Identities**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

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### **Declaration**

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Heather Swenddal, August 23, 2019

### **Dedication**

To my 36 participants for their generosity and candor, and  
To my grandparents, Paul and Patricia Underhill, whose love of education inspired my own.

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### Glossary of Key Terms

IBC.....	International Branch Campus
TNE / TNHE.....	Transnational Education / Transnational Higher Education
CGT.....	Constructivist Grounded Theory
AusInt.....	Generic reference to all universities (“Australian International University”)
AusCity.....	Generic reference to all cities where parent campuses are located
H1, H2, H3.....	Locally-hired participants from host country (H = “host”)
R1, R2, R3.....	Locally-hired participants from third country within Asia region (R = “regional”)
I1, I2, I3.....	Locally-hired participants from third country outside of Asia (I = “international”)
P1, P2.....	Participants from parent-campus country (P = “parent”)

### Notes for Readers

This thesis establishes patterns across international-branch campuses studied but does not compare sites to each other. I do not distinguish between different universities; instead I refer to all universities by the generic term “AusInt” and all parent-campus headquarters cities as “AusCity.” These terms replace the original spoken terms as part of the de-identification process.

I do distinguish between types of IBC lecturers across these sites based on their countries of origin. The participant codes above represent this information. Please see Chapter 3 for further details about my approach to participant confidentiality and Appendix 6 on page 290 for a de-identified list of participants.

Also note that the data presented in this thesis have been carefully transcribed to capture in written form participants’ utterances during our audio-recorded interviews. For reader clarity I have omitted from the included extracts some non-relevant extralinguistic elements including pauses and filler sounds (e.g., “um”). I have also used ellipses (...) to eliminate portions of text unrelated to the point being featured. In doing so I have taken care to ensure that participants’ points remain preserved and that they accurately and confidentially represent what the participants communicated to me in our interviews.

### **Publications to Date from this Research**

- Swenddal, H., Nkhoma, M. & Gumbley, S. (2017). Cultural representatives: staff identity at international branch campuses. *Proceedings from International Conference on Education, Psychology, and Social Sciences (ICEPS)*. Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.
- Swenddal, H., Nkhoma, M. & Gumbley, S. (2018). “You need to sell the university”: International-branch campus lecturers’ orientations toward supporting marketing activities. *Proceedings from 32nd Annual ANZAM Conference: Managing the Many Faces of Sustainable Work*. Auckland, NZ: Australian & New Zealand Academy of Management.
- Swenddal, H., Nkhoma, M. & Gumbley, S. (2019). Locally-hired IBC lecturers as global university representatives: Assumptions, challenges and solutions. *CIHE Perspectives*. Boston, MA, U.S.: Boston College Center for International Higher Education.

### **Abstract**

In recent decades, many entrepreneurial universities have bolstered their student enrollments through transnational higher education, transporting educational products overseas to students in their home countries. International branch campuses (IBCs) are a prominent mode for delivering education offshore: These satellites of global universities provide mirrored parent-campus educational experiences to students in remote locations. More than 250 IBCs now exist worldwide, with high concentrations in Asia (C-BERT, 2019).

Like multinational enterprise subsidiaries, the value proposition of IBCs is their products' global resonance, achieved in part through the efforts of IBC staff. Historically IBCs have relied on traveling parent-campus lecturers to reinforce their campuses' global ethos, however for financial and logistical reasons many IBCs are transitioning to local hiring of host- and third-country lecturers. Recent IBC literature frames this trend as one of risk, suggesting that non-parent-campus lecturers may lack the loyalty and capacity to effectively represent their global institutions. As the sector continues to localize IBC academic hiring, the organizational integration of IBCs and their lecturers is a key management concern.

Existing literature on IBC contexts is limited, with a dearth of insights about locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives. In particular, the field lacks clarity on how IBC lecturers who are not nationals of the parent-campus country identify themselves and their campuses as part of their global universities. My research addresses this gap. Through a constructivist grounded theory study involving interviews with 36 lecturers and leaders across four IBCs in Southeast Asia, I examine the organizational integration of locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructed identities and explore the barriers to IBCs' global integration which could be addressed through management intervention.

In exploring the perspectives of IBC lecturers regarding their roles and campuses I draw on emic metaphors analogizing lecturers to members of sports teams. I theorize that locally-hired IBC lecturers see themselves as occupation-focused "free agents" and their IBCs as disadvantaged university "underdogs"—constructions which impede IBC lecturers' global-university integration. Contributing to these constructions are contextual challenges as well as perceived disrespect from parent-campus coordinators—the

“coaches” charged with guiding them. Connecting these theories I outline an overarching process of IBC self-distancing performed by locally-hired IBC lecturers: an “IBC Othering Loop” of perpetuated disadvantage and campus isolation.

These theories present a compelling case for more proactive parent-campus engagement of IBC lecturers. My findings challenge previous literature assumptions that non-parent-campus IBC lecturers are inherently institutionally disloyal; instead, my research exposes the many factors contributing to IBC organizational separation, identifying multiple points of potential management intervention. I suggest that more supportive engagement from parent-campus course coordinators in particular would likely decrease locally-hired IBC lecturers’ sense of global isolation. This engagement would help to improve the global-university integration of IBCs and their lecturers, aiding delivery on the IBC value proposition of globally-mirrored educational experiences.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

#### **Chapter Summary**

In this introductory chapter I outline the aims, methods and findings of my research on locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their individual and campus identities. I emphasize the need for understanding how IBCs' non-parent-campus lecturers see their roles and IBCs as part of their global universities, and I highlight the theories developed through this research that address this critical gap in IBC literature. This chapter serves as an executive summary of the full thesis, glossing key points which are developed further in subsequent chapters.

#### **1.1 Context and Need for this Research**

In this section I situate my research in the context to which it contributes: literature on the growing yet underexplored area of international branch campus management. I highlight the trend toward localizing IBC academic hiring and the lack of existing research knowledge about locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives. I then present organizational identity as a tool for exploring IBC lecturers' emic views.

##### **1.1.1 IBCs and the Trend Toward Localizing Academic Hiring**

In recent decades, higher education has become increasingly entrepreneurial, with universities embracing market activities that bolster their finances and enhance their reputations (Slaughter, 2014). International student recruitment is a key avenue for university expansion (Wu & Naidoo, 2016). Traditionally international students have relocated to their university's country and completed their degrees onshore; in recent decades the reverse flow has also been pursued, with universities bringing educational products and experiences to students overseas: a phenomenon called *transnational education* (Kauppinen & Cantwell, 2014). International branch campuses—the context studied in this thesis—are a prime example of transnational-education-based university expansion (Knight, 2016).



International branch campuses (IBCs) are overseas outposts of their parent universities, delivering global-university offerings to students at remote locations. The Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT, 2019) in the United States defines an international branch campus as

“an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; and provides an entire academic program, substantially on site, leading to a degree awarded by the foreign education provider,” (p. 1).

263 IBCs are now in operation worldwide (Garrett, 2018), largely based in Asia and the Middle East and run by universities in countries including the U.S., U.K. and Australia (C-BERT, 2019).

IBCs are expansion vehicles for their parent campuses, dependent on student enrollments for viability (Guimon, 2016). Like multinational enterprise subsidiaries (MNEs), IBCs' value proposition is tied to the global resonance of their educational products (Howman Wood, 2011). IBCs aim to mirror the student experience of the parent campus at offshore locations (Wilkins & Rumbley, 2018), an undertaking requiring robust image management (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015) and comprehensive cross-campus coordination (Wood & Salt, 2018). Failing to deliver a brand-resonant student experience can impact student retention, imperiling an IBC's sustainability (Healey, 2018).

IBCs' success in mirroring parent-campus experiences depends in large part upon the IBC staff engaged in global service delivery (Hughes, 2011). Historically IBCs have relied on traveling parent-campus lecturers to “transmit the parent-campus DNA” to these locations (Salt & Wood, 2014), but in recent years IBCs have increasingly hired staff from host and third countries, due to the simpler logistics and lower costs of hiring locally (Shams & Huisman, 2016). The practice of localizing IBC hiring mirrors that of MNEs, which are also increasingly tapping local sources of talent (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2017).

In some literature, localizing IBC academic hiring is seen as involving significant risk, providing economic benefits but potentially undermining IBCs' brand value (Healey, 2018). Healey (2018), for example, has suggested that locally-hired lecturers may lack the “institutional loyalty” to effectively represent their global institutions and may steer the IBC culture away from its global foundations (p. 631). Similarly, Shams

and Huisman (2018) call it a “fact” that “local lecturers do not fully represent the home institution due to the different cultural values,” (p. 958). The broad assumption in this IBC management literature seems to be that replacing parent-campus faculty with locally-hired host- and third-country staff will “dilute the brand” of IBCs in these settings (Altbach, 2011).

From an identity perspective these assumptions about locally-hired IBC lecturers’ loyalties are essentialist claims, tying lecturers’ national origins to a deterministic identity outcome (Tsukamoto, Enright & Karasawa, 2013). An alternate view of identity sees it as socially constructed: changeable over time and amenable to influence (Lawler, 2014). Constructionist views of identity are arguably more appropriate for the IBC context, in which lecturers are exposed to diverse identity influences. If we view IBC lecturers’ identities as constructed rather than predetermined, the IBC staffing challenge shifts from recruitment to cultivation: Rather than focusing on attracting more parent-campus staff, who are difficult to recruit, IBCs can focus on developing locally-hired lecturers as globally-integrated university representatives. Such a view aligns with calls in IBC literature for universities to think beyond recruitment to the full realm of talent management (Neri & Wilkins, 2019) and to consider how locally-hired IBC lecturers can be better integrated into their global universities (Wood & Salt, 2018).

A starting point for pursuing the organizational integration of locally-hired IBC lecturers is understanding these lecturers’ current identity constructions for themselves and their IBCs: how they see themselves and their campuses as part of their global universities. This focus is remarkably understudied in IBC literature; I turn now to a discussion of this research gap.

### **1.1.2 The Need for Research on IBC Lecturers’ Identity Constructions**

Transnational higher-education research is a “relatively young” and “underresearched” sector in general, with studies of faculty perspectives comprising just five percent of this already limited body of knowledge (Knight & Liu, 2017, p. 16). Local perspectives are also lacking in IBC research (Siltaoja, Juusola & Kivijärvi, 2019). Insights about the experiences of IBC faculty are primarily limited to views of parent-campus staff; these studies do, however, document challenges which may be widely

experienced, including insufficient onboarding procedures (Cai & Hall, 2016), competing local and global regulations (Dobos et. al., 2011) and problems in cross-campus coordination relationships (Edwards, Crosling, & Lim, 2014). These hardships take a toll: IBC lecturers have recently been found to have lower levels of organizational identification and commitment than their onshore counterparts (Wilkins, Butt & Annabi, 2017, 2018).

Insights to date on IBC lecturers' perspectives illuminate the challenges of this role from the standpoint of staff coming from the home-university location, but how locally-hired IBC lecturers view their roles and responsibilities is largely unclear in this literature. Given the trend toward localizing IBC academic hiring, it is arguably the views of these locally-hired IBC lecturers which are most in need of research clarity.

The orientations of locally-hired IBC lecturers' toward their roles and their IBCs can be explored through the related paradigms of individual and organizational identity construction. Individual identity construction is the ongoing process of individual's self-conceptions evolving through an "internal/external dialectic"—a synthesis of agentive self-definition and perceptions of how one is viewed by others (Jenkins, 2014). Organizational identity construction examines how organizational members perform "sensegiving" actions to determine an agreed-upon understanding of their collective, answering Albert and Whetten's (1985) classic question of "who we are, as an organization" (Gioia & Hamilton, 2018). Organizational-identity construction processes are complex in IBCs, which are "nested" within their global universities and are therefore influenced by their larger organizational image (Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas, 2010).

Applying an identity-construction paradigm to the IBC identity environment, it can be assumed that locally-hired IBC lecturers construct identities for their campuses and their roles within them; yet how they do so and the extent to which they see these identities as aligned with their global organizations is not established in existing literature. Understanding the identities which IBC lecturers construct for themselves and their campuses is critical to understanding their orientations to global service delivery. Identity and action are intertwined (Pratt, 2012), meaning that the identities that IBC lecturers construct affect how they perform their roles as organizational members. By

studying IBC lecturers' conceptions of these identities and the sense-making processes they use to construct them, the IBC management field can gain insights into the factors informing and impeding IBC organizational integration—factors which can potentially be addressed through management intervention.

Understanding locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions will contribute to this critical gap in current IBC literature; it will also provide practical insights to IBC managers in the sites that I researched. IBC leaders who participated in my research described challenges in facilitating cross-campus cohesion and helping IBC lecturers to see themselves as part of the full global university. These leaders echoed IBC literature concerns regarding the difficulties of integrating locally-hired IBC lecturers into their global institutions, and like Wood and Salt (2018) they framed this challenge not as a matter of recruitment but of engagement. These leaders hoped to gain insights about the specific issues impeding IBC lecturers' sense of global connectedness and actionable steps they could take to address them. My research provides these insights and contributes to the IBC management field's understanding of these issues.

Chapter 2 of this thesis provides further detail about the research context I address through this work and the theoretical paradigms I have used to explore the topic of locally-hired IBC lecturers' individual and campus identity constructions. I turn now to a summary of the research approach that I have followed to pursue this work.

## **1.2 Research Approach**

To enhance understanding of locally-hired IBC lecturers' organizational orientations, I have conducted a constructivist grounded theory study examining how these lecturers construct their individual and campus identities as part of their global universities, as well as the influences and outcomes of these constructions.

Constructivist grounded theory is a variant of grounded theory, a research method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as an alternative to positivistic research approaches, which they saw as imposing extant assumptions on a research situation. Grounded theory research involves approaching research with an open mind about what might be found, prioritizing the emic views of participants to build theory “from the ground up” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 120). *Constructivist* grounded theory maintains this emic

focus while highlighting the social-constructionist underpinnings of the approach and endorsing inductive exploration and theory development (Bryant, 2017; Charmaz, 2014).

Constructivist grounded theory entails a particular philosophical perspective. In keeping with its standard approach, my research follows a relativist ontology and a subjectivist epistemology, as well as an antifoundationalist motivation, which distinguishes constructivist grounded theory from critical theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). My research does not serve any particular political agenda; rather, it aims to represent as clearly as possible the ways that locally-hired IBC lecturers construct identities for themselves and their campuses, with the goal of enhancing management understanding about this important aspect of global service delivery.

My exploration of IBC lecturers' identity constructions began in late 2016 and has grown in depth and focus throughout my research process. I began this work with an initial examination of the rise of international branch campuses and the limited existing knowledge on the IBC lecturer experience. I decided to focus my inquiry on the context of Southeast Asia, particularly on two education "hubs" of robust IBC activity: Malaysia and Singapore (Knight, 2014). Following approvals and preparation activities in 2017, I traveled in 2018 to four IBC sites in these countries and interviewed 36 primarily locally-hired IBC lecturers and leaders. I conducted individual, one-hour, semi-structured interviews with participants, discussing their experiences working at their IBCs and gaining insights about their related identities. I analyzed these data both within and across cases, coding and developing theory.

My data analysis and theory development in this research followed the inductive and iterative steps of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). I coded participant data using sensitizing concepts recommended for constructivist grounded theory research—such as identity, agency and action—and produced 257 discrete initial codes, many of which appeared more than once in the data. When this process was complete I synthesized these initial codes to form 27 focused codes and then five theoretical categories. Through the feedback of my supervisory panel and discussions with IBC leaders, I drew from these theoretical categories to develop a multi-part grounded theory which helps to address the gap in IBC literature on locally-hired IBC lecturers' organizational orientations.

My focus on locally-hired IBC lecturers emerged during this research process. Originally I had planned to broadly explore IBC lecturers' identities and perspectives, but as my work progressed it became evident that organizational integration of locally-hired lecturers was a salient concern for IBC leaders, and literature on this topic produced during my data-collection period highlighted the need for research insights about non-parent-campus lecturers' global-university orientations. This focus on locally-hired IBC lecturers corresponded with an affordance of my research, in which my open call for participation had produced a participant base of lecturers primarily hailing from the IBC host country and third countries. Leveraging my participant base to address this emerging gap in knowledge, I decided to focus my research on locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions. The findings and theories developed in this thesis therefore address three research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

Chapter 3 of this thesis provides further detail about the approach and iterative stages of this research. Below I preview the comprehensive findings arising from this work which clarify locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions, offer insights into the mechanisms informing these constructions and the outcomes arising from them, and elucidate steps that university leaders could take to support locally-hired IBC lecturers' organizational integration.

### **1.3 Findings and Theories**

The title of this thesis encapsulates the sports analogy that I have used to represent locally-hired IBC lecturers' identities for themselves and their campuses. These framings draw from emic metaphors and synthesize findings throughout the data, presenting IBC lecturers' individual and campus identities as "free agents" serving "underdog" teams. Like sports free agents, locally-hired IBC lecturers prioritize their occupational identities

and see their organizational identities as important but ephemeral; global identifications are superficially and unevenly claimed, due in part to a sense of limited influence in parent-campus operations. This sense of global-university isolation applies at organizational levels as well, with locally-hired IBC lecturers seeing their campuses as akin to “underdog” sports teams, disadvantaged by limited resources and consumerist expectations. Contributing to these constructions is an image of parent-campus coordinators as disrespectful “coaches” who either micromanage or abandon their IBC colleagues, forcing locally-hired IBC lecturers to independently attempt to reconcile global expectations and local challenges.

Below I outline locally-hired IBC lecturers’ constructions of their course coordinators and their individual and campus identities—theories which are developed in Chapters 4-6 of this thesis, respectively. Throughout this work I suggest that locally-hired IBC lecturers’ constructions of themselves as free agents serving underdog teams demonstrates their sense of isolation from their parent campuses; however I also suggest that within their constructions opportunities for more effective cross-campus engagement are visible. Potential exists for locally-hired IBC lecturers to see themselves as globally-invested players on thriving, supported teams; the key to achieving this more productive orientation is robust, comprehensive and well-resourced engagement from parent-campus course coordinators.

### **1.3.1 Relating to Headquarters Coaches: Constructing Cross-Campus Coordination Relationships**

In Chapter 4 I explore IBC lecturers’ constructions of a critical collective they engage with in their daily work: parent-campus course coordinators. Parent-campus coordinators serve as the main point of contact from the global university to the IBC, embodying the link between campuses. Building on the sports metaphor introduced by participants, these coordinators could be seen as “coaches” for IBC teams, charged with ensuring that parent-campus academic experiences are appropriately mirrored at the satellite location and that IBC lecturers are well supported.

These cross-campus coaching relationships are fraught with challenges. I find that while locally-hired IBC lecturers may have positive relationships with individual parent-

campus coordinators, they tend to frame these coordinators collectively as inconsiderate of IBC lecturers' needs, with disrespect manifesting in two archetypal ways. IBC lecturers construct parent-campus coordinators as either "Distant Dads" or "Micromanaging Mums." Distant Dads are disinterested in IBC operations and difficult to access when needed, but give lecturers wide berth to adjust curriculum and assessments for the local context. Conversely, Micromanaging Mums provide nurturing guidance but require absolute compliance with global practices, even when local contextualization may be beneficial. In short, Distant Dads provide autonomy but not support, and Micromanaging Mums provide support but not autonomy.

In Chapter 4 I highlight these negative framings of coordinator archetypes and introduce a third archetype—rare but desired—of more respectful "Sympathetic Siblings" who provide appropriate amounts of support and autonomy, approaching global service delivery collaboratively. I showcase IBC lecturers' pursuit of these more collegial Sympathetic Sibling-style relationships as well as the phenomenon of IBC lecturers seeking IBC autonomy when attempts to renegotiate cross-campus relationships fail. In articulating the archetypes of Distant Dads, Micromanaging Mums and Sympathetic Siblings I clarify the specific modes of cross-campus engagement which are seen as unproductive by locally-hired IBC lecturers as well as the type of engagement style that they desire. I discuss ways in which university leaders might build upon these findings to promote organizational collaboration and cohesion.

These findings form the foundation for the following chapters on locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their individual and campus identities as part of their global universities—framings which depend in part on cross-campus relationships and may be enhanced through more effective engagement by parent-campus course coordinators.

### **1.3.2 Free Agents Donning Team Jerseys: IBC Lecturers' Layered Individual Identities**

Chapter 5 of this thesis explores IBC lecturers' constructions of their individual identities as they relate to their professional work. The central phenomenon observed in these data is identity layering: Participants construct powerful occupational identities



which they position as their core guiding selves, and treat their organization-related identities as more superficial and ephemeral. Drawing on emic metaphors I theorize IBC lecturers as akin to sports free agents. They wear the “uniform” of their IBCs—and to some extent don global accessories—but at their core these lecturers are occupationally focused, treating their organization-related identities as removable: temporally bound and situationally enacted.

The phenomenon of identity layering includes differentiation between identifications as members of the local IBC and the global university. If the IBC identity is a lecturers’ “uniform” which she habitually wears but can easily remove, the global-university identity is more like a rarely-worn clothing accessory. IBC lecturers have varying degrees of access to global-university identity options, with some enjoying its prestige benefits but many feeling that their remoteness from the global organization precludes them from claiming membership in it. Locally-hired lecturers’ identification with the parent campus is therefore more tenuous than their identification with the IBC.

This “free agent” identity layering is manifest in lecturers’ behaviors. IBC lecturers distinguish between “internal” and “external” identity situations, adopting their IBC—and sometimes global-university—identities when they participate in service activities such as student recruitment. However, in the classroom they eschew organization-based identities altogether, restraining their identities in these contexts to what they see as their core selves: their occupational identities as primarily educators, researchers or industry professionals. This finding demonstrates that deliberate organizational representation is not occurring in IBC lecturers’ interactions with students, suggesting a possible disconnect between leaders’ and lecturers’ understandings of lecturers’ roles in reinforcing IBC brand value.

Overall, findings presented in this chapter confirm literature assumptions that locally-hired IBC lecturers can struggle to identify as part of their global organizations, but they also suggest that the cause of lecturers’ low global identification appears to stem from low global engagement rather than inherent national loyalties. The “Sympathetic Sibling” style of cross-campus coordination offers potential enhancements for locally-hired IBC lecturers’ identities as global-university representatives, helping these lecturers engage and identify as part of their larger institutions.

However, regardless of their organization-based identities, in the customer-service environment where IBC literature calls for global-university representation, IBC lecturers' organization-based identities are not activated at all. In the classroom they perform not as global or even local organizational representatives: they are free agents, representing only themselves. This finding suggests that for locally-hired IBC lecturers to be engaged as in-class brand-reinforcers, this expectation should be clarified at the level of local IBC management as well.

### **1.3.3 Playing for Underdog Teams: Constructing IBC Contextual Disadvantage**

In Chapter 6 I examine locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their campuses' organizational identities as part of their larger institutions. In general, IBC lecturers envision their campuses as contextually disadvantaged, facing challenges unique to their settings. Carrying forward the sports metaphor, IBC lecturers in this research construct their IBCs as university "underdogs"—particularly in comparison to what they view as their IBCs' resource-rich parent campuses. Their specific areas of constructed disadvantage include the consumer expectations that they feel are attached to their IBCs' private status, the limited resources of the IBC, and their perception that local IBC students are less prepared for international-standard academic work than their on-campus peers.

IBC lecturers' constructions of their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs impact on their professional behavior. IBC lecturers I interviewed described themselves and colleagues acting upon these perceived disadvantages through a cycle of compensatory action, adjusting their educational approaches to address contextual needs. The concept of "spoonfeeding" information was the prototypical example that IBC lecturers presented of this phenomenon: reducing learning activities to exercises in memorization, reifying problematic approaches to learning. Some locally-hired lecturers strive to overcome perceived disadvantage and enforce global standards, but the compensatory behaviors of their peers interfere with global service delivery. For some lecturers, encouraging students to participate in opportunities to study abroad at the parent campus is seen as the only way of ensuring that they gain a truly global learning experience.

In constructing and compensating for perceived IBC disadvantage, IBC lecturers may deviate from global practices. The motivation for these actions are however quite different from those assumed in IBC literature. While Healey (2018) and others assume that locally-hired IBC lecturers will undermine global standards due to a lack of “institutional loyalty,” my findings suggest that contextual issues rather than inherent orientation are responsible for these deviations. Challenges unique to the IBC may be difficult for IBC lecturers to overcome, leading them to deviate from global standards. These findings again demonstrate the value of Sympathetic Sibling-style coordinators for supporting IBC lecturers’ identity constructions at organizational as well as individual levels: Engagement of parent-campus colleagues in the shared work of addressing perceived IBC disadvantage may help to mitigate this disadvantage and enhance global alignment of IBC practices.

#### **1.3.4 Synthesizing Findings and Theories**

The three focal areas described above provide insights about locally-hired IBC lecturers’ constructions of problematic relationships with parent-campus “coaches” as well as their “free agent” individual identities and “underdog” campus identities. These theories and their related findings are summarized in graphic form in Figure 1 on page 15, noting the influences and consequences of each phenomenon on IBCs’ organizational integration. All points are elaborated in subsequent chapters.

#### **1.3.5 Overarching process of the IBC Othering Loop**

Threaded across the phenomena summarized in Figure 1 is an overarching process of IBC lecturers’ constructing their campuses as distinct from their global universities—a phenomenon that I refer to as the IBC Othering Loop. I theorize this process as the coalescence of locally-hired IBC lecturers’ limited access to global identities, perceptions of IBCs’ unique disadvantage and problematic parent-campus coordinator relationships. Together these form a self-reinforcing cycle of IBC differentiation from the parent campus.

**Figure 1: Overview of Findings, Influences and Constructions**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions
IBC lecturers construct parent-campus course coordinators as disrespectful coaches.	Generalizing parent-campus coordinators as either abandoning or micromanaging IBC lecturers.	Negative past experiences in working with coordinators; stories of colleagues' experiences.	Frustration; sense of isolation from parent campus and global university.
IBC lecturers construct themselves as free agents, independent from their IBC and university.	Identifying minimally and superficially with global university; uneven distribution of global identification.	Lack of influence in parent-campus operations; perception of parent-campus disinterest in IBC.	Sense of isolation and independence from parent campus.
	Prioritizing occupational identities, limiting organizational representation to external contexts.	Professional beliefs and values; sense of role appropriacy and desire to avoid "selling" behavior with students.	Limited deliberate reinforcement of university brand at IBC, possibly impacting student retention.
IBC lecturers construct their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs.	Seeing IBCs as uniquely disadvantaged, with limited resources and low student preparedness.	Experience working with limited IBC conditions; exposure to favorable parent campus conditions.	Deviation from global teaching and assessment standards; seeing student mobility as only route to global experience.
	Framing IBCs as consumer-focused enterprises, with student/consumer expectations.	Experiences facing inappropriate student demands; exposure to IBCs' recruitment and retention focus.	

Contributing to the IBC Othering Loop are multiple factors, including IBCs' consumer-focused context which constricts lecturers as marketers; IBC lecturers' impressions that their campus accepts underprepared students yet offers staff insufficient resources; and lecturers' sense of isolation from parent-campus coordinators who are not sensitive to or interested in their contextual challenges. Influenced by these factors, some IBC lecturers perform compensatory teaching behaviors and limit their involvement with the parent campus: actions which perpetuate the IBC Othering Loop. This loop is so powerful that even those who resist it must contend with it, for example in encouraging the work-around of student mobility to the parent campus for a truly global experience.

My theory of the IBC Othering Loop provides a new framework for considering the challenge of IBC organizational integration. It demonstrates the multiple factors that

contribute to the overall narrative of IBC separation, and in doing so exposes multiple points of potential management intervention. In Chapter 7 I elaborate on this process and its implications.

### **1.4 Conclusion and Applications of this Research**

Below I briefly outline the contributions of this thesis to IBC literature and practice, the limitations of this research and opportunities for future inquiry, and the implications of this work for IBC practice. These points are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

#### **1.4.1 Contributions to IBC Literature**

This research makes substantial contributions to IBC literature, providing comprehensive understanding of participating locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their roles and campuses within their global universities. My findings expand the IBC sector's knowledge of the orientations of locally-hired IBC lecturers, demonstrating that in the context studied these lecturers construct their individual identities as "free agents," their campuses as disadvantaged "underdogs," and their parent-campus course coordinators as disrespectful "coaches" who generally abandon or micromanage IBC staff.

Overall my findings support literature concerns that locally-hired IBC lecturers may have difficulty integrating and aligning with their global institutions, yet I find that these difficulties are not nationally deterministic but are instead contextually-based and open to intervention. I find that locally-hired IBC lecturers desire more positive and supportive engagement by parent-campus colleagues, and that providing this engagement and improving the course-coordinator function that facilitates it are the keys to enhancing IBC global integration.

My research suggests that locally-hired IBC lecturers can be engaged and cultivated as global-university supporters. The findings and theories presented in this thesis provide insights about how to conduct this engagement and form a foundation for additional research exploring this topic further.

### **1.4.2 Limitations and Future Research**

As noted in Chapter 3 and 7, constructivist grounded theory research is inherently bound by time and space, representing a snapshot view of the context studied without making claims of wider generalizability. My focus in this research is the emic views of participants in the particular four IBC sites I visited; my findings therefore represent the views of these particular people in this particular moment in time. As I detail in Chapter 3, I have made extensive effort to ensure that the findings and theories I present are truly representative of widespread phenomena in the contexts I studied, but their applicability to contexts beyond those I studied will need to be determined by individuals with awareness of those contexts.

Looking to the future of this research contribution, I see potential for rich additional work building upon my findings. As Charmaz (2014) stresses, an affordance of constructivist grounded theory is the “grist” it provides for future inquiry. My theories of IBC lecturers as “free agents on underdog teams” and the archetypes of parent-campus course coordinators could all be explored further in additional contexts and with additional research approaches. Future research could also compare locally-hired and parent-campus IBC lecturers’ views directly, building upon my work which focuses primarily on the former. Finally, I recommend that future inquiry examine the perspectives of parent-campus course coordinators who work with IBC lecturers; given the importance of this function revealed by this thesis, understanding these individuals’ perspectives is paramount.

### **1.4.3 Implications for University Management**

In explicating the identity constructions of IBC lecturers for themselves and their campuses, this thesis highlights several tangible avenues for intervention and furthering of universities’ global-integration goals. Many of these implications relate to the role of parent-campus course coordinators who are positioned as “identity custodians” with the power to engage locally-hired IBC lecturers as global-university members (Ashforth, 2018). Currently this course-coordinator function is not consistently supporting this integration, contributing to a sense of IBC isolation which leads to unfavorable outcomes including the IBC Othering Loop. It is therefore critical for global university leaders to

overhaul this cross-campus oversight function, reframing the course-coordination role as ambassadorial “Sympathetic Siblings” who are trained in inclusive approaches to cross-campus engagement.

Parent-campus coordinators should be adequately resourced and held accountable for consistent IBC engagement, ensuring that IBC lecturers are no longer placed in the position of needing to independently reconcile perceived contextual limitations with lofty global ideals: IBCs and their parent campuses must collectively engage honestly with the realities of international education delivery, conducting cross-campus dialogue about educational goals and localization possibilities and limitations.

Supporting these cross-campus improvements are additional recommendations for IBC managers. A key factor in IBC lecturers’ sense of their campuses’ distinction is the perception that IBCs are commercial enterprises and thus may operate under different institutional expectations. As I discuss further in Chapter 7, locally-hired IBC lecturers’ perceived responsibilities for supporting IBC viability may be contributing to their constructions of IBC disadvantage and actions feeding the IBC Othering Loop. IBC leaders can help to mitigate these problematic perceptions by reiterating the IBCs’ goals for mirrored global service delivery and clarifying the limitations of IBCs’ commercial focus. Helping IBC lecturers understand, for example, where the line should be drawn between customer service and quality enforcement will free them to perform their roles without this complicating pressure of commercial support.

The remedies outlined above are significant but offer tangible affordances: by addressing issues at each of these points, IBCs can stall the IBC Othering Loop and deliver on their value proposition of mirrored global experiences. In explicating the constructions that impede and could potentially facilitate the organizational integration of IBCs and their locally-hired lecturers, I aim to support this overall goal through this thesis.

## CHAPTER 2

### ORGANIZATIONAL-INTEGRATION ORIENTATIONS OF LOCALLY-HIRED IBC LECTURERS: BACKGROUND AND EXPLORATORY FRAMEWORK

#### **Chapter Summary**

In the competitive landscape of 21<sup>st</sup>-century higher education, student recruitment has become a global endeavor. Universities have for decades looked to international student enrollments to bolster their bottom lines (Wu & Naidoo, 2016); many are now bringing educational experiences to students in their home countries through branded university satellites, “branch campuses” of their larger institutions. These international branch campuses—or “IBCs”—are to their parent universities what multinational enterprise subsidiaries are to their headquarters: organizational extensions whose remote locations present strategic benefits and unique challenges (Guimon, 2016; Healey, 2018).

This chapter overviews the rise of international branch campuses and the challenges that IBC leaders—like their MNE counterparts—face in transporting global products overseas. I highlight the IBC trend toward localizing hiring of academic staff and critique the untested presumptions in IBC literature that reliance on locally-hired lecturers may diminish IBCs’ brand integrity. Noting the dearth of existing literature about locally-hired IBC lecturers’ actual orientations, I emphasize the need for empirical research exploring the identities that these lecturers construct for themselves and their campuses as part of their larger universities. I argue that knowledge about IBC lecturers’ organizational identity constructions has theoretical as well as practical import, noting concerns shared with me by IBC leaders who participated in this research about their lecturers’ organizational integration. I conclude by outlining the research questions which have driven my pursuit of insights about IBC lecturers’ organizational identity constructions and have culminated in the grounded theory presented in this thesis.

#### **2.1 Offshoring Higher Education: Introducing International Branch Campuses**

The proliferation of international branch campuses in recent decades is part of a broader application of business strategies to higher education, approaching learning experiences as products to be marketed, sold, and shaped to meet consumer demand. In



this section I outline how IBCs have emerged within this broader consumerist trend in higher education and highlight the challenges that these institutions face in attracting and retaining student consumers.

### **2.1.1 Higher Education's Consumerist Turn**

Since the mid-twentieth century higher education has undergone a sea change, morphing from an elite rite of passage to a mainstream product serving a broad range of consumers. This “academic revolution” (Valimma, 2014, p. 45) began in the decades following World War II, when universities expanded education opportunities across social classes, resulting in millions more students engaging in higher study worldwide (Altbach, Reisberg, & De Wit, 2017, xii). Since 1970, global tertiary enrolments have grown from 32 million to nearly 200 million (Calderon, 2018, p. 6), increasing at more than three times the rate of the global population (World Bank, 2019).

This trend toward university *massification* has had sweeping consequences for higher education worldwide (Altbach & Reisberg, 2018), particularly in how university education is funded. Prior to massification many governments had supported universities directly as part of the “public good,” (Slaughter & Leslie, 1999; Slaughter, 2014). However, when the increase in university enrolments required additional resources, governments shifted their funding models, attaching financial-aid funding to individual students rather than supporting universities directly (Slaughter & Leslie, 2001). As a result, students became the arbiters of funding decisions, forcing universities to compete for student enrollments (Dyson, 2015).

Facing unprecedented competition for resources, universities began establishing marketing departments and promoting their offerings directly to students, approaching them as consumers of educational products (Dyson, 2015). Naidoo, Shankar and Veer (2011) term this phenomenon the sector's “consumerist turn”: a higher-education paradigm shift that dramatically changed how universities operate. No longer existing solely for public service, universities began adopting competitive business practices (Slaughter, 2014). For example, in recent decades higher education institutions have increasingly focused on developing their brand identities (Drori, Tienari & Wæraas (2015), marketizing aspects of their operations to generate revenue (Bok, 2003) and

generally embracing an “academic capitalism” that emphasizes organizational advancement and profit (Slaughter, 2014).

### **2.1.2 Looking for Students Overseas**

A key profit-generation strategy targeted by universities has been growing international student enrollments (Wu & Naidoo, 2016). In addition to the affordances that international students present for enhancing campus culture, these education consumers comprise an attractive market segment, typically paying full tuition rates and expanding the base of potential enrollments beyond a university’s domestic region (Kreuze, 2017). Over the past half century many universities have emphasized recruitment of overseas students to temporarily relocate to the university’s country and complete their degrees on site (Wu & Naidoo, 2016). Since 1975, the global number of students living and studying overseas has increased fivefold (UNESCO, 2015), with approximately 5 million students currently studying overseas (ICEF Monitor, 2017). The United States, United Kingdom and Australia host the majority of international students (ICEF, 2017); these students are sourced from around the world, with a sizeable proportion hailing from Asian countries—particularly China and India (ICEF, 2016).

Recruiting international students to relocate for tertiary study is not the only way that contemporary universities build international enrollments. A complementary market segment is foreign students who desire an international degree but are unwilling or unable to leave their home region (Levatino, 2017). As globalization has eased restrictions on cross-border trade, many universities have sought to capture the offshore higher-education market segment through remotely-delivered educational offerings, allowing students to earn global-university qualifications closer to home (Kauppinen & Cantwell, 2014). Academic capitalism has become transnational, with academic programs and providers traveling across geographic borders (Kauppinen & Cantwell, 2014). In the tertiary sector these internationally-transported academic programs are collectively known as *transnational higher education*, encompassing an ever-increasing range of products and experiences that comprise one of the “most consumer-driven form[s] of education delivery in the world today,” (McBurnie & Ziguas, 2007, p. 1).

Comprehensive worldwide data on transnational higher-education enrollments is not available, but in examining statistics from Australia—a major TNHE provider—the impact of the phenomenon is evident. Of the roughly 430,000 overseas students enrolled in Australian tertiary education courses in 2017, nearly 120,000 were based offshore, with large concentrations of distance students based in China, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong (Australian Department of Education & Training, 2019). Particularly notable in these data is the market demand for in-person TNHE products: less than 10 percent of Australian TNHE students were enrolled in online distance-education programs in 2017; the remainder were engaged in educational experiences at physical offshore locations (Australian Department of Education & Training, 2019). These data demonstrate that online education is not as prominent in TNHE as is face-to-face international education; in-person delivery comprises a far larger market.

Face-to-face TNHE involves an array of delivery models. Some TNHE programs are merely superficially attached to the global universities whose brands they invoke; others are full-fledged global-university satellites (Wilkins & Rumbley, 2018). Knight (2016) categorizes TNHE models as *collaborative* versus *independent*: collaborative models involve joint-venture partnerships between global universities and local higher-education providers, producing products such as co-branded dual degrees, while independent models involve direct global-university administration of educational products—typically through a satellite campus. The satellite university campuses utilized in the independent TNHE model are called international branch campuses (IBCs)—one of the most prominent manifestations of TNHE in the international higher-education market (Wilkins, 2017).

### **2.1.3 The Popular International Branch Campus Model**

International branch campuses (IBCs) are satellite outposts of their parent universities, delivering the global-university product to students at remote locations. The Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT, 2019) in the United States defines an international branch campus as

an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; and provides an entire academic program, substantially on site, leading to a degree awarded by the foreign education provider, (p. 1).

C-BERT's definition above highlights the role of each IBC's global university in ownership, presence and provision of IBC programs: features that distinguish IBCs from collaborative TNHE models (Knight, 2016). C-BERT's definition also emphasizes what is to many students IBCs' most crucial selling point: the fact that the degree is awarded by the global university and is therefore equivalent to degrees awarded at the home institution (Hughes, 2011).

Demand for remotely-delivered global-university education has been significant in recent decades. Since the 1990s IBCs have proliferated to serve offshore student consumers (Knight, 2016). As of late 2018, 263 IBCs were in operation worldwide (Garrett, 2018), rising from approximately 50 in the late 1990s (Lane, 2011). Many of these IBCs are based in the booming educational markets of East and Southeast Asia and are run by global universities in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016, p. 13). Knight (2016) notes that IBCs are now so prevalent that they are study destinations in their own right, serving not just local populations but also third-country international students who choose to enroll in IBCs in lieu of their parent campuses (pp. 35-36).

IBCs' primary attraction to students is the opportunity for students to attain a global-university degree and experience within or close to their home regions (Ahmad & Buchanan, 2017; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011). For students preparing for a globalized workforce, earning a prestigious international degree and developing international-standard professional skills are seen as powerful ways of differentiating themselves in the local employment market (Knight & McNamara, 2015). Prestige is a crucial element of this appeal: IBC consumers value word-of-mouth impressions from people they know and select IBCs for study when they believe these institutions are seen as reputable and prestigious (Wilkins & Huisman, 2014, p. 2,228). Students' impressions of the parent campus influence their choice of IBC, transferring positive image associations from the parent to the satellite campus (Wilkins & Huisman, 2013).

The reputational benefits of IBCs described above are available via the traditional international-education route of moving overseas for study. However, Levatino (2017) has demonstrated that onshore international students comprise a different market segment to IBC consumers. Students choose IBCs over traditional international study experiences for a variety of reasons. One is financial: IBCs typically offer lower tuition than their onshore counterparts, and students remaining in their home regions can avoid the high costs of international travel and living expenses (Ahmad & Buchanan, 2017; Wilkins & Huisman, 2011). Yet IBCs' proximity to students' home regions offer more than simply cost savings: by attending the IBC, students can also remain near their families and enjoy the cultural comfort of attending university in an environment they see as safe and inviting (Ahmad & Buchanan, 2017), enjoying what Wilkins and Huisman (2013) call the "convenience factors" of living close to home (p. 609). In short, IBCs create a bridge between the local and the global, providing a financially and culturally accessible version of a prestigious international university education.

#### **2.1.4 Ensuring Viability in the Volatile IBC Market**

Launching an IBC is a complex venture carrying benefits as well as risks (Healey, 2015; Wilkins, 2016). Key benefits for host countries are the opportunity to meet a gap in local higher-education options (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012), thus possibly reducing brain drain from students who would otherwise migrate abroad (Salt & Wood, 2014), and to enhance the knowledge economy of the region (British Council, 2014; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Benefits for parent universities include research collaboration (Tierney & Lanford, 2014), innovation (Crist, 2017) and image-enhancement opportunities (Girdzijauskaitė & Radzeviciene, 2014; Tayar & Jack, 2013), and perhaps most importantly, the opportunity to increase student enrollments. International students represent a key source of income for universities (Levent, 2016, p. 3,853), and expanding the parent university's market base is widely seen as a primary reason that universities launch international branch campuses (Guimon, 2016; Lim & Shah, 2017; Sutrisno, 2018).

IBCs are typically established as private enterprises in their host countries (Lane & Kinser, 2011), and are largely self-sustaining, dependent upon student enrollments for

viability (Lane & Kinser, 2008). As Garrett (2018) notes in his summary of a report by the Observatory on Borderless Higher Education on mature IBC operations, financial sustainability is the perennial goal of these institutions (p. 16, also see Garrett, Lane & Merola, 2016). Without adequate enrollments, IBCs cannot be successful. Indeed, insufficient enrollment figures have forced the closure of many IBCs, including perhaps most prominently the University of New South Wales's short-lived Singapore campus in 2007, which closed within its first year due to low student enrollments (OBHE, 2007). IBCs' dependence on student enrollments for viability makes them risky endeavors (Girdzijauskaitė & Radzevičienė, 2014) with the "potential for spectacular failure," (Witte, 2014, p. 45).

Staving off IBC failure is the responsibility of IBC leaders, who face the challenge of maintaining a healthy pipeline of students and ensuring their retention. Robust marketing efforts are typically employed to attract students to IBCs (Lewis, 2015; Lipka, 2012), and sustaining their image as attractive destinations requires fulfilling students' expectations for a globally-reflective experience (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015). For IBC leaders, ensuring that the IBC student experience delivers on the promises of the global brand requires careful use of limited resources and strategic balancing of competing demands. I turn now to discussion of these management practices, focusing specifically on the challenges of managing academic staff in IBC environments.

## **2.2 Leveraging Locally-Hired Lecturers for Global Service Delivery: Assumed Implications of Localizing IBC Academic Hiring**

The tenuous viability situation of IBCs outlined above demonstrates the need for IBCs to ensure continuously marketable academic products. IBCs must deliver on the value proposition of transported overseas-study experiences; IBC staff play a central role in providing these global experiences. Yet as IBCs move away from seconding parent-campus lecturers toward host- and third-country academic hiring, some IBC scholars suggest that the global image of these institutions is under threat. In this section I outline the experiential focus of IBCs and the role of IBC lecturers in shaping IBC products, and discuss literature assumptions that localizing hiring of IBC lecturers will compromise global service delivery.

### 2.2.1 Challenges in Delivering a Globally-Reflective IBC Product

Just as multinational enterprise subsidiaries deliver globally-recognized products offshore, international branch campuses deliver global university experiences in satellite locations (Guimon, 2016; Healey, 2018; Lane & Kinser, 2011; Wilkins & Rumbley, 2018). IBCs' focus on the student experience distinguishes this model from forms of transnational higher education which focus primarily on the final product of globally-recognized university qualifications. At IBCs, the learning experience is part of the product; to be successful it must reflect the "fundamental ethos" of the parent campus (Howman Wood, 2011, p. 30).

To highlight the importance of a parent-campus-reflective student experience in the IBC model, Wilkins and Rumbley (2018) posit a new definition of IBCs, expanding on the C-BERT original cited in 2.1.3 above. This new definition is as follows:

An international branch campus is an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a specific foreign higher education institution, which has some degree of responsibility for the overall strategy and quality assurance of the branch campus. The branch campus operates under the name of the foreign institution and offers programming and/or credentials that bear the name of the foreign institution. The branch has basic infrastructure such as a library, an open access computer lab and dining facilities, and, *overall, students at the branch have a similar student experience to students at the home campus* (p. 14, emphasis mine).

Wilkins and Rumbley's definition of IBCs above emphasizes that like MNEs, global universities have a responsibility to ensure that the customer experience in satellite operations reflects that of the home institution. Their definition clarifies that the IBC value proposition includes a global experience, not just a global qualification: attending an IBC is meant to be akin to attending its parent campus. This pledge to "recreate" (Cai & Hall, 2016, p. 208) the global university experience in a remote location makes IBCs the purest and most ambitious form of transnational higher education, fully transporting the home-campus educational product across geographic borders.

Delivering on the promise of the IBC model poses challenges for IBC managers. Transferring the "home-based institutional DNA" of the parent campus to the IBC is a difficult undertaking (Salt & Wood, 2014, p. 94), requiring leaders to "manag[e] multiple interrelated images simultaneously" (Wilkins & Huisman, 2013, p. 618). Studies of IBC

student perceptions reveal their high expectations and the serious consequences IBCs face if they are not fulfilled; each service encounter a student has at their IBC becomes a “moment of truth” referendum on their decision to attend it (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015). Students who feel that the IBC experience is not meeting their expectations for a parent-campus-equivalent experience will, as Hughes (2011) warns, “find a different institution to attend” (p. 27).

IBC faculty play a critical role in this delivering on the IBC brand promise (Hughes, 2011; Heffernan, Wilkins & Butt, 2018). Heffernan et al. (2018) emphasize that “staff involved with service delivery and quality must ensure that every student has a positive purchase and consumption experience” (p. 237). Straying too far from delivering an image-resonant global university experience may jeopardize students’ enrollments and ultimately the IBC’s bottom line. As Hughes (2011) stresses, for IBCs to be successful there must be little distance between the institutional “brand” of the IBC and students’ actual learning experience: IBC staff, she argues, are crucial to ensuring this brand resonance (p. 27).

IBC managers striving to deliver a globally-reflective student experience must do so do so with limited resources and may need to make compromises when determining which components of the parent-campus delivery model can be reasonably transported. As Wilkins (2018) notes,

Institutions generally expect managers responsible for transnational education to deliver the same quality and results achieved at home campuses, but with much fewer resources and different student and staff profiles (p. 206).

In deciding which aspects of the parent-campus experience to transport to the IBC, leaders must strive to meet student expectations while adhering to the limitations of their budgets, logistical capacities and stakeholder oversight (Guimon, 2016; Healey, 2018). Complicating this work are additional pressures within the host environment for localization of some aspects of IBC operations, for example to cater to local students’ learning preferences (Heffernan, Morrison, Basu & Sweeney, 2010) or to meet government guidelines for hiring local faculty (Healey, 2018; Liu & Lin, 2017). These localization pressures compete with the product demand for globally standardized experiences, complexifying the challenge of IBC management decision-making.



### **2.2.2 Applying the Global Integration-Local Responsiveness Framework to IBCs**

Research insights into how IBC leaders determine which parts of their operations to globalize have developed through considerations of how these decisions are made in multinational enterprises (MNEs). Maintaining an appropriate global-local balance in service delivery at remote locations is a need that global universities share with MNEs (Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2016). In MNE literature a tool widely used for conceptualizing global-local business decisions is the “Global Integration-Local Responsiveness (‘I-R’) Framework,” (Meyer & Estrin, 2014). Developed by Prahalad and Doz (1987) and widely applied to MNE studies in decades since, this framework is considered useful for conceptualizing the global-local balancing challenges inherent to the IBC context (Shams & Huisman, 2012).

The Global Integration-Local Responsiveness Framework, abbreviated as the “I-R Framework,” charts different ways that global institutions reconcile pressures to maintain globally-integrated approaches (“I”) and respond to local needs (“R”) (Shams & Huisman, 2012). The framework envisions local and global management considerations as opposite poles on a cline, with decisions favoring one side sacrificing benefits of the other side—a “strategic paradox” necessitating constant tradeoffs (De Wit & Meyer, 2010). An exclusive focus on global integration in product design, for example, would pursue global conformity but risk alienating local consumers, while an exclusive focus on local responsiveness would cater to local needs but risk straying too far from global standards, therefore compromising image or quality.

Applying the I-R Framework to IBC contexts, Shams and Huisman (2012) identified curriculum, staffing and research as three areas of global-local tension; the first two of these areas are particularly relevant to discussions of the IBC consumer product. Studies of IBC management approaches using the I-R Framework have found strong preferences for globally-standardized curricula and locally-sourced faculty (Healey, 2016, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2016). Interview studies of IBC strategic management perspectives have suggested that they favor IBC curricula that is nearly identical to those delivered at the parent campuses, with only slight localizations for contextualization purposes; conversely, these leaders embrace highly localized academic staffing, with far

greater locally-hired faculty than seconded parent-campus faculty (Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2012, 2016).

If we consider curriculum and staffing as two elements involved in recreating the global academic product of the parent campus at the IBC, the combination of trends toward maintaining globally-standardized curricula and localized academic staff is worthy of examination. On the one hand, though several researchers have questioned the extent to which IBC curriculum delivery can and should replicate that of the parent campus (e.g., Lim, Bentley, Henderson, Pan, Balakrishnan, Balasingam, & Teh, 2016), the decision to maintain globally-standardized curricula suggests an inherent consumer logic, since by accepting the “tradeoff” of forgoing comprehensive localization, the global resonance of curricular materials is maintained (Healey, 2018). However, the IBC trend toward reducing numbers of seconded parent-campus faculty is less transparent in purpose, representing a more complex local/global tradeoff which I will now discuss.

### **2.2.3 The Trend Toward Localizing IBC Academic Hiring**

As noted across recent IBC literature, IBCS are shifting away from their early reliance on fly-in or expatriate faculty and moving toward local hiring of host-country and third-country nationals (Garrett, 2018; Neri & Wilkins, 2019; Wood & Salt, 2018). This trend mirrors that of multinational enterprise subsidiaries, which have also in recent decades reduced reliance on headquarters expatriate staff and have increased hiring of local and international staff (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2017). Yet the reasons cited for localizing staff differ across MNE and IBC contexts. MNE managers approach local hiring as a way of tapping new talent pools and infusing global operations with fresh perspectives (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2017, pp. 252-253). IBC managers, conversely, are framed in recent literature as reducing reliance on seconded parent-campus faculty primarily for practical reasons (Healey, 2018; Neri & Wilkins, 2019; Shams & Huisman, 2016).

Literature on IBC managers’ I-R preferences suggests that sourcing faculty from the parent campus is seen as ideal for maintaining product standardization across campuses, but localizing hiring is needed due to the higher cost of seconding parent-campus faculty than hiring locally (Shams & Huisman, 2016; Healey, 2018). Parent-

campus academics are also seen as reluctant to relocate overseas (Altbach, 2011; Salt & Wood, 2014; Wood & Salt, 2018), due in part to concerns about interrupting their careers and research (Wilkins, 2016, p. 175). Thus, while in MNEs staff mobility is accepted practice (Salt & Wood, 2014, p. 92), in IBCs facilitating this mobility is seen as a major challenge, precipitating the growing reliance in these contexts on locally-hired academic staff (Neri & Wilkins, 2019; Healey, 2015, 2016, 2018; Salt & Wood, 2014; Shams & Huisman, 2012, 2016; Wilkins, 2016; Wood & Salt, 2018).

The challenges that universities face in facilitating parent-faculty mobility to their IBCs help to explain the reason for the management trend toward locally hiring IBC lecturers. Localizing IBC academic hiring is framed as a “tradeoff” (Healey, 2018): gaining the financial and logistical benefits of local hiring in exchange for forgoing the preferred lecturer category of parent-campus faculty. This compromise is also associated with risk—particularly in its ostensible threat to IBC academic “culture,” which is seen as posing a potential threat to IBC viability (Healey, 2018; see also Shams & Huisman, 2016). In short, IBCs are increasingly turning to local academic hiring to maximize cost and logistical efficiencies, but they are doing so with the assumption that these actions carry significant risks to the IBC.

The risks of localizing IBC academic hiring appear to be widely assumed by several IBC leaders and scholars, but also seem to be based more in assumption than empirical evidence. Loose invocations of the concept of “culture,” for example, feature throughout this literature, inviting investigation. I turn now to discussion of the risks associated with localizing IBC academic hiring as they are presented in recent literature.

#### **2.2.4 Presumed Risks of Localizing IBC Academic Hiring**

Localizing hiring of IBC academic lecturers is framed in IBC I-R literature as carrying significant risks, both in its reduction of parent-campus staff at the IBC as well as its increase in locally-hired host- and third-country staff. Fundamentally these risks are associated with culture and identity. Healey (2018) asserts that “academic faculty are at the heart of the reproducing the academic culture in the IBC” and ties this cultural reproduction to the national origin of IBC lecturers (p. 631). Others IBC scholars make similar claims, suggesting that underrepresentation of parent-campus staff at IBCs may

contribute to a cross-campus cultural distance that “dilutes the brand” of the global university at the IBC (Altbach, 2011).

The specific concerns of these scholars involve processes at the individual and organizational levels of IBCs operations. At the individual level, a key vein of literature citing concerns about localizing IBC hiring expresses doubts about whether individual non-parent-campus faculty will—or even can—effectively represent their global universities in their interactions with students. For example, Shams and Huisman (2016) associate seconded staff with the “high quality” identity and image that IBC consumers seek, noting that

[a]cademic staff from the home campus carry along the reputation and the prestige of the foreign HEI [Higher Education Institution], which is one of the key factors that students in the host countries seek their degrees (p. 967).

This quote suggests a presumption that parent-campus staff can through mere presence adequately represent the global university to students, exemplified in the claim that they “carry along the reputation and prestige” of the parent campus to the IBC. How parent-campus staff presumably transport this global culture is unclear, but they are seen here as doing so automatically and willingly.

In contrast to their favorable view of parent-campus seconded IBC lecturers’ institutional representation, Shams and Huisman (2016) frame host-country and third-country nationals as inherently incapable of representing the global university. They claim, for example, that locally-hired faculty are unable to adequately perform a representational role, calling it a “fact” that “local lecturers do not fully represent the home institution due to the different cultural values,” (p. 958). Representational capacity is thus framed as an essential characteristic, determined by heritage and “values” which in the case of non-parent-campus faculty are assumed to be patently at odds with global university ideals.

Healey (2018) expresses similar concern about local IBC hiring, also noting IBC leaders’ perceptions that students expect to interact with parent-campus staff and may view locally-hired staff as non-representative:

some local students complain about being taught by locally-hired faculty because they believe them to be less academically competent than seconded UK faculty (p. 638).

Shams and Huisman (2012) make a similar observation, noting that

Many students are attracted by the reputation of the foreign university and wish to see lecturers coming from the main campus (p. 6)

Students' expressions of this bias against local lecturers is presented by Healey (2018) as unfortunate, but he frames it as a major consideration, noting in his conclusion that the appropriate amount of locally-hired IBC faculty is the proportion of them that "still satisfies the students that they are getting a UK experience," (p. 641). Individual IBC faculty members' representational capacity is in this view superficially limited by their nationalities, impeded by the stereotypes imposed by students, who are the IBC's customers.

As is evident in these texts, there appears to be a potent narrative in the IBC sector about locally-hired lecturers' individual capacity for representing their global universities to students. Primarily this concern appears to be about image—the semiotic value of a national identity tied to the parent-campus country—as well as the "cultural values" that presumably will lead lecturers to "not fully represent the home institution" (Shams & Huisman, 2016). The overall assumption is therefore that locally-hired IBC lecturers will lack both the ability and inclination to present themselves as legitimate members of the global university to students, detracting from the global brand experience.

In addition to these individual-level impressions of IBC lecturers' representational capacities, literature discussing IBC managers' presumptions of local academic hiring suggest concern with how these lecturers will impact their campuses politically. IBC lecturers are in some literature assumed to adopt a general orientation toward organizational disunity, encouraging IBC deviation from parent-campus standards and sowing organizational disalignment. Healey (2018), for example, writes:

if the IBC were wholly staffed by locally-hired faculty... the faculty would have limited first-hand knowledge of, and institutional loyalty to, the home university. There is a risk that the IBC would develop an academic and organizational culture that was quite unlike the home university. As a result, the students could have an educational experience that was so fundamentally different that it would undermine the proposition that they were earning the same university degree. (p. 631).

In the quote above Healey (2018) echoes the individual-level assumptions discussed above that parent-campus faculty are homogeneously supportive of their global institutions and locally-hired faculty are inherently incapable of institutional support. However, he then extends these assumptions to the campus level, suggesting that this presumed low “institutional loyalty” will lead to identity drift: an erosion of the IBC’s “organizational culture” as part of the global institution. Elsewhere Healey (2016) makes similar claims, warning of risks for IBC campus alignment if the number of locally-hired lecturers is too great:

regular rotation of IBC managers and other seconded staff is critical to creating and sustaining a culture of organizational identity with the home university. The less frequently the pool of seconded staff is refreshed with colleagues steeped in the home university culture, the more liable the IBC is to develop its own sense of identity and a distinct set of collective values and beliefs (p. 68).

As is evident in the quote above, a prominent assumption in recent IBC literature is that the IBC’s identity will diverge from the parent campus without the presence of adequate numbers of seconded parent-campus staff.

The overall picture presented by these literature framings of locally-hired IBC lecturers is that sourcing staff from anywhere other than the parent campus poses risks to the IBC product offering. Locally-hired lecturers are framed as ineffective global-university brand representatives due to their “different cultural values” (Shams & Huisman, 2016, p. 958) and are assumed to harbor disloyalties to the parent campus and proclivities toward deviating from global-university standards (Healey, 2018, p. 631). A general assumption in this literature is that IBCs’ overreliance on local academic hiring risks a “fundamentally different” student experience at the IBC than the parent campus, compromising delivery of the global-university brand experience (Healey, 2018). Altogether localizing IBC hiring is presented as a significant risk, assumed to be fraught with pitfalls.

### **2.2.5 Identity Assumptions in Presumed Risks of Localizing IBC Academic Hiring**

Literature assumptions of locally-hired IBC lecturers’ inherent disloyalties raise questions about their identities. Are parent-campus seconded staff the only legitimate

bearers of global university identity? Do lecturers' national origins predetermine their behavior, or are behaviors and orientations developed through exposure and thereby amenable to change? The IBC leaders' views presented by Healey (2018) and Shams and Huisman (2016) appear to represent the former, more deterministic view. Healey (2018) for example, situates his discussion of locally-hired lecturers' representational limitations by describing the anthropological differences of home and host countries:

The 'cultural distance' between the home and host countries of many IBCs is considerable. As a broad generalization, IBCs are set up by Western universities, steeped in a culture of academic freedom and critical thinking. In contradistinction, many of the host countries have very different cultures, often linked to religion and/or their political systems (e.g., hereditary monarchy or a single-party state) (p. 624).

While his general sensitivity to potential cultural differences has merit, Healey's argument here and elsewhere seems to be that culture *determines* loyalty and behavior, creating "different value sets" that interfere with global service delivery (Healey, 2015, pp. 395-396). Shams and Huisman (2016) make a nearly identical point about "different cultural values" (p. 958) precluding global universities from "translat[ing] institutional culture" to IBCs (p. 963). Desirable cultural attitudes are seen as naturally occurring with seconded faculty and not capable of being cultivated in non-seconded staff.

The casual use of the word "culture" in these texts warrants consideration of the terms itself. "Culture" has both sociological and organizational connotations, referring to the "customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group" as well as the "shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices" of a group (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Culture is the taken-for-granted approaches of any group to aspects of life or work. Closely related to culture is the concept of identity: how an individual or a collective defines itself (Jenkins, 2014). Identity is what drives human behavior: we act according to our understanding of how someone fitting our self-definition should act (Goffman, 1959). Culture can impact identity, whether it is national culture influencing an individual's self-concept (Hofstede, 2001) or organizational culture serving as a referent for an organizational or workgroup identity (Ravasi, 2018). A question relevant to the topic of localizing IBC lecturers is therefore whether culture determines or merely influences identity.

A fundamental debate in identity studies is of fixedness: whether one's identity is predetermined or malleable. Essentialist views of identity see it as deterministic, prescribed by national origin or culture, socioeconomic class and other fixed factors (Tsukamoto, Enright & Karasawa, 2013). More contemporary views of identity see it as malleable, social and situationally *constructed*: open to influence and change (Lawler, 2014). Constructionist views of identity pose an important challenge to essentialist assumptions. The idea that national culture predestines a "collective programming of the mind" (Hofstede, 2001) is being questioned in this globalized era in which individuals are exposed to a wide range of identity influences. As McFarlin and Sweeney (2017) emphasize,

there are dangers in oversimplifying something as complex as culture, particularly when the focus is on managing organizational behavior (p. 39).

The "sophisticated stereotypes" of national culture are in MNE settings undergoing increasing scrutiny, with scholars such as McFarlin and Sweeney (2017) considering them potential but not deterministic influences on individual identity (p. 65). In the global workplace, identities are embraced as multifaceted and amenable to change, with national culture treated as one of many variables to be explored but not assumed (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2017, p 65).

Applying the concept of essentialist versus constructed identity to the localizing of IBC faculty, a counterpoint to the IBC leader assumptions presented by Healey (2018) and Shams and Huisman (2016) emerges. While from an essentialist perspective non-parent-campus lecturers may be seen as incapable of delivering an "authentic" global-university curriculum due to their national origin (Liu & Lin, 2017, p. 282), a constructionist approach to IBC staffing looks beyond national origin, seeking to develop staff of all nationalities as university representatives. Constructionist views of identity do not assume that localizing academic hiring poses inherent risks to global service delivery; rather, they look to how IBC faculty can be trained and engaged as global-university staff members and how universities can more inclusively engage IBC faculty. In short, rather than perpetuate limiting stereotypes about localizing hiring, constructionist approaches to IBC lecturer identity invite a more pertinent and productive question: How can locally-hired IBC lecturers and their campuses be better integrated into global university



operations?

This thesis adopts a constructionist view of identity and therefore sees IBC lecturers as not essentially “programmed” by a particular national culture, but amenable to global influence. In the next section I highlight calls in recent IBC literature for this more proactive approach to IBC staffing management, looking beyond lecturer loyalty as something determined by national origin and focusing more on how to effectively engage locally-hired staff in global-university operations.

### **2.3 Pursuing the Organizational Integration of Locally-Hired Lecturers: Foundations and Aims of this Research**

While some IBC management research frames localizing of academic hiring as a strategic compromise carrying brand-integrity risks, other literature takes a more hopeful view, seeing locally-hired IBC lecturers as capable of identity expansion and embracing of global-university practices. In this section I highlight calls for better organizational integration of locally-hired IBC lecturers and outline the related challenges of IBC leaders who participated in my research. I note the dearth of existing literature to shed light on the questions of locally-hired IBC lecturers’ organizational orientations, and summarize the research paradigm of organizational identity construction that I have used to pursue findings for IBC management knowledge and practice.

#### **2.3.1 IBC Literature Calls for Organizational Integration of Locally-Hired Lecturers**

Alongside literature approaching localized IBC hiring as a risk is a competing discourse calling for global universities to better induct locally-hired staff into their global operations. Interestingly, this vein of literature includes an author cited in assumptions of locally-hired lecturers’ disloyalty noted above. Shams and Huisman (2016) attribute to Hughes (2011) their claim of a “fact” that local lecturers are not adequate representatives of parent-campus culture. However, Hughes does not make this claim. Instead, she emphasizes the important role that lecturers play in representing their organizations and encourages thoughtful IBC management and communication: engaging staff with the global vision and training them in the mores of the overall institution to

ensure they adequately represent it. She notes the importance of IBC alignment to global imperatives (p. 23) but does not suggest that parent-campus staff alone are capable of achieving this alignment. Rather, Hughes (2011) calls for greater integration of IBC lecturers into global-university communities, helping them to “understand and embrace the expectation of the home campus,” (p. 27), seeing locally-hired staff as legitimate, trainable global-university representatives.

With the field of IBC management embracing faculty localization, IBC management literature is beginning to encourage an embrace of more constructionist views of lecturer identity, thinking beyond staffing as a matter of hiring a narrow subset of people and exploring ways in which locally-hired IBC faculty can be better integrated into their global universities. Knight (2015), for example, cites the benefits of a “culturally rich mix of academic staff” in transnational educational settings and advises that clear communication around academic standards can ensure that this diversity “provide[s] benefits not problems,” (p. 118). Neri and Wilkins (2019) make a similar point, noting that replacing the recruitment focus with one of talent management can help locally-hired IBC lecturers develop a “shared sense of purpose, direction and unity with the home institution (p. 16). Wood and Salt (2018) also endorse a shift toward cultivating and developing locally-hired IBC academics “recruited from international sources but able to engage” with the parent campus ethos (p. 197).

Several strategies have been recommended for achieving better global integration of locally-hired IBC lecturers. Wood and Salt (2018) call for IBCs’ “generally ad hoc approach to induction, training and monitoring” to be replaced with more systematic approaches to training and development (p. 183). Specifically they call for “disciplinary, pedagogic and cultural induction programs” that will compensate for the geographic distances separating these campuses (Wood & Salt, 2018, p. 196). Chapman and Pyvis (2013) also note the need for moving beyond ad-hoc cross-campus coordination approaches and systematize processes for regular supportive engagement, and Keevers, Lefoe, Leask, Sultan, Ganesharatnam, Loh and Lim (2014) demonstrate that through proactive cross-campus communication, a stronger sense of IBC lecturer belonging can be formed.

In reviewing literature that more positively approaches locally-hired IBC lecturers' integration into their global university communities, I aim to showcase the range of opinions on this topic. By advocating for global integration of locally-hired lecturers, the authors cited in this section encourage the IBC sector to transcend essentialist views of staff identity and seek to engage locally-hired lecturers as institutional supporters. To further these efforts toward effective organizational integration of locally-hired IBC lecturers, more information about these integration challenges is needed. Below I outline some of the IBC integration needs identified in interviews that I conducted with IBC leaders as part of this research. As I will demonstrate, IBC lecturers' organizational integration and related identities were salient topics of concern for these leaders.

### **2.3.2 Global-Integration Challenges of IBC leaders I Interviewed**

IBC leaders I spoke with in the course of conducting this research confirmed that organizational integration of their academic staff was a key challenge they faced. As detailed in Chapter 3, 34 of the 36 participants I interviewed as part of this research hailed not from the parent-campus country but from the host country or third countries; this high concentration of locally-hired IBC lecturers in my research aligns with the overall preponderance of locally-hired IBC lecturers at participating campuses and the IBC field at large.

During my research I spoke with three senior leaders about the challenges they perceived related to IBC lecturer identity, a "sensitizing concept" I used to guide my grounded inquiry. Through these discussions the topic of organizational integration featured prominently. Leaders emphasized the geographical and cultural challenges of working at an IBC and collaborating with their IBCs' parent campus, noting concerns about how their IBCs' lecturers were engaged as part of the global university. Due to the matrixed nature of IBC enterprises it seemed that some of these leaders were not in a position to be able to fully control—or even fully access—their academic staff's overall working experience. They were eager to better understand how their academic staff experienced and oriented to the IBC and wider organization, as well as the identities that shaped and were shaped by lecturers' experiences.

The individual and campus-level identities of IBC lecturers emerged as salient levels of analysis in my interviews with IBC leaders. IBC leaders were interested in how IBC lecturers understood and embraced their individual roles within the IBC and how lecturers understood the IBCs' identity in connection with the university. IBC leaders' interest in these levels differed from those of Healey (2018) and Shams and Huisman (2016) however, in that these scholars' treatments of identity-related topics focus on their anticipated *product* of localizing academic hiring—the presumed lack of global representation—whereas the IBC leaders I interviewed focused more on their IBC lecturers' experiences as part of the university: the *process* of their engagement and resulting identity development. A key aspect of this process regarded how these lecturers related to colleagues within the global organization.

IBC leaders I interviewed shared concerns about how IBC lecturers identify individually as part of their global organizations. Generally they described IBC lecturers as genuinely seeking connection with the parent campus and its colleagues. As one leader noted:

I think the desire to be part of something bigger and to reach out to connect is definitely a motive for people here (P2).

However, leaders worried that this interest was not reciprocated by parent-campus staff, leading locally-hired IBC lecturers feeling isolated from the larger organization. One leader said he imagined that IBC lecturers felt like “contractors” delivering university products rather than members of the institution itself, noting that parent-campus colleagues' apparent disinterest in IBC operations impeded IBC lecturers' development of a globally-connected individual identity. Some leaders said they suspected that IBC lecturers are inadequately engaged by parent-campus colleagues, with a lack of informal dialogue and overall treatment leaving them feeling abandoned. As one leader explained,

Little things that [parent-campus colleagues] do... show us that... “I'm not part of you” (H21).

IBC leaders suggested that challenges with parent-campus engagement were not necessarily due to inherent disrespect or disinterest, but are the natural product of geographical distance and competing priorities. As P2 said,

I think part of it is that the whole notion of a branch campus where it's sort of a small entity somewhere on the other side of the planet can easily be confused with being a client or a partner rather than being a part of its own [institution]. And while the staff here work very hard to try and close that gap, I don't think that gap is being closed (P2).

These extracts paint a concerning picture of IBC lecturers' engagement as global university members. P2 suggests that IBC lecturers at his campus are striving to assert themselves as part of the global university and essentially being rejected by parent-campus colleagues who see the IBC as more of a partner than an organizational entity. H21 perceives a feeling of organizational disunion taking place, with IBC lecturers being shown by parent-campus staff that the two campuses are not part of each other. These perspectives provide an important counterpoint to the assumptions presented by Healey (2018) and Shams and Huisman (2016), who appeared to assume IBC lecturer disinterest in the wider university; the IBC leaders I interviewed felt that the IBC lecturers desired cross-campus connection but felt unrequited in this desire, dismissed by their parent-campus colleagues.

A related concern is how IBC lecturers see their campus mission as part of their global universities. IBC leaders I interviewed worried that the commercial framing of their IBCs as enrollment-generating vehicles might impact how IBC lecturers understood their campuses' identities. The leader H1, for example, contrasted the educational imperative of helping students develop and achieve outcomes with international education's commercial tendency toward "just considering them as customers." He said that the combination of this orientation and the "arms' length" remoteness of parent-campus quality efforts could diminish quality expectations for the IBC. P2 expressed similar concerns, describing perceptions of parent-campus staff that the IBC's mission was to secure "bums on chairs." The possibility that local IBC lecturers would internalize this IBC commercial framing was noted by leaders as a potential identity risk, with lecturers potentially seeing their IBC as responsible for delivering but not embodying global university products. As H21 elaborated:

So we are very much—if I put on my lecturer hat I feel like I am very much—just somebody running, delivering AusInt product rather than being part of AusInt (H21).

These IBC leaders were concerned that the contextual framing of the IBC as a commercial enterprise by parent-campus staff may influence how IBC lecturers orient to their IBCs' role within the larger organization. They feared that such a sense of separation could adversely impact academic quality: that the profit-driven nature of IBCs would cause parent-campus colleagues to lower academic standards for work produced in this context, and that IBC lecturers may perceive these lower standards and adopt them, reinforcing a narrative of IBC organizational separation.

Despite these concerns, IBC leaders I spoke with were committed to organizational unity and involved in high-level management efforts to encourage it—as one lecturer put it, to build a “one [university]” internal brand image. Yet with these challenges in cross-campus relationships and organizational framing, leaders expressed doubts that IBC lecturers would orient to this vision. As H21 said:

H21: I guess eventually, right—eventually we will be one. But right now we're more in the nonbeliever than the believer.

INT: More nonbelievers about unity?

H21: Yeah, we're more nonbeliever category than the one that believe we are one AusInt. So I'm not sure... You tell me... after you interview my staff. You can get a sense that—I believe—this is my hunch—that we are just a contractor. We are just a franchisee.

IBC leaders worried that IBC lecturers' isolation from the parent campus would lead to their pulling away from the idea of the IBC being part of the global institution, looking solely to the local IBC for community. This concern was articulated by P2 in explaining the approach of a former leader at his IBC:

there was a strategy put in place by my predecessor, well bugger them, let's just have our own sense of community here (P2).

P2 framed this local IBC focus as a kind of protective measure: a consolation prize for IBC lecturers feeling rejected by parent-campus colleagues. This outcome echoes Healey's (2016) suggestion that parent-campus disinterest combined with cross-campus distance could lead an IBC to “develop its own distinct identity” (p. 72)—a trend also observed by Hill and Thabet (2018). As Hill and Thabet (2018) emphasize, effective cross-campus communication can help assuage these separation tendencies (p. 319);

indeed, improving global communication was an integral goal for all managers I interviewed.

Overall, the IBC leaders I interviewed share the concerns of Healey (2018) and Shams and Huisman (2016) that locally-hired IBC lecturers have difficulties in developing identities as part of their global universities on both individual and campus levels. However, unlike these texts which treat lecturer identity as nationally predetermined, the IBC leaders I interviewed approached organizational integration as involving processes of cultivation, shaped by engagement by the home university and dominant narratives at the IBC. They were eager to understand the perspectives of academic lecturers at these sites about their overall orientations toward organizational integration—and more specifically about identities they had constructed for themselves and their campuses as part of their wider universities. My research aims to illuminate locally-hired IBC lecturers' individual and campus identities, producing findings that will contribute to what is currently a markedly underdeveloped vein of literature. I turn now to a brief overview of the existing knowledge in IBC literature on IBC lecturers' organizational orientations and identities.

### **2.3.3 The Missing Identity Focus in Existing IBC Literature**

The first step in understanding how IBC managers can better engage locally-hired academic staff is understanding how these lecturers currently orient to their universities: how they construct the organizational integration of their individual and campus identities. IBC lecturer identity is not directly addressed in current literature, but within the broader literature on IBC staff perspectives, some insights can be gained about this population's orientations to their roles and organizations that provide a foundation for more specific research on IBC lecturers' identities. I now review the limited existing knowledge about IBC lecturer perspectives that frames the gaps in literature addressed in this PhD research.

As detailed above, within the limited research on IBC management there is a presumption that locally-hired staff will be disloyal or otherwise incapable of delivering a globally-aligned university experience. These assumptions have not been tested empirically. In fact, very little research exists on IBCs in general. Transnational higher-

education research is a “relatively young” and “underresearched” sector (Knight & Liu, 2017, p. 16), with considerable gaps in knowledge about how international branch campuses operate (Girdzijauskaite & Radzeviciene, 2014; Healey, 2015; Hill & Thabet, 2018). Kosmützky and Putty (2016) note a particular need for insights about the on-site work of TNHE delivery: the “tightly interwoven processes” involved and the actors who administer them (p. 23).

The minimal existing literature about IBC operations has focused on strategic efforts to launch and manage IBCs, and includes studies such as those discussed previously about IBC leaders’ strategic decision-making processes (e.g., Healey, 2016; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Healey, 2018). The perspectives of IBC staff outside the management realm have received much less attention, with studies of IBC faculty comprising just five percent of the already minimal body of TNHE research (Knight & Liu, 2017, p. 16). Given the importance of IBC faculty in ensuring cross-campus quality, these stakeholders’ views should no longer be neglected (Chapman & Pyvis, 2013).

Also lacking in IBC literature is adequate presentation of local perspectives. As Knight and Liu (2017) note, TNHE literature to date has prioritized views of parent-campus rather than regional stakeholders, with research showcasing host-country perspectives “significantly underrepresented” (p. 15). Indeed, the small number of studies exploring IBC faculty perspectives have primarily focused on traveling parent-campus faculty: the primary IBC workforce of the sector’s pioneering era. The growth in IBCs worldwide occurred rapidly over just two decades; the accounts of parent-campus staff who traveled to work at these new enterprises chronicle the early-stage cultural adjustments involved in this work. Garson (2005), for example, described her own identity-shaping experiences working at an early-stage IBC and meeting the unique learning needs of local students. Scholars including Smith (2014) have explored the workload challenges for fly-in faculty, calling attention to the travel demands which are likely part of the reason this staffing model has proven insufficient for long-term IBC staff sustainability. Studies of expatriate IBC staff have exposed challenges as well, noting the hardships that these lecturers face in adjusting to the life in the host country (Cai & Hall, 2016), the challenges in reconciling local and parent-campus expectations



(Dobos, 2011), and the threats to their identities posed by cultural mores that constrain their behavior (Romanowski & Nasser, 2015).

The general impression from faculty-focused IBC literature is that working in these contexts is arduous. With limited pre-departure training (Cai & Hall, 2016), uneven support from parent-campus colleagues (Dobos, 2011; Edwards, Crosling & Lim, 2014), and the logistical challenges in working across geographic divides (Hill & Thabet, 2018), the life of an IBC lecturer can be challenging. Wilkins, Butt and Annabi (2017, 2018) evidence the overall dissatisfaction of IBC lecturers in their survey research on university lecturers' organizational commitment and identification, which revealed that IBC lecturers are less committed to their universities than their parent-campus peers. The authors did not distinguish between locally-hired and parent-campus faculty in this research—a limitation the authors acknowledge—so it is unclear how these groups' perspectives may have differed. However, Wilkins et al.'s (2017, 2018) findings form a crucial contribution to general understandings of IBC lecturers' orientations, illuminating the morale issues challenging this population.

Although IBC literature to date has provided some general insights into IBC lecturers' general challenges and dissatisfactions, this research has not substantially addressed fundamental questions of how locally-hired lecturers see themselves and their campuses as part of their larger institutions: in other words how they construct the organizational integration of their individual and campus identities. Assumptions about the risks of locally-hiring IBC lecturers suggest a view of identity as a taken-for-granted concept, essentially determined and straightforward in execution. This essentialist view limits IBC managers from maximizing the affordances of a locally-hired workforce. In this emerging era of localized IBC hiring, a constructionist exploration of IBC staff identity is needed: examining these lecturers' *actual* perspectives formed through their myriad experiences and chronicling how they orient to their individual roles and their IBCs' roles as part of their global universities.

Empirical study of IBC lecturers' organizational orientations is lacking in current IBC literature, which has only minimally focused on IBC faculty and in doing so has prioritized views of parent-campus rather than locally-hired staff. Explicating the perspectives of IBC lecturers themselves about their individual and collective identities

will fill this critical gap in current literature, shedding light on the orientations of these individuals on whom IBCs' future viability arguably relies. Research on IBC lecturers' identity orientations will augment presumptions with concrete facts, revealing the extent to which Healey (2018), Shams and Huisman (2016) and others are correct in assuming that locally-hired lecturers lack the capability to adequately represent their global institutions. A focus on locally-hired IBC lecturers will also heed Siltaoja, Juusola and Kivijärvi's (2018) call for research about how "staff at IBCs from different cultures perceive the organizations and how they perceive their identities and agency in their respective 'world-class' institutions," (pp. 17-18). More broadly, research on IBC lecturer identities will contribute to research on TNHE faculty perspectives, an area especially in need of further research development (Knight & Liu, 2017, p. 16).

This PhD research addresses the identity gap in IBC literature with a comprehensive emic study of IBC lecturer identity at individual and organizational levels, providing insights about how this population can be successfully engaged as university representatives. I turn now to explanation of the theoretical paradigm utilized in this research and the research questions I address through this work.

#### **2.3.4 Understanding IBC Lecturers' Constructed Identities: Research Paradigm, Questions and Aims**

This research assumes that locally-hired IBC lecturers' organizational integration is not predetermined by national origin but can be developed through adequate training and support. It seeks to identify for the IBC sector the current situation of IBC lecturers' orientations toward their local and global institutions, and to do so utilizes the theoretical paradigm of identity construction, engaging locally-hired IBC lecturers to gain insights about their emic perspectives.

As introduced in section 2.2 and further detailed in section 2.4, the term "identity" as it is used in this thesis refers to the ways in which individuals and collectives define themselves. In this research my interest is in organizational identities—the self-definition of an organization by its members (Albert & Whetten, 1985)—and the identities embedded within organizations such as those of individuals and workgroups (Ashforth, 2018). Following social-constructionist identity approaches, I see these identities as co-

constructions by agentive individuals through social interactions, with identities shifting and evolving over time. Using this paradigm of identity construction, my specific focus is on how individual IBC lecturers construct their individual and campus identities, particularly in regards to their integration with the global university organization.

This research uses a constructivist grounded theory approach and a constructionist identity paradigm to explore the emic perspectives of IBC lecturers about their individual and organizational identities. It seeks to contribute to the IBC field's limited knowledge about IBC lecturers' identities and approaches to their work. It also strives to gain insights in relation to the areas of interest and concern shared with me by IBC leaders I spoke with during my data-collection process. The interviews I conducted and data they generated have yielded findings addressing three research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

The first research question above is aimed at gaining information about IBC lecturers' identity construction at individual and organizational levels, explicating how they see themselves and their IBCs within their global universities. This question aims to tease out issues of institutional loyalty, brand orientation and organizational integration, providing a nuanced view of how IBC lecturers in these settings actually orient to these factors. It is simultaneously a "what" and "how" question, examining not only the *content* of the identities IBC lecturers are constructing, but also the *manner* in which they do so, highlighting the identity-construction processes evident in participants' discourse and accounts, and the insights that these provide for IBC knowledge and practice. The word "construct" focuses on the content of the identity that has been constructed as well as the mechanisms by which that construction has occurred.

The second research question enhances understanding of the factors informing IBC lecturers' constructions of particular identities for themselves and their

organizational collectives. This is inherently a “why” question, seeking to trace the links between lecturers’ identity constructions and the beliefs, allegiances, and experiences that may have prompted them. In asking this question I aim to provide a clearer understanding of the influences on IBC lecturer identity: crucial insights for enhancing knowledge in this field and offering practicable information for IBC leaders at participating universities and beyond.

The third research question focuses on the outcome of IBC lecturers’ identity constructions, addressing the identity’s manifestation in representational behaviors, which can in turn reinforce the performed identity (Goffman, 1959). This question also considers the impact of these findings on the field of transnational higher education and IBC practice. It seeks to identify implications of these findings, assessing, for example, whether they confirm or contest the presumptions in IBC literature that locally-hired IBC lecturers will impede the global integration of their IBCs or resist representing their global universities to students. In addressing this question I examine specific practices such as these as well as general insights gained through considering the full range of findings produced in this thesis, highlighting recommended steps for IBC leaders to pursue locally-hired lecturers’ global integration.

This research has several aims. First, by representing the perspectives of locally-hired IBC lecturers about the organizational integration of their individual and campus identities, this thesis aims to introduce emic voices to a discourse that had previously relied on assumptions of these organizational members’ orientations. Through this research, concerns noted by IBC leaders in Shams and Huisman (2016), Healey (2018) and even my own work are counterbalanced by insights from IBC lecturers themselves, showcasing the perspectives of organizational members who are best positioned to speak to their own identity constructions.

This research also aims to assess scientifically whether the casual and stereotypical presumptions in IBC literature about locally-hired lecturers’ identity orientations are confirmed by identity-based research. For example, Healey’s (2016) claim that an IBC’s “culture of organizational identity with the home university” is threatened by predominantly locally-hired staff appears to be mere conjecture; it is not based on empirical evidence of lecturers’ collective sense of “who we are, as an

organization” (Albert & Whetten, 1985). By presenting lecturers’ emic understandings of their individual and campus identities, this research adds an important empirical contribution to what has until now been rife with assumptions.

Perhaps most importantly, this thesis aims to further the action noted by Wood and Salt (2018) as imperative for the IBC sector moving forward: exploring means of better integrating locally-hired IBC lecturers into the global university. In this research I strive to identify recommended best practices that can support lecturers’ organizational integration, yielding contributions to IBC literature as well as implications for IBC management.

The approaches I followed to pursue this research are outlined in Chapter 3. In the remainder of this background chapter I will now provide further detail about the research paradigm adopted for this analysis: identity construction of and within organizations.

## **2.4 Constructing Identities in Organizations: Theoretical Framework Utilized in this Research**

### **2.4.1 Basic Premises of Identity Construction**

Identity is famously a “slippery” term, with myriad approaches to it across disciplines (Lawler, 2014, p. 1). In psychology, identity is understood as the internal “essence” of an individual—a singular and stable core of their being (Lawler, 2014, p. 14). Other social sciences, such as sociology, prioritize a social view of identity, seeing it as explaining “who people are to each other” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 6). This social approach to identity sees it as multiple and socially situated, shifting over each individual’s lifetime and negotiated through their social interactions (Jenkins, 2014; Lawler, 2014). Identity is in this view “not fixed, immutable or primordial,” but a “process of ‘being’ or ‘becoming,’” shaped by individuals’ experiences and influences (Jenkins, 2014, p. 18-20). In other words, identity is *constructed*.

Identity construction is the act of forging, contesting, negotiating and reinforcing identities: engaging in conscious or unconscious identity work to influence a particular outcome (Lawler, 2014). This construction can be initiated by the individual but is also a social process, with social interaction as the locus of identity *co-construction* and maintenance. For example, an individual might perform a claimed identity, engaging in

“dramatic realization” of a role (Goffman, 1959), and this candidate identity may be reinforced or undermined by her interlocutors (Jenkins, 2014). One might also be placed in a “subject position” of their interlocutors’ choosing, forcing the individual to either accept or resist this positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990). The mirror of others’ perspectives interacts with each individual’s personal sense of self, creating what Jenkins (2014) calls an “internal/external dialectic”—a synthesis of how people define themselves and how they perceive others’ definitions of them (p. 42-43). Individuals are constantly co-constructing identity with interlocutors: negotiating agreed-upon ways of being.

The approach to identity as a constructed phenomenon is predicated on wider philosophies of the social construction of reality (Gergen, 2015)—a subjectivist epistemological stance that I adopt in this thesis and detail in Chapter 3. For the purposes of articulating the theoretical paradigm of identity construction in this section, the key premise I wish to stress here is that in this thesis identity is considered not predestined but developed over time, not singular but multiple, and not produced by a sole individual but collectively forged through social interactions: the ever-evolving product of many influences. These features of identity construction apply to both individual and collective identities—both of which I explore in this thesis. Below I introduce the research area of organizational identity and highlight key concepts related to construction of organizationally “nested” individual and group identities.

#### **2.4.2 Introduction to Organizational Identity Construction**

Organizational identity is a “root construct” in organizational behavior research which applies principles from individual identity theory to the study of organizations (Pratt, Schultz, Ashforth & Ravasi, 2018, p. 1). This research area began with Albert and Whetten’s (1985) study of what members of a university saw as “central, enduring and distinctive” about their organizations. Organizational identity research draws on concepts from individual identity and contains some of the same debates, with questions of the number and fixedness of these identities central. However, since organizations possess not single souls but those of many actors, an additional question—that of identity

ownership—drives debate in organizational-identity research: the question of *whose* identity conceptions determine the organizational identity.

A prominent way of conceptualizing organizational identity is of the organization as a collective social actor, with an identity that derives primarily from organizational leadership (Gioia & Hamilton, 2018). In the social actor conception, organizational identities are deliberately shaped to have a “sensegiving” influence on individual organizational members, defining how they should think about the organization and operate within it (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). Organizational identity is in this view singular and largely fixed, strategically designed and enacted by leaders.

An alternate perspective to the social actor conception of organizational identity is the social-construction view, which sees organizational members as agentive in forging identities for their organizations through a collective “sensemaking” process (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). In the social-construction view of organizational identity construction, individual organizational members do not simply carry out a leader’s vision; they may contest, negotiate, influence and perform an organizational identity of their own understanding, “collectively fashion[ing] an identity that they see as fitting for themselves,” (Gioia & Hamilton, 2018, p. 24.) Organizational identity construction is therefore an outgrowth of the individuals who engage in it, synthesizing an organizational self which “serves the organizational constituents’ identity projects,” reflecting and informing local understandings (Dejordy & Creed, 2018, p. 374).

Once thought to be competitive paradigms, the sensegiving and sensemaking views of organizational identity are now largely seen as compatible (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) and even “mutually constitutive”: two forms of organizational meaning-making in which organizational identities are synthesized (Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas, 2010, p. 42). Leaders posit a candidate organizational identity, members negotiate the organizational identity to push it closer to their collective preference, the negotiated identity is institutionalized as fact, and then the process begins again (Ashforth, 2018, p. 86). In this thesis I adopt this complementary view of social-actor and social-constructionist organizational identity formation processes, assuming that IBC lecturers are presented with sensegiving messages and also construct through individual and collective sensemaking their own understandings of organizational identities.

The process whereby identity sensemaking occurs is a focus of organizational identity construction research. As with its individual identity corollary, organizational identity construction research sees collective identity as a continuous outgrowth of members enacting not simply “who we are” but “how we are becoming” (Schultz, Maguire, Langley & Tsoukas, 2012, pp. 3-4). Organizational identity construction processes are seen as constant acts of *organizing* (Lorino & Tricard, 2012, p. 202): acting in ways that promote a particular organizational identity, reflecting on actions and feedback, and collectively refining identity constructions through these processes (Pratt, 2012, p. 26). This organizing synthesizes “polyphonic” narrations of disparate entities (Suddaby, Foster & Trank, 2018, p. 311), forging new perspectives that are repeatedly revisited and revised (Pratt, 2012, p. 26-27).

The processes of organizational identity formation draw in part upon the resources of organizational culture, a broader concept that refers to the values and practices collectively embraced by organizational members, with or without their conscious awareness (Ravasi, 2018). In defining “who we are, as an organization,” members look to “what we do,” and likewise may “do” an action according to their understanding of “who we are” (Watkiss & Glynn, 2018, p. 318). Aspects of organizational culture can therefore serve as resources for organizational identity construction, with members looking to organizational practices in identity sensemaking; likewise, organizational culture can be a way of instantiating organizational identity, carrying out an exemplary enactment of an identity claim (Ravasi, 2018). Organizational identity therefore provides a lens onto organizational culture, revealing insights about members’ identifications and the cultural influences which relate to them.

In this thesis my focus is not broadly on the organizational identity of global universities, but rather on IBC lecturers’ constructions of themselves and their campuses as part of their global universities. These campus and individual identities are “nested” within those of their wider organizations (Gioia, et al., 2010), with identities at all levels impacting each other. As Ashforth (2018) notes:

collective identities tend to emerge from individual identities... and collective identities in turn both enable and constrain identities nested within them, including individual identities (p. 81).



In this thesis I examine IBC lecturers' individual identities in regards to their IBC roles and responsibilities, and I explore how they construct identities for their campuses. I foreground this discussion by examining the organizational collective of parent-campus course coordinators who represent the global university to IBC lecturers and may influence their identity constructions. Below I summarize key background concepts relevant to each of these foci in the context of international branch campuses: the "them" of parent-campus coordinators, the "me" of individual lecturers' professional identity, and the "us" of shared campus identity. In doing so I provide background information for the research findings in each of these areas which I will share in subsequent chapters.

### **2.4.3 Constructing "Them": Image-Construction Concepts Relevant to Parent-Campus Course Coordinators**

A central collective around which participants in this study shared perceptions is of the parent-campus coordinators who oversee delivery of courses at the IBC. The salience of parent-campus coordinators to IBC lecturers' identity constructions is clear even in the background insights provided by participating IBC leaders in 2.3.2: Parent-campus coordinators were constructed by participants as an important collective of social actors which impacted their individual and campus identity construction.

From an identity perspective, collectives can be organized as either groups or categories, distinguished by the assumed interrelations between members in groups and not necessarily in categories (Jenkins, 2014, p. 106). Since this thesis focuses purely on the perspectives of IBC lecturers and not on those of parent-campus coordinators, the question of whether these coordinators engage with each other and function as a group is unclear and irrelevant. From IBC leaders' and lecturers' perspectives, parent-campus coordinators represent at the least a clear category of organizational stakeholders with whom lecturers interact. The act of ascribing identity features to such a category is called "collective external definition": creating broad definitions and expectations for categorical members which the members themselves may not be aware of (Jenkins, 2014, p. 106).

The process of collective external definition can help those defining a category refine their own shared identities: the shared "in-group" identity is strengthened through

clarity of the “out-group” identity’s features (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As Jenkins (2014) notes, this process of other-identification helps individuals to make better sense of their social situations, helping them to anticipate future occurrences:

Our ability to identify unfamiliar individuals as members of known categories allows us at least the illusion that we may know what to expect of them (p. 107).

IBC lecturers’ impressions of their parent-campus coordinators are therefore important to understand, as they will impact these lecturers’ future expectations as well as their sense of their own identity within these organizations.

The category of parent-campus coordinators within the global university landscape is complex, since these staff members function as both organizational colleagues—members of the same general “group” of university employees—and as distinct categorical members of a different campus, “nested” within a different organizational subunit. Further complicating relations between parent-campus coordinators and IBC lecturers is the power that the former can have over the latter to determine outcomes and influence behavior. Parent-campus coordinators could be seen as playing an “identity custodian” role: symbolically representing university leadership and providing *sensegiving* top-down guidance about how to perform the representational role (Ashforth, 2018, p. 85). Organizationally these coordinators are positioned as leaders, with an expected “identity cascade” that flows values and practices from leaders to line-level staff (Ashforth, 2016, p. 85). However, “bottom-up” power of staff to define the organization in their own terms are also powerful; these *sensemaking* activities can challenge the cascade of top-down identity, forging new and competing understandings (Ashforth, 2016, p. 85). These simultaneous processes set the stage for potential conflict: As Kenny, Whittle and Willmott (2018) emphasize, “All forms of sensemaking and sensegiving are seen to be *politically charged* and *significant*,” (p. 141, emphasis in original).

This brief summary of concepts related to IBC lecturers’ construction of categorical identities demonstrates the precarity of these members’ organizational positioning and the importance of understanding how IBC lecturers orient to these leaders. In Chapter 4 I present findings from this research on IBC lecturers’ image

constructions of their parent-campus coordinators, noting the impact of these identifications on cross-campus relationships.

#### **2.4.4 Constructing “Me”: Individual-Identity Concepts Relevant to IBC Lecturers**

In a processual view of identity development, identity construction is the act of *identifying*: developing and revising identifications with various social targets such as roles, relationships, groups and categories (Jenkins, 2014). Human beings actively construct their identities in coordination with others in their social environments, developing and performing identifications (Goffman, 1959), and constantly revising them as their insights and circumstances change (Jenkins, 2014). Individuals have many identities which become salient at different moments; these can range from the personal (e.g., mother) to the professional (e.g., lecturer), with infinite identifications possible within a single individual (Jenkins, 2014).

In this thesis my interest in individual identity focuses on professional spheres: the “constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role” (Ibarra, 1999, p. 765). Briggs (2007) sees professional identity as comprising three concepts: “professional values (What I profess); professional location (The profession to which I belong); and professional role (My role within the institution),” tying professional identity to both roles within a particular organization and long-term identifications spanning institutional boundaries (p. 474). Within the broad category of professional identity are occupational and organizational identification: the processes by which individuals align their identities with those of their occupation and/or their organization (Vough, 2012).

Though often interconnected, occupational and organizational identifications differ in focus. Organizational identification considers staff members as organizational stakeholders, answering the question “Who am I in relation to the organization?” (Bartel, Baldi & Dukerich, 2018, p. 476). This identification can be “situated”—a temporary employment-related identification—or it can be “deep structure” identification involving a more powerful emotional connection of an individual to her employer (Rousseau, 1998). For employers, organizational identification is valuable as it involves employees’ “deep acceptance” of an organization which inspires them to assume its identity as part of

their own, “enabling them to enact its purpose, values [and] beliefs,” (Ashforth, 2016, p. 362). High levels of organizational identification are associated with employees “act[ing] in the interests of the organization,” (Mishra, 2013, p. 222), for example performing “organizational citizenship behaviors” such as representing their organizations positively to stakeholders (Fuchs, 2012, p. 67).

In contrast to organization-related identities, occupational identity focuses on “what we do rather than where we do it,” (Ashcraft, 2013, p. 13). Occupational identity refers to individual’s sense of themselves as part of their overall occupations or professions: membership that will often outlast a particular institutional affiliation (Ashcraft, 2013). The salience of occupational identity varies with individuals (Skorikov & Vondracek, 2011) and can conflict with organizational identifications when the values and obligations associated with these orientations do not align (Miscenko & Day, 2016, p. 234). The relationship between organizational and occupational identifications is particularly topical in higher-education contexts, where studies of “academic identity” have explored the changes to academic life brought about by academic capitalism (Macfarlane, 2016; Daniel, 2018).

In a constructionist approach to identity formation, occupational and organizational professional identities—like all of an individual’s identities—are seen as developing through social processes and drawing upon a range of schemata. A salient concept for conceptualizing these schemata is Bourdieu’s (1989) concept of *habitus*: “schemes of perception, thought and action” developed through an individual’s experiences that guide her orientations and behaviors (p. 14). Habitus is the “embodied history” of an individual or group, “internalized as second nature” and thus powerful in influencing an individual’s self concept (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 56). Ideas about professional roles and responsibilities can form part of one’s habitus, shaping their identifications and overall professional identities. Habitus is therefore another key concept helpful for understanding how IBC lecturers orient to their roles, responsibilities and organizations, forging identities as professionals within these spaces.

The professional identities of IBC lecturers are contextually complex, with a range of possible identification targets competing for their focus. How IBC lecturers identify within their organizations is the topic of Chapter 5, in which I discuss the

different identifications research participants indicated in their interviews and the ways that they appear to enact their identities in their workplace interactions.

#### **2.4.5 Constructing “Us”: Organizational-Identity Concepts Relevant to IBCs**

These constructive processes of individual identity construction also function at collective levels. Significant identity research has focused on how groups define themselves within their broader fields of operation, negotiating and reinforcing conceptions of in-group and out-group characteristics (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As with individual identity construction, group identity construction also involves entities grappling with existential questions, such as “who are we as a subunit/organization and how are we different from others?” (Ashforth, 2018, p. 80). IBCs are a unique kind of group: similar to MNE subsidiaries, they are “nested organizations” (Gioia, Price, Hamilton & Thomas, 2010) which derive their identities both from and beyond their parent campuses.

Organizational-identity construction processes discussed in 2.4.2 above are relevant to the nested organizations of IBCs. “Sensegiving” candidate identities are provided by management and organizational members engage in negotiated “sensemaking” processes to forge a collective consensual understanding of what the nested organization’s identity will be (Gioia, et al., 2010). In a study of a new college nested within a larger university, Gioia, et al. (2010) found that organizational identity development followed this general order, with a range of negotiation processes contributing to the eventual identity. An important goal of these overall processes was to determine a shared understanding of this college’s “optimal distinctiveness,” (Gioia, et al., 2010), a concept I turn to now.

Whether nested or independent, an organization’s identity is connected to what its members see as “central, enduring and distinctive” about this organization as compared to its peers (Albert & Whetten, 1985). In other words, an organization’s identity refers to both what its members see as linking them to other categories—stressing their similarity—as well as stressing the unique qualities that differentiate them from their competitors (Gioia & Hamilton, 2016, p. 26-27). In nested organizations this quest for “optimal distinctiveness” (Brewer, 1991) may happen at multiple levels: identifying

similarities and differences between the nested and the parent institution as well as between the nested organization and its competitors (Gioia, et al., 2010). Nested organizational identity development is strongly influenced by the encompassing organization. As Gioia, et al. (2010) note:

within a nested organization, negotiating identity claims might take less time and involve less contestation because the new organization might be able to draw some elements of identity from the parent organization. In contrast, a new nested organization might take longer to attain optimal distinctiveness because its members need to work more intensively to figure out how it is different from the larger organization (pp. 40-41).

Gioia, et al.'s (2010) point about the efforts of nested-organization members to determine their organization's uniqueness from the parent campus suggests an important point about the international branch campus context: that the search for distinctiveness is an inclination of any organization, nested or otherwise. For international branch campuses, one question might be which level of distinctiveness from the parent campus is seen as optimal: a point on which organizational members may disagree.

One major point of distinction between IBCs and their home campuses is the tenuous market viability of IBCs as compared to their parent campuses, as noted in 2.1.4. Though higher education generally has undergone a consumerist turn (Naidoo et al., 2011), at IBCs this consumer focus may be particularly palpable for organizational members. The market-focused nature of IBCs suggests that they may have "hybrid identities": two competing identities which are both essential to the organization's purpose and "yet are viewed as being at odds," (Pratt, 2018, p. 107). Universities under academic capitalism form a classic example of identity hybridity with their dual focus on the "public good" (Slaughter, 2014) as well as capital generation. In IBCs, this dualism may be particularly salient, perhaps leading to a nested organizational identity as distinct from the wider university due to the IBC's strong market-driven focus.

This overview of organizational-identity concepts relevant to international branch campuses provides a foundation for the related findings shared in this thesis. How IBC lecturers orient to the hybrid nature of their nested organizations and determine the optimal distinctiveness of their campuses are two issues discussed in Chapter 6, in which

I explore IBC lecturers' identity constructions for their campuses as nested organizations and the outcomes of their apparent organizational identities in practice.

#### **2.4.6 Exploring IBC Lecturers' Organizational Identity Constructions**

The processual nature of the construction of organizationally nested identities makes these self-definitions ever-evolving. A key question in identity construction research is therefore how to study this process of doing and becoming. Qualitative interview-based tools—and grounded theory in particular—are typically preferred for this work due to the need for ascertaining emic insights from members involved in carrying out these processes. As Foreman and Whetten (2016) note,

organizational identity is viewed as socially constructed claims and understandings, residing in the perceptions and beliefs of members. These claims and understandings are discovered through qualitative methods and (most often) a Grounded Theory approach (p. 50).

By interviewing members of a collective about their identity orientations within and toward their organizations, researchers can gain a snapshot view of how the group or organization is self-defining at a particular moment in time. In Chapter 3 I outline the research approach I followed to explore IBC lecturers' constructed identities within their organizations, utilizing the philosophical foundation and tools of constructivist grounded theory research.

## CHAPTER 3

### A CONSTRUCTIVIST GROUNDED-THEORY APPROACH TO RESEARCHING IBC LECTURERS' IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS

#### Chapter Summary

In Chapter 2 I introduced the context of international branch campuses (IBCs) and discussed their movement from reliance on parent-campus to locally-hired lecturers. I highlighted the literature assumptions that internationally-hired faculty are uninclined to represent their global universities to stakeholders, arguing that research on IBC lecturers' actual orientations is needed to augment these assumptions with empirical understanding. To explore this topic I introduced the theoretical framework of identity construction and articulated the following research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In Chapter 3 I introduce the research approach that I followed to pursue these questions. Following a situating overview of the research design typology that conceptualizes my approach, I introduce the research ideology, strategy, methods and techniques that I have used to carry out this research. I begin by detailing the philosophical foundations of this work, highlighting the subjectivist ontology, constructivist epistemology and humanist axiology that have informed my qualitative and interview-based research strategy. I outline this strategy and the grounded theory method I have used to pursue it, highlighting my use of Constructivist Grounded Theory and its sensitizing framework, Symbolic Interactionism. I then detail the specific techniques that I have followed to develop a comprehensive grounded theory of IBC lecturers' identity constructions at individual and organizational levels—results I present in Chapters 4 through 6.



### 3.1 Research Design Typology Framework

In his introduction to the *Palgrave Handbook of Research Design in Business and Management*, editor Kenneth Strang (2015) calls for researchers working within these fields to delineate their approaches in terms shared by the full community (p. 6). Citing Creswell's (2012) concerns about the current atomized state of qualitative research practices across disciplines, Strang argues that "a single comprehensive resource of alternate approaches" is necessary to facilitate cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural understanding (p. 5-6). To meet this need, Strang (2015) presents a "Research Design Typology" model, which outlines the basic considerations of research across traditions.

Strang's (2015) Research Design Typology calls for researchers to chart their approaches' *Ideology, Strategy, Method* and *Techniques* (p. 11). *Ideology* in this model represents the researchers' philosophical approach or "paradigm": what Guba (1990) describes as a "basic set of beliefs that guides action" (p. 17). *Strategy* refers to the type of analysis being undertaken: quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods. *Method* refers to the methodological framework adopted, such as experimentation or grounded theory. And *Techniques* describes the instruments and actions used, such as interviews or surveys. (See Strang, 2015, p. 3-11, for a full overview of this typology model). An image of Strang's simplified model is included in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: Strang's Research Design Typology Overview** (Image: Strang, 2015, p. 4)

<Image removed due to copyright restrictions>

Strang's Research Design Typology shares similarities with the research approach models of Denzin and Lincoln (2005, 2018), which map research approaches across a cline of positivist to interpretivist approaches. Heeding Strang's call for unified research terminology, in this chapter I use his standard framework to situate my research, presenting the ideology, strategy, methods and techniques I have followed. I also draw from Denzin and Lincoln (2018) and others to elucidate various aspects of my approach.

### **3.2 Research Ideology Adopted for this Research**

All research has a philosophical foundation, whether this is articulated or left unsaid (Charmaz, Thornberg & Keane, 2018). Strang (2015) calls this foundation the research *ideology* (p. 22). The ideology adopted for a piece of research is fundamental to the shape of the project, determining the methods employed and the view of research findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 195). For much of human history, the predominant research ideology has been positivism, an approach associated with the scientific method that sees reality as singular and absolute, discernible through rigorous use of deductive, primarily quantitative tools (Strang, 2015, p. 22). In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the conventions of positivism were challenged by postmodernism, which saw reality as multiple and socially constructed—interpretable but not inherently knowable (Best & Kellner, 1991). This “postmodern turn” (Kellner, 1998) in ontological thought presaged the introduction of interpretive, qualitative research methodologies—alternatives to positivist approaches (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 43).

In 1994, Guba and Lincoln produced their seminal cline comparing and contrasting major research approaches (p. 109). The two major interpretivist ideologies they included were critical theory and constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109). Interpretivist ideologies have multiplied in recent decades; however, the two general threads of critical theory and constructivism remain prominent (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2018). For this research I have followed a constructivist approach. In this section I contrast the constructivist research ideology with that of critical theory and positivism to clarify the particular features of my assumed ideology.

Strang (2015)'s research typology model holds that the ideology of a research project entails three philosophical stances:

- *ontology*, one's theory of reality
  - *epistemology*, one's theory of how knowledge can be obtained, and
  - *axiology*, one's ethical commitments for the research project
- (p. 11; also see Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 37).

As part of its constructivist ideology, my PhD research assumes a relativist and anti-foundationalist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology, and a restrained yet supportive axiology. These terms and their stances adopted in this research are elaborated below.

### **3.2.1 Relativist, Anti-Foundationalist Ontology**

Ontology is a theory of reality: how one sees the world. For Lincoln and Guba (2013), the fundamental ontological question is “what is there that can be known?” (p. 37). For positivists, the answer is straightforward: they envision a “real reality” that exists but cannot always be ascertained (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 235). This “realist” perspective is a key part of the positivist ontology, as is the adherence to “foundationalism”: the idea that truth can be measured against the “template” of the real world (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 235). For positivists, reality is singular, knowable and provable—provided that one has the right tools.

Critical theory differs from positivism in many ways, but it also adopts a realist and foundationalist ontology (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 235). Critical theory invokes a “historical realism” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109), seeking to expose the societal “infrastructures of oppression, injustice and marginalization” that adversely impact certain groups (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 237). Foundationalist allegiances are also part of critical theory, but in a different way from positivism: instead of adhering to the positivist foundation of the empirical world, critical theory sees as foundational the particular social frameworks embraced by the researcher, such as feminist or queer theory (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 237).

Constructivism adopts a very different ontology from both positivism and critical theory. It does not envision a single “real reality”; it holds that individuals “construct the world in our own terms,” deciding for ourselves what we accept as real (Gergen, 2015, p. 30). Constructivist ideology rejects the realist ontology and accepts one of relativism, believing that groups and individuals construct their own realities, which are social and

multiple and constantly in flux (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 57). Constructivism is also antifoundationalist, with no existing rubric for truth; constructivists believe that what is accepted as truth is tentative and constantly negotiated by communities (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 237). “Truth” is assessed by its usefulness to the creator (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 51).

For my research I have adopted a constructivist ontology. Though I utilize the framework of organizational identity to parse my data, I remained “theoretically agnostic” (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003) throughout data collection and analysis, avoiding biases and thus embracing an antifoundationalist approach. My approach is also relativist, anticipating multiple social realities in these research contexts, and drawing from my lifetime of experience witnessing how communities use discourse to construct and reify shared worldviews. Though I share Gergen’s (2015) appreciation for the large scientific community that builds knowledge around widely agreed-upon “facts,” I believed that the world is individually and socially experienced, with interpretations and responses to environmental phenomena largely constructed by these individuals. The constructivist ontology I embrace in this research acknowledges and explores these processes.

### **3.2.2 Subjectivist Epistemology**

Epistemology describes views of how knowledge is attained. At its heart is the question of how a person sees herself as a “subject” in relation to “objects”—things, people and ideas outside herself (Gergen, 2015, p. 7). Positivism sees subjects and objects as separate, believing that an individual subject can stand apart from an object and view it objectively (Lincoln et al., 2018, p. 235). Since it sees objective analysis as possible, positivism pursues objectivist research techniques aimed at heightening the accuracy, validity and reliability of data collection and analysis (Strang, 2015, p. 20).

In contrast to positivism’s objectivist epistemology, critical theory and constructivism see the world in subjective terms, viewing subject and object as interconnected. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) summarize the subjectivist epistemology as one in which

[t]here are no objective observations, only observations socially situated in the worlds of—and between—the observer and the observed. Subjects, or individuals, are seldom able to give full

explanations of their actions or intentions; all they can offer are accounts or stories about what they did and why (p. 53).

In other words, a subjectivist epistemology sees true objectivity as impossible, believing that researchers are “a part of what we see” and expecting that all research findings will carry some imprint of the researcher (Charmaz, 2017b, p. 4). Subjectivist epistemologies also see research participants as incapable of objectively reporting their perspectives; thus, they favor interpretivist research methods that allow knowledge to be developed through exploration (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 53).

Critical theory and constructivism both employ a subjectivist epistemic approach. However, for critical theorists, knowledge is “value-mediated” against the rubric of the researchers’ imported philosophical framework, interpreted through the lens of this existing perspective (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 109). Constructivists, in contrast, resist importing existing frameworks; they seek to consensually create knowledge with the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 57). Constructivist researchers prioritize knowledge stemming from the data itself and try not to “fit the data to any preconceived notions” (Herring, 2018, p. 232), in keeping with their ontological view of multiple social realities.

In this research I follow a constructivist epistemology. I see subject and object as intricately connected, and I believe that claiming to perform this research as a truly objective reporter of facts would be disingenuous, given my personal history working at IBC settings in Asia and familiarity with related issues and discourses. Research is to me always an act of interpretation: as Denzin (2010) argues, “nothing speaks for itself” (p. 297). Yet my interpretation is reflexively managed, eschewing any single interpretive schema and embracing “theoretical agnosticism” (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003) and co-creation of findings. Thus, in epistemology as well as ontology, my approach is committedly constructivist.

### **3.2.3 Restrained, Supportive Axiology**

Axiology is a “theory of values” (Hart, 1971), referencing the moral and cultural beliefs adhered to in research (Strang, 2015, p. 19). In recent years, axiology has joined ontology and epistemology as a paradigmatic concern, appearing within the ideological

“layer” of Strang’s (2015) Research Design Typology and recommended by Lincoln et al. (2018) as a paradigm addition to Denzin and Lincoln’s (2018) classic map (p. 229). Brennan et al. (2015) stress the particular importance of considering axiology in cross-cultural research, since various cultures “see and value research” in different ways, requiring unique care for participants (p. 97).

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) consider the axiological question to be an ethical one: “how will I be a moral person in the world?” (p. 195). Axiological goals are pursued differently through the practices of various research traditions. As a constructivist working with qualitative tools in a cross-cultural setting, part of my axiological commitment has been to prioritize care and respect for the participants I interviewed. This was manifest in my efforts to provide clear information about the research to volunteers, deal sensitively with topics of potential discomfort during interviews, and maintain participant confidentiality. I value my participants and have continuously placed their needs for comfort and privacy over my own research aims.

Axiology also extends beyond issues of research ethics. Lincoln and Guba (2013) broaden the axiological question to include aesthetics, suggesting that researchers ask themselves:

“Of all the knowledge available to me, which is the most valuable, which is the most truthful, which is the most beautiful, which is the most life-enhancing?” (p. 37)

In relation to this aesthetic focus, my axiology for this research did not just stem through my ideological choice of constructivism; it also influenced it. My beliefs about what would be “most life-enhancing” for my participants helped me choose between constructivist and critical theory approaches, both of which I find appealing. In some contexts of my life—such as in my identification as a feminist—the interpretive lens of critical theory would be best suited to achieving truth and beauty. However, for my research on the perspectives of IBC lecturers—particularly locally-hired lecturers whose perspectives are lacking in current literature—I felt that the most “life-enhancing” outcome would be a comprehensive representation of participants’ views. I thus entered the work with an open mind, maintaining “methodological self-consciousness” to interrogate and manage my biases (Charmaz, 2017a, p. 35).

My goals for the outcomes of this research also align with a constructivist axiology. In this work I have aimed to develop information that could potentially benefit the IBC lecturer population, but I do not seek to initiate this action personally or follow a particular critical agenda. This stance aligns with Denzin and Lincoln's (2018) axiological contrast between constructivism and critical theory, which holds that both of these paradigms seek to on some level facilitate an emancipatory benefit for the groups participants represent, but in constructivism this aim is "longer term" and "more reflective" than it is with critical theory's "desire for immediate results" (p. 226). My axiology could therefore be described as one of supportive restraint: respecting and caring for participants, but delaying any advocacy position I might adopt until the research is complete.

### **3.2.4 Summary of Research Ideology**

As detailed above, the ideology I adopted in this research aligns with constructivism on an ontological, epistemological and axiological level. Some aspects of this ideology represent my personal beliefs and orientations, while others represent my goals for this particular piece of research. This ideology is also influenced by my choice of research methods. Strang (2015) notes that while larger philosophical commitments tend to influence other aspects of research, this influence can follow the other direction, with a particular set of methods influencing one's adopted ideology (p. 31). This was the case for me. I began planning this research with a desire to do an interview study that would allow me to speak to IBC lecturers directly about their views. After selecting constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as the ideal method to pursue this work, I began reading about its constructivist roots and identifying my personal philosophy in alignment with it. In practice I have therefore employed what Clarke (2006) calls the "theory/methods package" of CGT: a subject I discuss further in the Methods section.

### **3.3 Research Strategy Adopted for this Research**

In Strang's (2015) Research Design Typology, research strategy is the layer immediately following ideology, influenced by its philosophical commitments (p. 32). Strang (2015) defines strategy as the overall type of research pursued—quantitative,

qualitative or mixed methods—as well as the level and unit of analysis, and the purpose of conducting the research (p. 43). He notes that in quantitative research, strategies are typically very detailed, including the hypotheses the researcher will test, while qualitative research strategies tend to be more “loosely articulated” to accommodate more open-ended interpretivist approaches (p. 43). Below I briefly overview the strategy I have pursued in this research.

### **3.3.1 Type, Level and Unit of Analysis**

This research follows a qualitative methodology: a common pairing with interpretivist ideologies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Since little is known about the identity orientations of locally-hired IBC lecturers, qualitative tools are ideal, allowing an open lens to capture this populations’ emic perspectives rather than simply testing extant assumptions. While I draw from the findings of quantitative researchers in developing my sense of the IBC landscape and influences on lecturers’ identity situations, I use qualitative tools to flesh out the textured expanses of this image.

My research operates on the human level of analysis and takes as its unit of analysis the one-on-one research interview. In doing so it aims to capture the perspectives of individual lecturers and track patterns within their orientations. However, unlike other forms of interview-based research which focus primarily on fully capturing the details of individual cases, the constructivist grounded theory method I employ focuses primarily on patterns within and across cases (Charmaz, 2014, p. 171). In my research I explore lecturer participants’ perspectives as individuals, but move beyond these seeking to identify commonalities, divergences and other phenomena that provide insight into this wider population.

### **3.3.2 Research Purpose**

This research addresses assumptions in IBC literature that locally-hired IBC lecturers are less loyal and capable of representing their global universities than their parent-campus peers. Through a grounded-theory study of IBC lecturers’ actual perspectives, I seek to replace these deterministic views of locally-hired IBC lecturers with nuanced empirical insights about their actual orientations toward the organizational



integration of themselves and their campuses. This research takes an open approach, seeking not to prove a particular hypothesis (Herring, 2018) but rather to represent authentically the emic perspectives of IBC lecturers. Utilizing the theoretical framework of individual and organizational identity construction, I pursue the questions introduced above:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In addressing these questions through emically-sourced interview data from lecturers working in Southeast Asian IBCs, this research makes both theoretical and practical contributions: it expands knowledge in the under-researched area of IBC staff perspectives, provides empirical clarification to the impressionistic assumptions about locally-hired IBC staff, and presents insights that IBC leaders can use to enhance their workforce-development strategies.

On the latter point of practical application it is important to note that blanket generalizability is not assumed in constructivist grounded theory, since this approach recognizes the temporal and geographical boundaries that establish each context as unique. However, though not necessarily generalizable, I believe that others working in the IBC arena will find them to be potentially *transferable* to their contexts—a determination that Denzin and Lincoln (2018) advise should be made on a case-by-case basis (p. 553). Generalizability may be an eventual outcome of this work should other researchers build on the theories I have developed and test them through quantitative means. As Charmaz (2014) notes, “grounded theorists can offer the grist for emergent hypotheses that quantitative researchers might pursue” (p. 198). An additional goal for my research is therefore to introduce new veins of inquiry to IBC literature that can be pursued in future work.

### 3.3.3 Summary of Research Strategy

In this research, my goal of enhancing IBC literature through emic understanding of locally-hired lecturers' perspectives is pursued through a qualitative strategy. I have conducted one-on-one interviews with actual IBC lecturers and have carefully analyzed and developed theories from their findings. I turn now to discussion of the precise interview-based method I have followed in this research: constructivist grounded theory.

### 3.4 Research Method Adopted for this Research

Strang's (2015) call for terminology clarity is particularly salient in his use of the terms "method" and "techniques." While some research delineates between "methodologies" and "methods," Strang connects these terms and separates them from "techniques" (p. 49). For Strang (2015), "methods" are formal, philosophically-driven research approaches followed within disciplinary communities of practice; the incremental actions taken as part of these methods are "techniques" (p. 49). In this chapter I outline the method of constructivist grounded theory (CGT) that I have used for this research and detail the specific techniques I have followed to carry it out.

#### 3.4.1 The "Family" of Grounded Theory Methods

Grounded theory is a form of qualitative research that prioritizes examination of data from an emic perspective with the aim of developing theory (Bryant, 2017; Charmaz, 2017c; Corbin, 2017). Researchers following the grounded theory method (GTM) collect data and analyze it "from the ground up" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 120), coding it through multiple sense-making iterations, writing analytical memos, comparing data across cases and avoiding *a priori* assumptions to develop theory that prioritizes participants' perspectives and practices (Bryant, 2017; Charmaz, 2014). GTM was pioneered in 1967 by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, whose seminal book, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory," argued for what was then a revolutionary approach to theorizing: using empirical data as a source of theory, departing from the era's dominant approach of applying existing "grand theories" to new situations (Milliken & Schreiber, 2012). The GTM techniques that Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced for collecting,

coding and theory-building from emically-sourced data provide tools for conducting qualitative studies with rigor (Matavire & Brown, 2011).

Glaser and Strauss' (1967) original conception of grounded theory was highly influenced by positivist ideologies (Bryant, 2017; Charmaz, 2014). In their original presentation of GTM, Glaser and Strauss (1967) claimed that theory "emerges" from data as facts to be "discovered," suggesting a realist ontology and objectivist epistemology. As GTM matured and other researchers began working within the paradigm, new approaches to grounded theory emerged. Strauss's partnership with Juliet Corbin (see, for example, Strauss & Corbin, 1990) prompted development of a GTM approach that diverged from Glaser and Strauss's original, introducing new guidelines that Glaser protested (Kenny & Fourie, 2014). As the rift between Glaserian and Straussian GTM approaches widened, a second generation of grounded-theory researchers developed new variants, producing at least seven distinct approaches (Denzin, 2007). The most dominant second-generation grounded-theory method to date is constructivist grounded theory.

#### **3.4.2 Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT)**

Constructivist grounded theory was pioneered by Kathy Charmaz, a former PhD student of both Glaser and Strauss. Constructivist grounded theory retains the core GTM methods of iterative data coding, memo writing and theory development, but rejects the idea of theory "discovery" in data, arguing that "we *construct* our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives and research practices," (Charmaz, 2006, p. 10, emphasis mine). Charmaz (2014) frames earlier versions of GTM as having an objectivist epistemology, arguing that Glaser and his followers "assume that data represent objective facts about a knowable world" (p. 235). She suggests that a relativist and subjectivist ideology aligns with foundations of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006, 2014), which in its more academically resonant Straussian varieties drew from constructivist philosophies (Bryant, 2017, p. 63). Thus, constructivist grounded theory "shift[s] the epistemological foundations" of the original method (Charmaz, 2017a, p. 34), emphasizing the interpretivist, constructivist approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 725) that makes CGT a "theory/methods package" (Clarke,

2006). CGT researchers adopt a constructivist ideology, recognize their subjectivity and resist positivist claims of generalizability (Charmaz, 2014, p. 342).

I selected constructivist grounded theory as my core method for this research because it aligns with—and has helped me explicate—my ontological, epistemic and axiological approach to this research. Reading Charmaz’s 2014 CGT handbook, “Constructing Grounded Theory,” was a revelatory experience for me during the early stages of this research, when I knew that I wanted to conduct an interview study of IBC lecturers but was still deciding which approach to follow. After considering several methodological options, I found in constructivist grounded theory an approach that facilitated the rigorous pattern-seeking procedures I considered important, yet also aligned with my social-constructionist leanings, allowing me to recognize and interrogate my own role in theory development. In this research I have carefully followed the steps outlined in Charmaz (2014) as well as other thought leaders in constructivist grounded theory, such as Antony Bryant (2017). At times I have also looked to earlier or alternative GTM texts to better understand key techniques, but throughout this project I have sought to make this work a strong example of constructivist grounded theory—the precise version of GTM that I endorse. In section 3.5 I outline the specific techniques I used to carry out this CGT research.

### **3.4.3 Constructivist Philosophical Foundations of CGT**

Constructivist grounded theory is rigorously open-minded, yet it does invoke the foundational philosophies of American pragmatism and symbolic interactionism, both of which emanated from the Chicago School of Sociology when Anselm Strauss was a student there (Bryant, 2017, p. 63). American pragmatism and symbolic interactionism are complementary social-constructivist philosophies, with pragmatism reflecting John Dewey’s stance that knowledge is not universal but is contextually and pragmatically determined (Bryant, 2009, p. 14), and symbolic interactionism emphasizing the symbols humans use to interpret, communicate and create shared meaning in social interactions (Blumer, 1969; Gergen, 2015).

Symbolic interactionism offers a helpful foundation for constructivist grounded theorists as they engage in research and seek to understand local perspectives (Charmaz,

2014, p. 277). Building on the work of George Herbert Mead and popularized by his student Herbert Blumer, symbolic interactionism holds as its thesis the claim that “human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them,” (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). People interpret the words, gestures, actions and objects they encounter, and respond based on their understanding of what these phenomena mean to themselves or their community. Interaction is in this view a “reciprocal process” of self- and other-interaction, in which people both perform social actions, reflect upon their effect, and use information gleaned from this reflection to inform subsequent actions (Denzin, 1992, p. 4).

For the constructivist grounded theorist conducting interview research, awareness of the symbols inherent in human meaning-making encourages sensitivity to interview discourse, both for the insights these symbols reveal about participants’ worlds and the potential for them to inadvertently shape the interview content (Charmaz, 2014, p. 284). An example of drawing on Symbolic Interactionism during an interview would be asking a participant to define a term they have used, ascertaining whether there is a unique local meaning for this term in the context studied. Doing this helps the researcher to examine the emic meaning-making practices of the community. As Burke and Stets (2009) note:

By identifying the meaning that actors attributed to their surroundings, by getting “inside their head’ and seeing the world from their perspective, we can understand why people do what they do (p. 33)

To explore this emic perspective of actors, Charmaz (2014) suggests using symbolic interactionism as a starting place for collecting and analyzing data (p. 30). She recommends that constructivist grounded theorists adopt the related sensitizing concepts of “action, meaning, process, agency, situation, identity and self” in their research, noticing when these concepts become salient for participants and exploring meanings within and around these points (Charmaz, 2014, p. 117). I have followed this approach in my research, probing when these concepts surface in interviews and using the concepts in coding to prioritize local meanings.

Symbolic interactionism also prompts a sensitivity to how interview discourse shapes the ongoing interview interactions (Charmaz, 2014, p. 284), engaging what William James conceptualized as each human’s interrelated “I” and “me” (Denzin, 1992,

p. 4). A participant's "I" is her acting self, the "self as subject" who engages in social interaction; her "me" is her reflective self, the object that her "I" reflects upon (Denzin, 1992, p. 4; Meijers & Hermans, 2018). The process of an "I" reflecting on its "me" is not always straightforward: self-knowledge is not always transparent (Jenkins, 2014, p. 33; Meijers & Hermans, 2018), and human beings inherently package information they share to their perceptions of how it will be received (Blumer, 1969, p. 8). Understanding these phenomena, CGT researchers take care to monitor their own semiotic expressions during interviews (Charmaz, 2014, p. 284), avoiding the appearance of judgment and creating open environments in which participants share honestly their views which may be difficult to express (Charmaz, 2014, p. 82). The resulting dialogues are—as all interactions—a co-constructed product, but the researcher can strive to make that product as authentic as possible a representation of emic perspectives. In my research, I took this responsibility very seriously and found symbolic interactionism to be a helpful schema for reflexively managing my engagement and sensitively attending to participants' needs.

#### **3.4.4 Summary of Research Method**

In this section I have outlined my chosen research method of constructivist grounded theory (CGT) and highlighted its methodological roots and philosophical underpinnings. I have explained how CGT builds upon early conceptions of grounded theory by recognizing theory as developed co-constructions rather than inherent discoverable truths. I have also articulated the predominant theoretical tools of CGT's "theory/methods package" (Clarke, 2006), explicating the sensitizing concepts from symbolic interactionism that help grounded theorists attune to the use of symbols in interview environments. Through this section I have provided an overview of the overall constructivist grounded theory method which I have rigorously followed in this research; I turn now to discussion of the specific techniques that I have used to do so.

#### **3.5 Research Techniques Used in this Research**

As noted above, "techniques" are what Strang (2015) terms the specific steps used to carry out a formal research method; the term "techniques" he sees as synonymous with

that of “procedures” (p. 65). In this section I use both of these terms interchangeably for all steps involved in conducting this research.

Constructivist grounded theory takes an open approach to the procedures it recommends. It loosens what Charmaz (2014) terms the prescriptive “rules, recipes, and requirements” of more objectivist grounded-theory approaches (p. 16), instead providing “flexible” guidelines that allow researchers to intuitively gain deep familiarity with data and construct theory (Charmaz, 2017c, p. 299; Kenny & Fourie, 2014). Fortunately, these guidelines are well delineated, with Charmaz (2014), Bryant (2017), Bryant and Charmaz (2007) and others offering clear direction for pursuing constructivist grounded theory research. In this section I outline the techniques that I have followed at each stage in this process and summarize briefly the outcomes of each.

### **3.5.1 Planning the Project’s Scope and Focus**

Having selected CGT as a method and interviews as a core technique, I reviewed CGT and IBC literature to determine the appropriate size, scope and characteristics of my research population. Geographically I decided to focus on IBCs located in Asia, where many of the world’s IBCs are concentrated (CBERT, 2019). Specifically I targeted higher-education hubs that host a number of branch campuses, including Singapore, Malaysia, and Hong Kong, since basing my study in these countries would help enhance the anonymity of my sites and participants (Knight, 2014). Basing my research in Asia was also helpful given my familiarity with the region: as a resident of Vietnam at the time, I believed that my schemata for regional terms, locales and practices would help me to successfully engage IBC lecturers in dialogue and recognize opportunities to probe for salient details.

In choosing the number of interviews to target, I reviewed CGT and wider qualitative research guides for recommendations. The prevailing answer to the “how many interviews” question is “it depends” (Charmaz, 2014; Baker & Edwards, 2012). Qualitative data collection is quite different from that of quantitative approaches. The positivist focus on selecting representative data samples to produce generalizable findings is not relevant for the qualitative researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Instead, qualitative researchers focus on the “credibility” and “dependability” of findings,

understanding that what we discover will be contextually bound (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 57). The number of interviews necessary to achieve research credibility and dependability varies based on the field and the goals of the study (Charmaz, 2014, p. 106).

In constructivist grounded theory, it is imperative to generate enough data to create fully-developed (“saturated”) renderings of theoretical categories—something that can be achieved with different amounts of data depending on the particular project (Charmaz, 2014, p. 106). Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) hold that 12 interviews can be sufficient; others suggest that 20-40 may be necessary for full saturation (Hagaman & Wutich, 2016). CGT PhD theses I have reviewed range from 15-45 participants, so I chose 25-50 as an ambitious initial target. I also decided to aim to collect data at three to five international branch campuses, feeling that collecting data across a range of contextual situations would provide me with a broader understanding of the IBC context and perhaps heighten the potential “transferability”—though not the “generalizability”—of findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 57).

The identity focus I established for these interviews developed from a professional challenge I had faced as a manager at my IBC. As discussed in Chapter 1, throughout my IBC leadership roles I had led efforts to engage lecturers in improving the academic student experience, striving to help them understand their influential power as “brand ambassadors” (Sujchaphong, Foster & Trank, 2015) of the university to students (Hughes, 2011). Some lecturers responded enthusiastically to my efforts; others strongly resisted. The question of how IBC lecturers identify within their organizations became an academic pursuit. When my initial literature review confirmed the dearth of research on IBC lecturers’ identities—and IBC lecturers’ perspectives in general—I established a research goal of developing a grounded theory on IBC lecturer identity, a topic that I later developed within the theoretical framework of organizational identity.

### **3.5.2 Gaining Institutional Approvals**

To gain approval to conduct this research, I developed and submitted proposals for review by three bodies: my PhD committee at RMIT, which reviewed my full research proposal as part of my Confirmation of Candidature milestone meeting in



January 2018; RMIT's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC); and the RMIT Vietnam Research Ethics Committee (VREC). These proposals outlined details of my planned research procedures and included a sample Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, a sample Interview Guide, and sample email text that I used to approach sites to request permission to collect research at their campuses. All three proposals were approved over the period of December 2017 through January 2018, with feedback provided used to refine these plans and documents. (See Appendix 1 for the letter of approval from RMIT's Human Research Ethics Committee and Appendices 2-5 for examples of documents used recruitment and data collection.)

### **3.5.3 Approaching Sites and Recruiting Participants**

To develop a sample population for data collection, I used a purposive sampling technique, which Strang (2015) notes is typical for constructivist research. I began by reviewing the list of IBCs maintained by the Cross-Border Education Research Team (CBERT, 2019) to identify potential sites of study. I focused on IBCs that had been in operation for at least five years, offered undergraduate degrees (often in addition to postgraduate offerings) and had at least 1,000 students. Doing this narrowed my focus to sites that were adequately representative of the IBC concept and would be likely to yield useful data.

This selection process resulted in 10 international branch campuses that I initially reached out to for possible inclusion in this research. I began contacting leaders at some of these campuses in October 2017, noting at the time that I was still seeking ethics approval, and approached more sites following approval and as the research progressed. Appendices 1 and 2 represent, respectively, an anonymized sample of the initial email text I sent to these leaders and a longer introduction letter from my primary supervisor which was included with select letters as needed.

Some IBC leaders did not respond to my email inquiries, and others rejected my request. Yet several were willing to participate. In total, I secured permission from four IBCs to conduct data collection on their campuses. All four of these sites happened to be Australian institutions, with parent-campus headquarters in that country. Two of these IBCs were based in Singapore, and two were based in Malaysia. Though initially I had

contacted IBCs outside of these two countries, I was pleased with this eventual site distribution, as both of these “education hubs” (Knight, 2011) have proactively recruited overseas higher-education providers (Kosmützky, 2018) and represent “maturing markets” for transnational higher education (Lim & Shah, 2017, p. 257). By focusing on this region I was able to limit contextual site differences as influences on participant orientations: though they vary in size and location, all IBCs included in this research are well-established Australian university satellites in regions in which TNHE is a familiar educational opportunity.

Recruitment of participants proceeded following site permissions and carefully adhered to ethical standards outlined by the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (2018). At each site, an IBC representative helped me to send an initial email to academic staff describing my research and inviting them to participate. I asked my IBC contacts to share this opportunity with all academic staff at their institutions who taught higher-education courses; IBC leaders with teaching responsibilities were included in this group. I provided sample text for my IBC contacts to use in their emails to staff, exemplified anonymously in Appendix 4. I also asked them to include in their email the customized site-specific Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form (PICF) for potential participants’ review; this is shown in anonymized form in Appendix 5. My contacts at these IBCs supported my efforts by approaching potential participants they thought may be interested and encouraging them to consider participating.

In total, I secured 36 volunteer participants through this purposive sampling technique. All were academic lecturers ranging in age from their 20’s to their 60’s. They taught in a variety of disciplinary areas, from the sciences to the humanities to business. 13 participants were based at Singapore IBCs; 23 were based at Malaysian IBCs. Remarkably, there were 18 male participants and 18 female participants. The data set also included participants with a range of years of experience at the IBC: nine participants had been at their IBCs for 0-2 years, eight for 3-5 years, ten for 6-8 years and nine for nine or more years. Those with more years of experience at the IBC tended to hail from the host country or region, while those with fewer years at the IBC tended to be from outside of Asia. For roughly half of participants the IBC was their first role in higher education;

others had worked previously primarily at local universities, and a few had experience working at other IBCs.

The distribution of nationalities in my final data set created an affordance for my resulting focus on locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives. 21 participants were citizens of the IBC-based host country, five were locally-hired third-country nationals from elsewhere in Asia, eight were locally-hired third-country nationals from countries outside of Asia, and just two were parent-country nationals hired by the home campus. Though in my initial days of data collection I was only thinking in terms of "local" and "expatriate" staff, the fact that my final research population skewed to locally-hired and predominantly regional staff proved helpful for using my research to address IBC literature presumptions about locally-hired staff's identity orientations—a topic that I became aware of as my research progressed.

A de-identified list of all research participants showing their basic demographic features is provided in Appendix 6. Note that the pseudonyms listed in Appendix 6 and used throughout this thesis correspond with participants' countries of origin: "H1, H2 and H3," for example, are lecturers hailing from the host country. "R1" is a lecturer from the host-country region of Asia, and "I1" is a lecturer from another international third country. "P1" is a lecturer from the parent-campus country. Also note that in this thesis I use the term "locally-hired" generally to refer to lecturers hired at the IBC directly rather than hired at the parent campus for employment at the IBC. The general category of locally-hired lecturers could ostensibly include lecturers from the parent-campus country who are perhaps living in the IBC as expatriates, though typically the term "locally hired" is used in IBC literature to mean staff from the host country or third countries—non-parent-campus-country faculty. This is the usage that I mean to invoke with the term "locally-hired" in this thesis.

#### **3.5.4 Collecting Interview Data**

Data collection for this research was conducted over a seven-month period from January to July 2018. I split this collection process into two main periods, visiting Sites 1 and 2 in late January and early February, and Sites 3 and 4 in late May and early July. Sites 1 and 4 were based in Singapore and Sites 2 and 3 were based in Malaysia. This

order of site visits allowed me to ensure regional coverage at both stages of the research, and the gaps between data collection periods gave me the opportunity to adjust my research questions in light of emerging phenomena.

I visited each site for three to five days and corresponded with participants separately to avoid inadvertently revealing their identities to colleagues at the same site. Staff at all sites supported my efforts and provided me with private space to conduct interviews and work between them, allowing me to maintain participants' privacy during interviews as well as begin analyzing the data in a secure environment.

Interviews were scheduled at times convenient to participants; generally these were planned for one hour, but some were longer or shorter depending on participants' needs and interests. In each interview, I began by asking whether the participant had read the Participant Information and Consent Form sent to them previously. I then reviewed a physical copy of this document with them, explaining the purpose of the research, the details of what participation involved, and the risks and benefits of participating. I explained that the interviews would be conducted in semi-structured format, like a conversation, and that they could redirect this conversation as they desired at any point. I also explained that I would be audio-recording the interviews for later transcription, with audio files secured for my records but not shared publicly. The full list of information I shared in this informed-consent process is shown in my script in the Interview Guide in Appendix 7. After reviewing this information with each participant, I gave them an opportunity to ask questions and then inquired as to their comfort and consent, the latter of which they confirmed by signing the PICF. I provided each participant with a physical copy of the full PICF for their records.

Most interviews ran for the scheduled hour, with the recorded data-generating portion encompassing 30 to 50 minutes. For each interview, I asked the questions in the Interview Guide, but at times adjusted their order and focus, and remained open throughout to opportunities to pursue interesting tangents. Following Charmaz's (2014) guidance, I kept my questions as open-ended as possible, inviting participants to tell me the stories of their experiences in academia and at their IBCs. As each interview progressed, I probed carefully but often deeply into questions of identity, constantly seeking to use the participants' own language and descriptions in this shared exploration

of their perspectives. I used copies of the interview questions to take notes and guide my focus, but following Charmaz's (2014) advice to prioritize audio recordings over notes for CGT data (p. 91), I focused my interview efforts on engaging with my participants and ensuring that the audio recordings captured the best information possible. The conversations that ensued were consistently illuminating and enjoyable—for myself and for many of the participants, who often remarked at the end of the interview that they had benefited from this reflection opportunity.

Each interview was audio-recorded using two to three devices: the Audacity program on my laptop, a small digital recorder, and at times for additional backup, a voice-recording program on my mobile phone. This process resulted in clear and usable data for the full data-generating portions of all but one of the interviews. Unfortunately, during one interview, both Audacity and my backup device failed mid-way through, losing several minutes of data. However, my notes for that interview were particularly detailed, and I was able to recapture much of the essence of what had been missed. My notes taken during all interviews were secured as confidential supplementary data, along with notes about background information shared from campus leaders. I also recorded observations from other aspects of my experiences at the campuses, such as signage that referenced the IBC's parent campus.

Following each interview I reviewed the audio data and prepared it for transcription. Since CGT sees interviewers' questions as impactful in the social construction of meaning, audio recordings were transcribed in full, recording participants' utterances as well as my own. Many of these recordings I transcribed myself; for others I enlisted the help of a transcription service, after confirming its strict non-disclosure policy and confirming participants' permission to use their data in this way. I reviewed and refined all transcripts to ensure adequate data capture. When I felt that the written data sufficiently represented that of the audio, I imported these transcripts into the software program NVivo for analysis. To maintain full awareness of the range of semiotic expressions participants used, I included in transcripts many of the extralinguistic pauses, fillers (e.g., "um") and false starts that occur in natural conversation, considering these as potentially meaningful during analysis. For reader clarity I have removed these additional notations in the extracts presented in this thesis.

### 3.5.5 Initial Coding

A hallmark of constructivist grounded theory is simultaneous data collection and analysis, with analysis taking place from the first moments of transcription (Charmaz, 2014). Following this dictum, I began transcribing and analyzing recordings of interviews the evening after my first day of data collection at Site 1. As audio recordings were transformed into de-identified transcripts, I uploaded these data into the qualitative research-analysis software program NVivo, which is commonly used for CGT and GTM studies (Bryant, 2017, p. 18). I then commenced the first official stage of constructivist grounded theory analysis: initial coding.

Charmaz (2014) describes initial coding (also called “open coding” (Urquhart, 2012) as a form of guided reflection, returning to the memories of each interview but doing so in an “interactive analytic space,” in which “fragments of data” are studied closely to glean insights about what they reveal (p. 109). With NVivo, codes are produced by highlighting a portion of text and labelling it with a code. In CGT, all codes emerge from the data themselves, perhaps inspired by “sensitizing concepts” but not dictated by these or any other extant concepts. For this research I adopted as sensitizing concepts symbolic interactionism’s “action, meaning, process, agency, situation, identity, and self,” (as cited in Charmaz, 2014, p. 117). Charmaz (2014) recommends that researchers follow an intuitive process for initial coding, remaining open to insights to be gleaned from the data and consistently ensuring that codes reflect the data and participants’ emic worlds. She recommends supplementing researcher-created codes with “in vivo” codes using participants’ own language where possible (Charmaz, 2014, p. 134)—a practice I also employed. As codes accrued, I engaged in “constant comparison” of data, the process of noticing similarities in topics, stances and other phenomena that helps a researcher trace patterns across a data set (Bryant, 2017, p. 92). and where possible I used the same codes to denote similar phenomena across cases.

I devoted considerable time to the initial-coding process, coding full transcripts and completing this process for the last set of data in August 2018. Following Charmaz’s (2014) recommendation, I consulted Saldaña’s (2016) qualitative coding guidebook, which provides additional advice on how to conduct this important stage with large amounts of data such as this. Saldaña (2016) recommends alternating between practices

of “lumping” (coding larger sections for general topical data) and “splitting” (coding smaller sections of data for detail) depending on the relevance and import of the text (p. 23). I adopted this practice in my analysis, coding salient and complex portions of data with the “splitting” approach—similar to Charmaz’s (2014) concept of “line by line” coding, in which participants’ moment-to-moment shifts are observed and recorded (p. 19). For less relevant data such as background information, I used Saldaña’s (2016) “lumping” method, sorting larger portions of this text to relevant folders. Several sections of text I coded twice, with both “lumping” and “splitting” approaches capturing different aspects of what I observed.

This comprehensive and intensive process produced 257 codes in total, all of which are listed in alphabetical order in Appendix 8. Some of these codes were only applied to a single instance of data, while others were used across multiple transcripts. At several stages during initial coding I examined my growing list of initial codes and grouped them based on topic, stance and action. This aided my ability to access this list while coding new data, and more importantly it contributed to my early theorizing about phenomena in the first set of data and eventual focused coding of the full data set.

### **3.5.6 Early Theorizing and Theoretical Sampling**

Formal theory development is typically done during the final stages of CGT research, but theorizing about phenomena in the data is helpful throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Bryant, 2017). A tool often employed in theorizing is “theoretical sampling,” which Charmaz (2014) describes as “going back into the empirical world” to collect new data to clarify properties of developing theories (p. 192). Typically theoretical sampling is done near the completion of a grounded-theory project, as a way of “saturating” categories that have emerged (Bryant, 2017, p. 251). However, in some grounded-theory research a type of theoretical sampling can be conducted within the data-collection period—particularly when time allows for analysis of early data to influence collection of later data (Urquhart, 2012).

Due to the affordances of time and data quality, I was able to follow this iterative approach. The scheduling of data collection into two periods separated by nearly four months required me to delay formal focused coding until all data had been collected and

initially coded. However, this delay also gave me an opportunity to explore in detail the 23 transcripts I had collected at Sites 1 and 2. Comparing data with data, writing memos and discussing my observations with my supervisors and colleagues, I identified salient phenomena within these initial data that led to development of initial theories and categories—ideas that I extended through a form of theoretical sampling in my data collection at Sites 3 and 4.

An example of this theoretical sampling is in my evolving conception of individual identity within IBC organizational contexts. At the outset of this research I was directly focusing on lecturers' behavioral intentions, asking for example how they felt about representing their universities. In my research at Sites 1 and 2 these questions yielded data in which participants detailed their experiences in activities such as IBC marketing events. In comparing these data across cases I noticed that participants repeatedly described boundaries they placed on their own behavior which seemed to be guided by loyalties beyond their institutional identities: a morally-imbued set of personal responsibilities that influenced how they carried out their work. I realized that participants were outlining for me a model of layered identity prioritization. The extract in Figure 3 below from an email to my supervisors captures my early theorizing about this topic:

**Figure 3: Extract from Email to Supervisors on May 11, 2018**

I've noticed that in interviews when we talk about participating in marketing activities (e.g., open days) many participants taking pains to justify (perhaps to me as an assumed fellow academic?) their reasons for participating and where they draw the line in terms of what they will and won't do in these encounters. One participant made a big deal about stressing that he does this only because he truly believes in the university's mission. Another emphasised that he's not a "snake oil salesman" and talked about subverting the process by recommending the home campus rather than the IBC when students seemed a better fit for this... These people are constructing for themselves an identity that does justice to their values (stemming perhaps from the group habitus of academia) while allowing them to fulfill their job responsibilities.

This extract showcases the theory I was beginning to develop at the time about what was influencing these lecturers' behaviors: the idea that they were constructing an occupational identity separate from their organization-related identity, with the former mediating their behavior as part of the latter. I also realized in my initial research that



participants seemed to enjoy talking about identity directly, finding it a helpful shorthand for describing their orientations. Thus, in the updated version of my interview guide for Sites 3 and 4, I included a new question that asked them directly about their professional identities, as seen in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4: Question Added to Interview Guide for Data Collection at Sites 3 and 4**

*When you think about your professional identity—your sense of yourself in your profession—do you feel like PU [Parent University] is part of that identity? And if so, do you identify more with PU local or PU global?*

PROBE FOR: professional identity, identification with PU, distinction between professional and institutional identity.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS:

- *... so is it academic first, then PU local, then PU global?*
- *Has your professional identity changed since you started this job?*

This new interview question for Sites 3 and 4 allowed me to glean further data that eventually helped me to saturate properties of the category “Prioritizing professional identity over institutional identity.”

Another example of mid-research theoretical adjustment was around the concept of “spoonfeeding,” a term that participants at Site 2 introduced to refer to the educational practice of oversimplifying course content and delivering it to students in overtly accessible ways, such as providing sample answers to exam questions. This phenomenon intrigued me in its demonstration of how course delivery could differ while materials were ostensibly globally aligned. I began to theorize that spoonfeeding related to how lecturers envisioned their IBCs: they were re-imagining their IBCs as aligned with this practice and setting related expectations with students. This marked the beginning of my thinking of IBC lecturers as co-constructing their IBCs. In data collection at Sites 3 and 4, I adopted IBC construction as an additional sensitizing topic, probing for related insights in various parts of the dialogue.

These examples of my early theorizing around professional identity and spoonfeeding demonstrate the ways in which insights gained in analysis of early data influenced my later data collection. The analytical period bisecting my two stages of data collection helped me to refine my thinking and my interview questions to maximize the

effectiveness of data collection at Sites 3 and 4. By the completion of these interviews, I had a substantial amount of usable data, with a good portion of this data already tailored to further illuminate emerging phenomena identified in mid-research analysis. Following initial coding of the full set of data, I began the next official stage of CGT research: focused coding.

### **3.5.7 Focused Coding**

Focused coding is an interim process in grounded theory in which the researcher strives to “sift, sort, synthesize and analyze” initially coded data, examining this with a more analytical lens to move toward theory development (Charmaz, 2014, p. 138). In this process, researchers review their corpus of initial codes and identify links between them, and look beyond the descriptive phrasings of their initial codes for analytic insights they may have missed. Initial codes already carrying analytic import may be upgraded to focused codes, and initial codes that connect to each other may be combined into single, more analytic codes. The purpose of this step, Charmaz (2014) stresses, is to aid the researcher in developing “theoretical sensitivity” to phenomena in the data, helping them see connections and processes spanning multiple initial codes (p. 161).

Charmaz (2014) notes that focused coding often proceeds rapidly, formalizing observations and theories developed during initial coding. This research followed a similar straightforward path. Following CGT principles I had strived for theoretical sensitivity from the beginning of this research, engaging in early theorizing and theoretical sampling. When initial coding for the full data set was complete, I returned to these ideas in examining the full list of 257 initial codes and their corresponding data. I also returned to my original research questions and foci of identification and representation, and connected these to emergent phenomena in the data. Through this analytic process I developed 27 focused codes, which are listed alphabetically in Appendix 9.

To ensure that these codes captured all relevant data, I re-coded text from salient initial codes and then went back to the original transcript data to code previously uncaptured data that fit the new focused codes. I also performed the additional step of mapping focused codes against the data to enhance my understanding of the presence of

these phenomena across the data; doing so illustrated that most of the focused codes I developed have substantial coverage across the data. Though as Charmaz (2014) notes, the frequency of a phenomenon does not determine its salience, I found it helpful to obtain this overall view of focused code prominence to guide the next stage of this research: theoretical category development.

### **3.5.8 Developing Initial Theoretical Categories**

Following focused coding I moved further into theoretical analysis and began developing tentative categories: the “conceptual element[s]” of a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 37). In CGT the process of category development is intuitive and emergent (Charmaz, 2014). Although earlier objectivist versions of GTM prescribe additional techniques at this stage such as axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and the use of theoretical coding families (Glaser, 1978), Charmaz (2014) cautions that application of these steps can compromise the emergent nature of theory development (p. 149). She suggests a more organic approach: using memo-writing to “take ideas to a more abstract analytical level,” (p. 190) and engaging in the inferential process of *abduction* (p. 205)—a “creative inferential process” in which researchers consider a variety of explanations for phenomena they observe in the data (Timmermans & Tavory, 2015, p. 167).

By November 2018, through an iterative process of data analysis, abduction and memo writing I had developed five tentative and interrelated categories to describe phenomena that I had observed in the data. I phrased all of these categories as actions, following Charmaz (2014), with the actor of IBC lecturers implied in each. These initial tentative categories are listed on page 87 in Figure 5, along with a brief summary of the findings of each.

In November 2018 I presented an update on my research progress to my PhD review panel as part of my second milestone meeting. My panel members were generally pleased but advised that I needed to do more theoretical work to clarify how the findings I had produced addressed the management challenges that I had set out to pursue. I needed more robust and actionable contributions: not merely painting a picture of IBC lecturer identity, but rather targeting insights to knowledge gaps in the field and outlining

implications for IBC leaders. This feedback sparked a paradigm shift for me, emboldening me to advance beyond the cataloguing mentality that I had brought to data analysis and confidently proceed as a theorist. This orientation served me well in the next stage of my research: returning to the literature to reconsider my findings in light of existing knowledge in the field.

**Figure 5: Initial Theoretical Categories Identified in November 2018**

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Prioritizing a professional identity	IBC lecturers prioritize their professional (occupational) identities over their institutional identities, equating their professional identities with their “soul” core selves and their institutional identities with removable “clothes.” IBC lecturers’ professional identity allegiances influence their institutional behaviors, particularly in regards to how they represent their IBCs to stakeholders.
Seeing IBC teaching as uniquely challenging	IBC lecturers see their roles as more challenging than their parent-campus peers, due to the IBC’s minimal comparative resources and market pressures to maintain enrollments. The student expectations established by the IBC’s private status are also experienced as burdensome.
Desiring more from parent campus relationships	IBC lecturers struggle in their relationships with parent-campus course coordinators, often experiencing them as either overbearing (Micromanaging Mums) or disinterested (Distant Dads). IBC lecturers appreciate and seek and collegial support from their colleagues, preferring that they behave not as parental figures but as Sympathetic Siblings.
Co-constructing the IBC’s global alignment or autonomy	There is disagreement between IBC staff about how to construct their IBC’s identity in relation to the global institution. Australian-university connections are seen as an important market differentiator, but operational autonomy is sought by some.
Selectively selling the university	IBC lecturers understand the unique market focus of their institutions and are generally willing to support marketing and engagement activities, but they do so in ways that correspond to their individual identity allegiances.

### **3.5.9 Integrating Literature and Establishing the Theoretical Framework**

Literature review in grounded theory research is typically conducted in two stages: in the early stages of a project as part of securing approvals and support to proceed, and more comprehensively after the data is collected and analyzed, augmenting findings with insights from other literature (Bryant, 2017, p. 29). While unusual compared to the more linear quantitative approach, grounded theory's restriction of the full literature review to later stages is crucial to the method, helping researchers maintain the "theoretical agnosticism" to analyze data with an open mind and avoid forcing it to fit with a particular theory (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003). I followed this approach throughout my data collection and analysis, reflecting at times about what I knew about the IBC context and identity formation, but grounding my analysis firmly in the data itself, avoiding importing of extant theories. By November 2018, I was ready to return to the literature.

Following my second milestone meeting I embarked on a period of comprehensive literature review. I refreshed my knowledge of core texts that I had studied previously, examined in detail new IBC texts that had been produced during my initial research process, and explored relevant texts from the adjacent area of multinational enterprise literature. Realizing that I was speaking obliquely about organizational identity without engaging with its literature directly, I also read multiple primers and articles in this area: an enriching process that led me to employ the theoretical framework of organizational identity construction in my thesis.

Organizational identity research is a subset of the organizational behavior discipline that focuses on how institutional insiders such as employees self-define "who we are, as an organization" (Albert & Whetten, 1985). While much organizational identity research explores the identity-shaping efforts of institutional leaders, an emerging vein explores organizational members' negotiated co-construction of organizational identities (Pratt, et al., 2018). This vein of organizational identity research resonated with my observations of IBC lecturers' organizational co-constructions, and in becoming familiar with the organizational identity literature I began to realize that its concepts provided an explanatory schema for translating the findings that I had developed

in my research to a useful and actionable contribution to the IBC field. Using identity construction as a framework, I examined data from my interviews with IBC leaders about their concerns regarding lecturers' orientations, and saw that organizational identity construction and its impact on individual identity were practical concerns for these leaders: they worried that challenges to collegiality and engagement were constraining IBC lecturers' relationships with parent-campus staff and sense of connection to the global university, and some suspected that these interactional challenges impeded IBC lecturers from confidently representing their global universities to stakeholders.

The practical organizational identity concerns of IBC leaders I interviewed aligned with gaps in IBC literature that I discovered during this intensive review process. During my data collection and analysis period, several papers had been published that raise questions about locally-hired IBC lecturers' institutional loyalty (e.g., Healey, 2018) and global integration (e.g. Wood & Salt, 2018) —literature that I discuss in Chapter 2. In reviewing this recent work I noted focal similarities with the aims of my research: these authors as well as I were speaking to the challenges of effectively managing staff in IBC settings. However, the presumptions in some of this literature that the nationality of IBC lecturers determined their loyalty or representational ability ran counter to my own experience as an IBC manager, and it oversimplified phenomena that I had observed in my research to date. I realized my emerging findings from the alternative standpoint of identity as multiple and constructed offered a more nuanced examination of the identity orientations of actual IBC lecturers.

In short, by focusing on individual and organizational identity constructions of IBC lecturers, I was able to address literature assumptions about IBC lecturers' perceived disability to represent their global universities, as well as IBC leaders' practical concerns about how IBC lecturers were orienting to their roles and relationships within these institutions. A grounded theory on IBC lecturers' identity constructions offered the potential to make a nuanced contribution to literature on how IBC lecturers actually identify, challenging essentialist assumptions in current literature, offering insights into the mechanisms informing these identifications and the outcomes arising from them, and elucidating steps that university leaders could take to intervene and support more preferable lecturer identity orientations.

### 3.5.10 Developing the Grounded Theories

In early 2019, as I clarified the theoretical and practical issues that my research addressed and the theoretical framework that could translate my categories to actionable theories, a vision for synthesizing theories began to emerge. I began to see a connection between the individually-focused categories of “Prioritizing a Professional Identity” and “Selectively Selling the IBC,” seeing the first phenomenon as leading to the second. I also realized that identity layering included IBC and global-university distinctions—yielding insights about lecturers’ individual integration to their universities at these levels. On the topic of campus identity construction, category links were also clear: “Seeing IBC teaching as uniquely challenging” I realized was an act of organizational identity construction—framing the IBC as different from the parent campus and thus possibly setting the stage for self-othering behavior. This observation suggested that the organizational disalignment I had noted in “Co-constructing the IBC’s global alignment or autonomy” was a processual outcome of this disadvantaged campus identity construction.

Connected to both individual and campus identity construction was IBC lecturers’ relationships with their parent-campus course coordinators—what I had framed as “Desiring more from parent campus relationships.” Through the lens of identity construction it became clear that the coordinator archetypes I had observed had significant impact on lecturers’ global experiences, influencing their construction of their individual and campus identities. I realized that the archetypes of IBC lecturers’ current constructions of these coordinating relationships revealed insights not just for improving these relationships, but for setting the stage for more effective organizational integration of IBC lecturers and campuses.

My final major step in theory development was to develop a unified theory of both individual and organizational identity construction in IBC settings, heeding calls by Urquhart (2012) and Charmaz (2014) for a comprehensive overarching grounded theory in GTM and CGT research. Thinking of these findings collectively, I reflected on a participant’s equation of his occupational-identity prioritization to sports free agency and saw parallels in how IBC lecturers and sports free agents orient to their institutional roles. Like free agents, IBC lecturers are occupational members willing to lend their talents to

different teams. When they serve on a particular team they support it—essentially wearing that team’s jersey—but they treat that jersey as separate from their core selves as ballplayers; this, I thought, exemplified well the phenomenon of IBC lecturers eschewing brand representation with their students. They essentially leave their jerseys at the classroom door, treating the global brand ethos as superficial marketing garb.

This sports analogy also translates well to the disadvantaged campus identity construction: sports team members may at times feel that their team is not adequately supported by its league and is faced with contextual demands that position it as an “underdog.” They may construct an underdog identity for the team that differs from the management vision, reifying this identity through their actions. Connected to these phenomena is IBC lecturers’ constructions of their parent-campus coordinators, who in the sports analogy could be seen as headquarters “coaches” with different, often problematic styles. On these multiple identity levels, these sports analogies resonated, leading me to summarize my overarching grounded theory of IBC lecturers identity constructions as “Free agents playing for underdog teams.”

I develop these theories of IBC lecturers’ constructions of their parent-campus coordinators in Chapter 4, their individual identities in Chapter 5, and their IBC organizational identities in Chapter 6.

### **3.5.11 Writing the Thesis Chapters**

In early 2019 I used my research memos to develop theories which articulate my findings and their implications. I wrote a new comprehensive thesis introduction and background chapters, an updated research methods chapter, and several findings chapters elucidating my theories of IBC lecturers’ individual and organizational identity constructions, and their contributions and implications. Following revision cycles of feedback from my supervisors and implementation of their suggestions, I produced an initial draft of the core thesis chapters in June 2019 for submission to my PhD panel as part of the third milestone.

The panel was pleased with the evolution of this work and confirmed completion of my candidature; they also provided helpful suggestions for opportunities to enhance the document further, particularly in re-ordering the thesis chapters to highlight the role



of parent-campus course coordinators in IBC lecturers' individual- and campus-identity construction. Following implementation of these suggestions, completion of the remaining chapters and careful review by my supervisors, I produced this final version of the thesis for submission to examiners in August 2019.

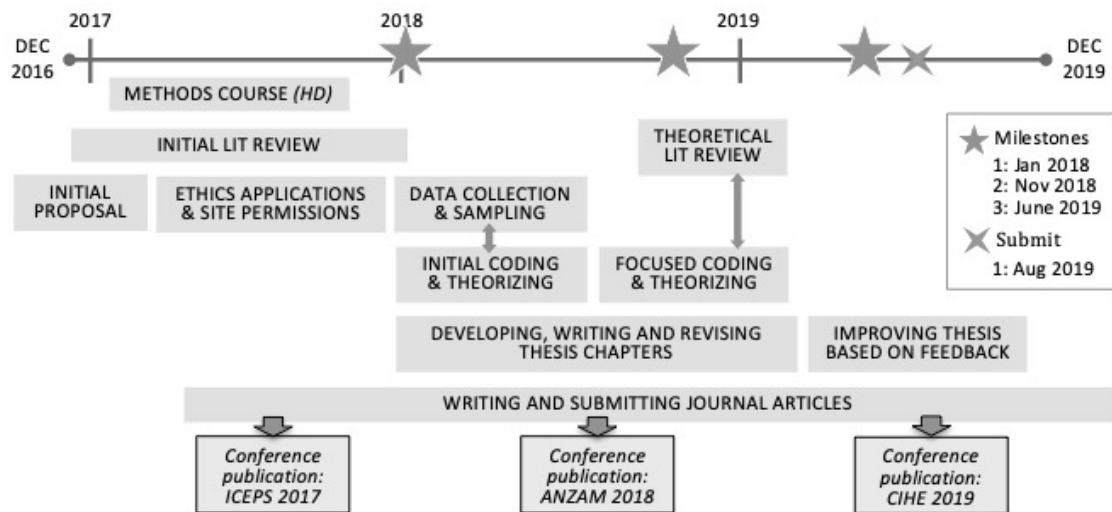
During early 2019 I also began developing drafts for research papers to add to the published work already produced from this thesis in 2017 and 2018. In August 2017 I delivered a conference paper at the International Conference on Education, Psychology and Social Sciences in Bangkok entitled "Cultural representatives: Staff identity at international branch campuses." In December 2018, my supervisor Dr. Sarah Gumbley delivered on our team's behalf another conference paper at the Australia New Zealand Academy of Management Conference in Auckland; this paper was entitled "'You need to sell the university': International-branch campus lecturers' orientations toward supporting marketing activities." In June 2019 I presented a third paper from this research at Boston College's Center for International Higher Education Summer Institute: "Locally-hired IBC lecturers as global university representatives: Assumptions, challenges and solutions." All of these papers have been met with enthusiastic support from conference attendees and readers.

### **3.5.12 Summary of Research Process**

The research process that has led to my development of these grounded theories has spanned nearly three years. This journey began in late 2016 fueled by my professional interest in better understanding the IBC lecturer population I was charged with engaging. In 2017 I immersed myself in IBC literature and pursued plans and permissions for grounded-theory research exploring IBC lecturers' perspectives, gaining Confirmation of Candidature status at my first milestone meeting in January 2018. In 2018 I conducted data-collection and analysis, iteratively tracing phenomena and patterns from initial codes to focused codes to theoretical categories, all of which I presented to my review panel at my second milestone in November 2018. In 2019 I synthesized my findings within the theoretical paradigm of individual and organizational identity construction, targeting them to meet the need for empirical research addressing IBC literature assumptions about locally-hired IBC lecturers' representational abilities as well

as the practical concerns shared with me by participating IBC leaders about their lecturer’s workplace relationships and identities. Following theory development I wrote my findings and supplemental thesis chapters, producing an initial draft that I presented to my review panel in June 2019 and revised for examination in August 2019. Figure 6 below charts my full research journey.

**Figure 6: My Research Journey: From Inception to Culmination**



## CHAPTER 4

### RELATING TO HEADQUARTERS COACHES: CONSTRUCTING CROSS-CAMPUS COORDINATION RELATIONSHIPS

#### **Chapter Summary**

Identity construction is a social process, drawing on interactions with others. For IBC lecturers constructing identities for themselves and their campuses as part of their global universities, parent-campus course coordinators are a key influence on these constructions. Positioned like headquarters “coaches” for remote IBC teams, parent-campus coordinators oversee course delivery and ensure the global mirroring of educational experiences. In doing so these coordinators form IBC lecturers’ primary link to their global institutions. Parent-campus course coordinators play a critical role in helping to shape the global integration of IBC lecturers’ individual and campus identities.

In this chapter I present locally-hired IBC lecturers’ collective perceptions of the parent-campus course coordinators they work with. I illustrate the widespread consensus that these coordinators en masse behave disrespectfully toward IBC colleagues, noting that positive coordination relationships are discursively packaged by participants as “lucky” exceptions to this assumed rule. I detail the forms in which perceived IBC disrespect is manifest by parent-campus course coordinators: the archetypes of “Distant Dads” who abandon IBC colleagues and “Micromanaging Mums” who dominate them. I then outline a third archetype, “Sympathetic Siblings,” who engage with IBC lecturers respectfully as supportive colleagues. I argue that Sympathetic Siblings should serve as a model for cross-campus coordination—a point I build upon in later chapters on IBC lecturers’ individual and campus identities.

#### **4.1 Introduction to IBC Lecturers’ Constructions of Parent-Campus Coordination Relationships**

In this section I briefly reiterate the aims and key concepts that have guided my research on IBC lecturers’ constructions of the parent-campus course coordinator function, as well as overview key findings and theories discussed in this chapter.

#### 4.1.1 Research Questions and Aims

In this thesis I utilize constructivist grounded theory research to explore the organizational integration orientations of lecturers working at Southeast Asia-based international branch campuses. My overall aim is to answer the following questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In Chapters 5 and 6 I explore IBC lecturers' constructed individual and campus identities. In this foundational chapter I focus more on the second question, examining the relationships that IBC lecturers have with their colleagues at the parent campus. IBC lecturers who participated in this research widely reported working with a parent-campus course coordinator who oversaw course delivery and assessments at the remote location. In this chapter I examine IBC lecturers' perceptions of these parent-campus coordinators, showcasing phenomena in my data about how IBC lecturers construct these coordinators as an organizational collective. As I discuss, IBC lecturers' cross-campus relationships emerged as a powerful force contributing to IBC lecturers' constructions of their individual and campus identities, particularly as regards these identities' organizational integration.

Previous IBC literature has established that cross-campus coordination relationships in these contexts can be problematic (Dobos, 2011; Edwards, Crosling & Lim, 2014). Edwards et al., (2014), for example, note that IBC lecturers can perceive parent-campus coordination as inappropriately controlling, desiring greater autonomy for lecturers working within these settings. IBC leaders I spoke with confirmed that lecturers at their sites have experienced difficulties in their relationships with parent-campus coordinators. Leaders stressed the importance of ensuring that IBC staff complied with parent-campus instruction, but also noted the logistical challenges impeding cross-campus relationship-building and the perceptions that these relationships were less

collegial than desired. A major concern was that an “us and them” mentality was prevalent in these cross-campus relationships, perpetuated by both local and global approaches to coordination.

My aim in this chapter is to elucidate IBC lecturers’ perceptions of these parent-campus coordination relationships, understanding specifically what IBC lecturers desire from these coordination relationships and what they see as lacking. This information sets the stage for the identity-construction discussions in Chapters 5 and 6, and in itself provides insights that can aid university leaders in addressing these challenges more productively. My goal is to develop comprehensive understanding of how locally-hired lecturers view their cross-campus coordination relationships, and how challenges in these relationships impact on global service delivery. I also strive to identify ways that these relationships could be made more collegial and productive in the future.

#### **4.1.2 Foundational Concepts**

In 2.4.3 I overview the identity concepts relevant to my exploration of IBC lecturers’ constructions of parent-campus coordinators as a collective. In summary, in this chapter I explore IBC lecturers’ “collective external definitions” of their parent-campus coordinators en masse (Jenkins, 2014, p. 106). My aim is not to present a comprehensive view of parent-campus coordinators’ identities; my emic lens remains focused on locally-hired IBC lecturers, capturing *their* perceptions of parent-campus coordinators and their relationships and experiences working with them. As Jenkins (2014) notes, the targets of collective external definitions need not be aware of these definitions for them to be valid. The constructions I present here are one-sided perceptions of IBC lecturers about these coordinators. They are also generalized views, defining the ways the *collective* of parent-campus coordinators is constructed, with individuals used as examples of that collective but sometimes cited as exceptions as well. The generalized constructions of parent-campus coordinators by IBC lecturers are my focus over the nuances of any one particular relationship.

A central presumption of this thesis is that parent-campus coordinators serve as a conduit linking IBC staff to parent-campus operations, overseeing course delivery at the IBC to ensure that it aligns with global standards. From an organizational-identity

perspective these coordinators could therefore be seen as “identity custodians”: individuals positioned within an organization to propagate a view of what the organization is, speaking for the organization or its leadership to build alignment around organizational identity understandings (Schinoff, Rogers & Corley 2018, p. 220). In this chapter I draw upon the concept of identity custodians to highlight the institutional positioning of parent-campus coordinators as well as the ways that their constructed actions facilitate and impede IBC integration to the wider organization. I argue that viewing parent-campus coordinators as identity custodians highlights the need for better training and resource support for these individuals to help them carry out this critical cross-campus engagement.

#### **4.1.3 Overview of Parent-Campus Coordinator Construction Data**

In this research data, parent-campus course coordinators are constructed by IBC lecturers as a nested identity within their organizations: a university subunit that represents the parent-campus and global-university perspective, embodying parent-campus power. The tendency of IBC lecturers to view parent-campus coordinators as a collective powerful entity is evident in the shorthand they use to describe these colleagues, referring to the campus location as a cover term for individuals there. For example, participants might say “AusCity says X,” instead of naming the particular person at AusCity who communicated a message. Through these and other practices, IBC lecturers demonstrated a generalized view of parent-campus coordination as a powerful collective, responsible for administering parent-campus standards at the IBC from afar. Carrying forward the sports metaphors introduced previously, we could consider parent-campus coordinators as headquarters “coaches” charged with training and supporting IBC staff to operate in line with the global-university identity.

Successfully executing a coaching role requires positive and supportive relationships with one’s team. Participants in my research appeared to desire these types of positive relationships with parent-campus colleagues. However, they tended to generalize parent-campus coordination of IBCs as problematic, with individual positive relationships framed as exceptions to the rule. As I asked participants to expand on their thoughts about their course coordinators’ engagement practices, a framing that emerged

was of a dichotomy between hands-on and hands-off coordinator styles. Drawing from the parental language introduced by many participants to discuss these relationships, I developed these styles as that of parent-campus “Distant Dads” and “Micromanaging Mums.” An extract from my participant H13 exemplifies these two archetypes:

H13: Female unit coordinators... tend to be more nurturing. The good side is they provide you a lot of support. Sometimes when there is something [like] the unit is revamped, they give you a lot of detailed instruction. You quickly pick up, "This is what you want." But the con... is they micromanage you. "I tell you like this," so "Do I need to follow like this?" They expect yes. But for the men it's like, "I don't really bother to explain." So you're actually like, you're surviving, trying to survive the whole semester. But the good side is they will not interfere your decision at the end. So pros and cons.

INT: So men are... So, really—so based on like that with gender? Men are less likely to interfere?

H13: That's the good side about men. But they are more, "I'm taking care of my part, yeah, you take care of your part." The woman is like, "I will teach you, I will help you, I will coach you." But at the end it's the end result, they will also interfere. Pros and cons. At first you love them. "The best mum." But when it comes to the end result, oh they interfere [with] marking. The men is like, "Anything, okay." Father is good. So it would be good to have a combination but you can't, nothing's perfect.

H13's framing of some parent-campus coordinators as overly hands-off and some as overly hand-on resonates with how participants across my data described these two engagement styles. One central type of coordinator IBC lecturers describe working with what I call a “Distant Dad”: someone who is remote and disengaged, who “do[es]n't really bother to explain” things but also doesn't “interfere” with IBC lecturers' decisions. A contrast to Distant Dads is what drawing on H13's phrasing I call a “Micromanaging Mum”: a coordinator who provides “a lot of detailed instruction” but dictates course delivery and interferes with assessments. While H13 couches these framings strictly in a gendered binary, based on my full data set I see these “Dad” and “Mum” orientations not as necessarily gender-specific; thus, I preserve H13's emic gendered framing with the caveat that these parental types could be inhabited by parent-campus coordinators of any gender.

The last line of the extract above expresses an important point about these archetypal framings of parent-campus coordinators. “Distant Dads” and “Micromanaging

Mums” both exhibit extreme behavior; a marriage of styles would be preferred but is seen as impossible. As H13 said, “it would be good to have a combination but you can’t.” Thus, these two differing parent-campus coordinator styles are both framed as problematic when exclusively deployed.

In this chapter I present the ways that IBC lecturers construct identities for the subunit of parent-campus coordinators. In 4.2 I note the ways that these parent-campus course coordinators are constructed as generally disrespectful with individual positive exceptions, leading to my outline of the coordinator identity archetypes that these IBC lecturers construct. In 4.3 I move to discussion of how IBC lecturers respond to their perceived disrespect by parent-campus coordinators, with these phenomena spurring some toward pursuit of a renegotiated cross-campus relationship—a “Sympathetic Sibling” archetype to replace parental ones—while pushing others to disengage from the parent campus. I conclude in 4.4 by noting contributions of these findings to IBC management literature and implications for IBC management, advocating for global universities to pursue “Sympathetic Siblings” as an archetypal standard for parent-campus course coordinator engagement.

## **4.2 Constructing Parent-Campus Disrespect for the IBC**

In this section I showcase the ways that IBC lecturers construct parent-campus coordinators as generally disrespectful toward the IBC. I begin in 4.2.1 by presenting participants’ framing of positive coordination experiences as exceptions to the rule, and then articulate in 4.2.2 and 4.2.3, respectively, the “Distant Dad” and “Micromanaging Mum” archetypes that participants in this research construct to describe their parent-campus coordinators. I conclude with a summary of these constructions in 4.2.4.

### **4.2.1 “I Was Very Lucky”: Framing Parent-Campus Coordination as Generally Problematic**

An important finding of this research is that IBC lecturers often described their individual relationships with parent-campus colleagues as positive while constructing the overall parent-campus coordination relationship as problematic. A lecturer’s individual



experience with a parent-campus coordinator could be productive in a given semester, but the fact that this could easily change was a point of concern. As I2 said,

The thing I guess I find about cross-campus working is it is so dependent on the individual relationship with your counterpart in the other country (I2).

When participants described positive experiences working with parent-campus staff, they tended to frame these relationships as exceptions to normal expectations, often using the word “luck” to differentiate these particular experiences as unique. The following extracts exemplify this phenomenon:

I'm relatively lucky perhaps compared to some of my other colleagues, given that the reception I have and contact I have with colleagues in the [College] in AusInt Australia is very positive (I5).

I was very lucky that all the coordinators—or most of the coordinators that I work with—they are very supportive... I find at least for me in my experiences that my coordinator is always very good. They don't challenge—instead they help (R5).

I've had it quite easy with my AusCity counterparts, so far. It's great, to be honest, because I've heard a number of stories from my colleagues in how they've probably had it a little bit more difficult from their end (H8).

They're very much open and they give us freedom... For us, it's like this but there are certain other schools... there's lots of issues. They don't get that full freedom I would say. There are issues in other departments, other disciplines. For me it's fine (R1).

Several participants in this research frame their individual parent-campus coordinator relationships as positive, positioning this positivity as unusual. I5 says that he is “relatively lucky” for his “very positive” parent-campus reception, R5 considers herself “very lucky” that “most” of her coordinators are supportive. H8 and R1 voice similar sentiments, in their cases describing awareness that other IBC colleagues are not so lucky. H8, for example, says that he has heard “a number of stories” from colleagues facing difficulties in coordination experiences. Likewise, R1 acknowledges that though she is allotted “freedom” by her IBC coordinator whereas in other schools “there’s lots of issues.” Across these extracts the discourse of exception is apparent: These lecturers position their individual positive experiences as fortunate exceptions to a rule—oases of positivity in an otherwise unhealthy atmosphere.

This very brief overview of IBC lecturers' descriptions of positive individual cross-campus relationships demonstrates several important points about how participants construct their headquarters "coaches" in these data. Most importantly, it showcases that not all relationships between these groups are seen as negative: several positive cross-campus relationships exist. However, the way these positive relationships are described treats them as rare and somewhat unusual, demonstrating that even when participants characterize their own relationships and experiences with parent-campus coordinators as positive, they echo the overall IBC narrative of the parent-campus coordination structure being fraught with problems. It is these generalized problems—these patterns of perception—that interest me most in this research, given their relevance to IBC global integration. I turn now to an overview of the archetypes that IBC lecturers generalize as evident in parent-campus coaching behavior: the perceived disrespect of Distant Dads and Micromanaging Mums.

#### **4.2.2 “You Forget We Exist”: Perceiving Disinterest from Parent-Campus Distant Dads**

“Distant Dads” is a parent-campus archetype constructed by IBC lecturers to describe coordinators who are excessively hands-off and unhelpful. To some extent, a hands-off course-coordination style is appreciated by IBC lecturers, who value the opportunity to localize course materials and make independent decisions, as noted in the extracts below:

Usually we get the teaching package from the main campus... If we are teaching Business there could be some cases. But we will have some freedom of changing all of those (R5).

They permit you [to] make things better... [There is] scope for making improvements (R1).

In these extracts above, R5 notes the “freedom” she and her colleagues have to change course materials to make them more helpful for local learners. R1 makes a similar point, saying that parent-campus colleagues “permit” improvements she and her colleagues seek to make. Both extracts frame these improvement opportunities as bestowed by IBC leadership and appreciated by IBC lecturers.

While IBC lecturers value the agency to make independent decisions about their courses, the independence allotted them by parent-campus course coordinators is often

seen as a side effect of parent-campus coordinators' hands-off approach, deriving not from these coordinators' conscious efforts to provide autonomy but rather from their disinterest in IBC operations. Yet despite views in some IBC literature that autonomy is widely desired by IBC lecturers (e.g., Edwards et al., 2014), participants in this research struggled when parent-campus coordination was excessively hands-off and lacking direction. The following extract from I2 expresses this view:

The person that had subject coordinated previously for this subject and then I took over was actually a very hands-off type of person. So it didn't kind of make so much difference and actually they weren't gonna kick up a fuss about changes that I made. They were kind of like "Go for it," basically... [However] you kind of want someone who seems to care a little bit more at the same time (I2).

I2's depiction of her "hands-off" course coordinator sums up well the combination of freedom and frustration that IBC lecturers associate with the "Distant Dad" archetype. I2 appreciated that the coordinator didn't "kick up a fuss" about her course changes, but also desired a coordinator who "seems to care a bit more" about instruction at the IBC. I2's framing of Distant Dads as exhibiting a lack of care is central to the negative framing of this archetype.

The theme of parent-campus coordinators not caring about IBC operations was elaborated by many participants. I1 articulated particularly negative experiences in working with Distant Dads at the parent campus:

Subject materials come. We email them, no response. They head off at Christmastime for two months and they're like, "Well, we're closed." They do things like shut down our virtual learning environment. They'll do reboots across Christmas break. We're in the middle of exam time and they'll shut down the whole system so students can't upload anything. You can't access the library. That happens every year. And they go "Oh, we forgot." We're like "Yeah, you forget we exist" (I1).

The oversight style that I1 describes in this extract exemplifies the idea of parent-campus remoteness and disinterest. She describes reaching out to course coordinators to discuss course materials that they provide and not receiving responses to her emails. Parent-campus colleagues are in her view unsupportive in addressing the logistical challenges posed by the different semester calendars across campuses. They "head off at

Christmastime,” leaving IBC lecturers to solve problems independently, and failing to advocate for the needs of IBC students with university functions such as the library. This general impression I1 sums up with her criticism of parent-campus colleagues, that “yeah, you forget we exist.”

The frustrations that I1 describes in this extract are echoed by IBC lecturers across campuses. The extracts below showcase further lecturer construction of parent-campus course coordinators as disengaged Distant Dads:

Sometimes [IBC staff] don't get response and they are waiting what happened... Actually, the [parent-campus] counterparts actually went on holiday (H11).

There's a bit of delay in everything... We have to keep following it up... "Can you get back to us, can you get back to us." That kind of thing (R1).

There have been a number of cases where I've worked with people that are less than... You get the sense that they were not interested, because this is just a problem for them, I guess. So a lot of times they don't reply emails, or reply very late. They give very obscure replies to the emails, and I don't know what to do with it, things like that... The worst ones are, of course, the ones that don't even get the marks back to you. It's Christmas... They're on holiday. And then you get a last-minute, one-line reply that says, "I agree with your marks"... Stuff like that, you know?... They'll say things like, "Hey, you're the one teaching over there. You figure this out" (H14).

Across these extracts, parent-campus staff are constructed as difficult to access. H11, like I1, describes non-responsive coordinators who turn out to have gone on holiday without informing their IBC colleagues. R1 describes her efforts to follow up with parent-campus staff and beseech them to engage. H14 echoes these challenges in greater detail, articulating the difficulties posed for IBC lecturers when they receive from parent-campus coordinators “obscure replies,” late responses, or hastily-written authorizations that undercut the considered effort of IBC lecturers to collaborate. H14’s exemplary quote of a representative parent-campus coordinator conveys the disregard he associates with the Distant Dad type, who rebukes IBC lecturers’ engagement requests with a flippant “you figure this out.”

Despite these frustrations, IBC lecturers do express empathy for their parent-campus colleagues, with some seeking to explain Distant Dad behavior as the result of overcommitted workloads. H7, for example, said that he felt that parent-campus staff

were disinterested in IBC operations because they are not adequately compensated for this additional work—an assumption that Chapman and Pyvis (2013) have found to be shared by parent-campus IBC course coordinators (p. 93). Likewise, R1 and H14 stressed the prioritization that they felt parent-campus staff must need to place on their local responsibilities, as noted in their quotes below:

[AusCity staff] want to pay attention to things that are there at Australia. They want to give first preference to that and that itself takes a considerable amount of time for them. We come in as again as [a second] preference (R1).

I think their heart is not in this [IBC work]. I think they don't think this to be important thing, part of the work over there... Maybe it's an extra job for them to do. They've got their own work (H14).

In the extract above, R1 suggests that IBC coordination and support may simply not be top of mind for parent-campus staff, who must also tend to domestic priorities. H14 expresses a similar idea but adds a pathos claim: “their heart is not in this.” Within these views of H7, R1 and H14 the empathy with which IBC lecturers seek to understand their coordinators’ experiences is visible: they imagine that these staff are overworked and understand that supporting a distant campus may not be at the top of their priority list. However, as evidenced in H14’s claim that “their heart is not in this,” it is clear that IBC lecturers experience frustration when they feel that their work at the IBC is not prioritized. They see the IBC—and by extension, its students—as a low priority for parent-campus coordinators. Though IBC lecturers rationalize parent-campus coaches’ deprioritization of the IBC as understandable, it is still a source of challenge for them.

Perhaps the greatest insult to IBC staff associated with the Distant Dads archetype is when parent-campus colleagues spend time in the IBC region but not with the IBC lecturers on their teams. I1 expressed this frustration:

We've had situations where a head of department is on campus and we weren't even aware, and we're like... “Oh, you're here?” Like, to come and not arrange a meeting with us. We're like, “Why are you here? Why are they putting you in a hotel for a week?”... They're sitting in offices. They're going to the zoo. Spending hours and hours at the zoo every day? They come for the holiday (I1).

I1, who was in her final weeks of employment at the IBC, was pointed in her depiction of uncaring Distant Dad parent-campus coordinators, whom she saw as responsible for supporting the IBC and actively shirking these responsibilities. I1's perception that parent-campus coordinators visit the IBC merely "for the holiday" connotes an overall sense of rejection, echoing H14's disappointment that parent-campus coordinators' "heart is not in this." Like children feeling rejected by a parent, IBC lecturers working with Distant Dads feel rejected and disappointed at their parent-campus colleagues' perceived disinterest.

These insights from current IBC lecturers provide a helpful corrective: the autonomy that distance provides is a mere silver lining in an otherwise dark cloud of disappointment. The free reign afforded by Distant Dads may be appreciated to some extent, but perceived disinterest is damaging to these overall relationships. As the IBC leader H21 put it in his analogous comparison of distanced IBC coordination to romantic relationships:

If your boyfriend doesn't call you. And you only call him when you need something. It's not gonna work (H21).

Distant Dads are like the non-communicative boyfriends in H21's analogy. Parent-campus disinterest breeds IBC disappointment and disengagement, risking an unproductive relationship.

A final point about the Distant Dads archetype is that its associations extend beyond descriptions of individual parent-campus employees to the parent-campus approach itself. Perceptions of parent-campus disinterest in IBC operations are visible in other descriptions of parent-campus engagement, such as in one participant's anecdote of meeting disciplinary colleagues in AusCity who were unaware of the IBC's existence. A simple but prominent example of how exclusionary messages can be inferred by IBC lecturers is in the lack of reference to the IBC in global university communications. H17's comment about her university's vice-chancellor's update is an example of this IBC exclusion:

H17: We get [the] Vice Chancellor's note to staff every week.

INT: Wow. That's good. Do you enjoy it?

H17: No, because it's all about AusCity campus... So it's about what's happening over there.

In this extract, H17 states that she does not enjoy her university's vice chancellor's note because it is "all about AusCity campus." This point illustrates the potential impact of cross-campus relationships on IBC lecturers' identity constructions. Seeing one's IBC reflected in global communications is a basic first step to envisioning the IBC as part of the global university. Noticing that week after week the IBC is unmentioned communicates overall parent-campus disinterest in the IBC, creating a pattern of expectation that can then be exacerbated by distant low engagement from parent-campus coordinators.

In this section I have presented the phenomenon of IBC lecturers constructing the parent-campus course coordinator archetype of "Distant Dads" who are disinterested in IBC operations. Distant Dads are seen as affording IBC lecturers some levels of welcome autonomy but doing so by default due to their overall lack of care in the IBCs' well being. Distant Dads are difficult to reach when they are needed and display a callousness toward IBC operations that can be insulting, for example in failing to inform IBC staff when they are going on vacation. IBC lecturers experience disappointment in dealing with Distant Dad coordinators, and though they empathize with their busy schedules they feel insulted by their lack of interest. Distant Dad behaviors are associated with relationship trouble and are constructed by lecturers as relating to general parent-campus stances as well as coordination relationships, with parent-campus actions such as failing to reference the IBC in global-university materials experienced as emblematic of general parental disinterest in the IBC.

#### **4.2.3 "My View Isn't Respected and Heard": Perceiving Disrespect from Parent-Campus Micromanaging Mums**

In H13's gendered stereotyping of male and female parent-campus course coordinators, she says that women are typically "nurturing" but also likely to "micromanage" the work at the IBC:

The woman is like, "I will teach you, I will help you, I will coach you." But at the end, it's the end result, they will also interfere (H13).

Though not specified as necessarily female by other participants, the archetype of what I call the “Micromanaging Mum” was constructed by participants similarly to how H13 portrays this person: as someone who offers extensive guidance to IBC staff that often crosses the line from helpful to overbearing. Micromanaging Mums’ support to IBC staff is appreciated to a point, but it is also experienced as limiting and condescending—as frustrating in its over-interest as Distant Dad behaviors are in their disinterest.

I2, who as presented in 4.2.2 had struggled with a past coordinator who she wished would “care a bit more,” also described challenges with coordinators who care too much about IBC operations, thus minimizing the autonomy of IBC lecturers. She notes:

There are subject coordinators I've worked with who were much more hands on, a little bit more micromanaging. I'm going through a bit of a situation at the moment with one where it definitely feels like my view isn't respected and heard, and that's much more frustrating [than a hands-off coordinator]... Having somebody who... overly cares but also then doesn't really listen to your opinion about your experience of running the subject here is really frustrating (I2).

In I2’s extract above she articulates the precise challenge for IBC lecturers posed by Micromanaging Mums: that in their efforts to help IBC lecturers, they minimize these lecturers’ agency. I2 says she “definitely feels like my view isn’t respected or heard”—a serious management challenge. I2, who had herself previously served as a subject coordinator, felt that she had insights to share with the team and wished to be engaged as a colleague, but instead felt that her opinions were not listened to: a situation she found “really frustrating.”

I1 shared challenges in working with Micromanaging Mums as well, saying that the lack of autonomy she feels in these situations is the main reason she decided to resign:

I will say that having to deal with Australia is probably the number one reason that I do not want to stay. So not being in charge of my teaching... not having that autonomy—to actually be in control of things myself... You know, of course we check for equivalency across campus in marking and spread of grades and stuff like that. But it's always Australia check us. Like they never send us samples of their work so we can check theirs. So it's like you're not checking for—you know we're not peer checking. You're checking up on me. And what makes you think that—and then of course then if they disagree, it's your wrong and they're correct. And it's like, “Well,



why? Maybe we're both just different, and maybe we should go somewhere in the middle?" And it's kind of like "Why are you checking my work?" (I1).

In this extract I1 invokes directly the loss of "autonomy" she feels—the sense of "not being in charge" or "in control" of her teaching and assessment of students. She shares an example that was common across Micromanaging Mum depictions: the perception of parent-campus staff imposing particular assessment practices on the IBC. Benchmarking she feels is not approached as a "peer checking" exercise where colleagues across campuses jointly synchronize approaches; rather, she feels that under the guise of moderation the parent-campus staff are "checking up" on her, surveilling her as an underling when she feels she should be treated as an equal.

In my research data, conflicts and frustrations related to Micromanaging Mum behaviors often corresponded with discussions of assessments. I3, like I1, finds it frustrating that moderation of assessment marks is not collaborative but "one way":

I's one way, so they moderate our papers, we don't moderate theirs... Historically, I can see the need for it, and when we first started if you want to be talking about assuring equivalency... they've set the standards, so [they're] doing that [moderation]. But, I feel like we've outgrown them now, and moderation's fine, but it need to come both ways (I3).

Interestingly, I3 ties her discomfort with Micromanaging Mum assessment moderation to the evolutionary development of the IBC, acknowledging that in the campus' early days a stronger parent-campus oversight was necessary but now a two-way moderation would be more appropriate. In making this claim I3 reflects the phenomenon noted in IBC literature that links IBC evolution to a push for greater autonomy (Edwards et al., 2014; Hill & Thabet, 2018). In practice, however, strong parent-campus oversight of IBC assessments is widespread in the cases studied. H14 and H13 express similar challenges and sentiments:

Sometimes, you get certain people that... would say something like, "Hey, my marks are like this. Yours is like that, right?" So he would say, "Maybe you should raise all the marks in the cohort by a certain amount." Something like that... I didn't think that was the right thing to do. So we have to go through stuff like that." (H14).

In terms of the autonomy, I think they can give us more freedom... Because for example sometimes when you do a project there are a lot criteria that you can list down to assess. We need

to follow that criteria. For example, like creative arts, how do you define? They like it, you don't like it. I give the student Distinction; [parent-campus colleagues] say, "This is just a mere pass." So how do you debate on the creativity? But since they have the final say, they designed the syllabus. So at the end we will go and just follow their way (H13).

In the extracts above H14 and H13 describe feeling compelled to change their assessments of IBC students' work at the direction of parent-campus course coordinators. In H14's case he was asked to raise his scores; in H13's case she was directed to a lower score. Both are examples of Micromanaging Mum behavior, where course coordinators did not invite negotiation of the grades or seek to establish a shared understanding: their leadership was experienced as top-down imposition of a singular view. Though H14 and H13 were both bothered by these situations, they acquiesced to their parent-campus directive. H13's account for doing so expressed the situation well: "they have the final say, they designed the syllabus." Her stance captures the diminished agency that IBC lecturers can experience when working with parent-campus Micromanaging Mums: "they"—based on location, not individual expertise—are in charge and must be followed.

Though IBC lecturers expressed a general willingness to comply with parent-campus coordinators' wishes, their descriptions of Micromanaging Mum behaviors showcased the disrespect that they associate with this parent-campus approach and the repeated sense of insult that IBC lecturers can experience when facing it. Interestingly, though these sentiments of frustration appeared to be shared across locally-hired IBC lecturers that described working with Micromanaging Mums, lecturers from local or regional Asian countries tended to be more accommodating toward overbearing parent-campus behaviors while third-country hires from outside of Asia expressed greater outrage about Micromanaging Mums' motivations. I1 and I3, both hailing from countries outside of Asia and Australia, are examples of the latter:

People are having to come off subjects because they can't deal with their Australian counterparts anymore... It's just so bad. And it's just so foolish. When you think, why is everyone being like this, why can't the people—you know, why do these guys at the main campus think that they're superior to us? Because they're not... Why they think that their understanding of pedagogy is better than ours is just flabbergasting. It's just so frustrating (I1).

Our staff here is just as talented and just as experienced, and just as good at what they're doing [as AusInt AusCity staff]. And it's just feeling a bit insulting that we're still always going to them [for

approvals]. And I think the family analogy is it's gone from the parent to the child to now it feels like the big older brother bullying (I3).

For both I1 and I3, the perception that parent-campus staff “think that they’re superior” to IBC staff was framed as outrageous and insulting. I1 sees Micromanaging Mums as believing themselves to have a superior “understanding of pedagogy”—a claim she found “flabbergasting.” I3 too sees it as “insulting” that the relationship is framed in unequal terms. Echoing her point shared previously about autonomy, I3 says that as the IBC has matured the parent campus has transitioned from being a supportive parent to a “big older brother bullying.” In these extracts the IBC is constructed as an oppressive force, embodied by oppressive individuals who “think they’re superior.” Within these claims of parent-campus perceived superiority lies a protective orientation toward the IBC and resentment of parent-campus interference. Though not Asian themselves—and perhaps in part due to their outsider heritage—I1 and I3 vociferously push back against parent-campus Micromanaging Mums, resisting their perceived claims of superiority and couching them as ignorant about IBC operations. As I1 said in regards to parent-campus staff,

they think that maybe we're all in mud huts here or something in Asia. You know that this is really strange idea of what Asia is (I1).

For I1 and I3, Micromanaging Mums behavior is an affront to IBCs and their largely local staff. These insults are experienced personally as well as institutionally, contributing to the overall construction of the IBC as mistreated by their universities.

Individual cross-campus relationships and macro-level cross-campus positioning are connected. IBC lecturers’ perceptions of parent-campus course-coordinators’ behaviors speak to their individual experience but also reflect their perceptions of how the IBC and parent campus generally work together. In data on Micromanaging Mum perceptions, perceptions of top-down parent-campus control were visible in IBC lecturers’ depictions in how they learn about university plans. The extracts below from R5 and H18 illustrate this point:

Our DVC always highlights about the strategic intent... But this intent comes from Australia. So we are just being—we are just communicated. We are told (R5).

Mostly it's one-way communication... Just a formality, just to inform us okay, this is the strategic plan of the university for the next five years... I think it's better to have two-way communication—should be between the top management of this campus with the mother campus (H18).

In the extracts above, R5 and H18 both convey an understanding that at an organizational level communication between the parent campus and IBC is “one-way,” the institutional version of Micromanaging Mum behavior. The IBCs “are told” about the university’s strategic plans but are not part of developing them. H18 appears to believe that even his IBC’s top management is nonagentive in university decision-making—a situation that may not be true in practice but nevertheless reflects his understanding. These lecturers’ perspectives exemplify the feelings that some lecturers have about their IBCs’ overall agency within the university: At an organizational level as well as in some individual course-coordination relationships, the parent campus leads through a top-down strong hand, disrespecting local perspectives.

In this section I have showcased the phenomenon of IBC lecturers feeling that their parent-campus coordinators—and in some cases the parent campus generally—orient toward the IBC with an top-down leadership style, exemplifying the archetype of Micromanaging Mums. Micromanaging Mums care deeply about the integrity of their programs and initiatives, and offer extensive guidance to IBC staff to ensure that they share the necessary resources to fulfill global standards at the IBC. This support is appreciated to some extent, but it is also widely resented, seen as disrespecting local expertise. IBC lecturers feel frustrated when they are forced to comply with global practices rather than collaborate with parent-campus course coordinators to develop mutually agreed-upon solutions. Micromanaging Mums are experienced as oppressive and overbearing, and though they are framed by some as perhaps nobly intentioned, their behavior is seen as conveying an inappropriate sense of superiority and disrespect toward the IBC.

#### **4.2.4 Summary of Findings on Constructed Parent-Campus Disrespect**

In this section I have showcased IBC lecturers’ constructions of parent-campus course coordinators, demonstrating the perception of general disrespect from these headquarters coaches as a collective. Despite cases of positive IBC lecturer relationships

with individual parent-campus coordinators, at a macro level these coordination relationships are constructed as problematic. Parent-campus staff are generally framed as either disinterested in IBC operations or disregarding of IBC expertise, exhibiting orientations toward what I call the archetypes of “Distant Dads” and “Micromanaging Mums.” Distant Dads provide autonomy but not support, allowing IBC lecturers freedom to exercise their agency but failing to provide the guidance and interest they seek. Micromanaging Mums provide support but not autonomy, overly guiding IBC lecturers but failing to listen to their ideas. Both Micromanaging Mums and Distant Dads are seen as undesirable archetypes.

Narratives of parent-campus coordinators’ disinterest and disrespect for IBC staff were echoed in broader communications from the parent campus: participants described vice-chancellor weekly updates that never mentioned IBC operations and one-way messages that informed IBC staff of plans without seeking input. These observations contributed to a general sense of parent-campus disrespect, which participants framed as an inherent burden of the IBC. Thus, the perceptions of parent-campus coordinators’ disrespect for the IBC are another contribution to lecturers’ constructions of an “underdog” campus identity, heightening their sense of IBC disadvantage.

These framings of cross-campus relationships as generally challenged were presented by many IBC lecturers as a problem to be addressed. The idea of renegotiating these relationships and advocating for a different approach to cross-campus Ideas was widely resonant. I turn now to discussion of participants’ descriptions of preferred parent-campus engagement styles: an archetype I call “Sympathetic Siblings.”

### **4.3 Renegotiating Cross-Campus Relationships: Seeking Sympathetic Siblings**

An identity-construction process resonant in IBC lecturers’ challenges with parent-campus coordinators is the idea of subject positioning: perceiving oneself being positioned in a certain way, and needing to determine how best to respond (Davies & Harré, 1990). Above I have showcased the phenomenon of IBC lecturers viewing their parent-campus coordinators as positioning their IBCs disrespectfully: as unimportant to the wider university in the case of Distant Dads, or as children who need to be carefully

supervised in the case of Micromanaging Mums. IBC lecturers of course do not wish to be ignored or micromanaged by their parent-campus colleagues. The ideal parent-campus coordinator would withhold neither support—as Distant Dads—or autonomy—as Micromanaging Mums—but would instead provide in a balanced way both of these accommodations. In other words, ideal parent-campus coordinators would sympathize with IBC lecturers' challenges in their unique contexts and engage with them respectfully as colleagues.

Alongside IBC lecturers' framings of their challenges with parent-campus coordination were indications of how these lecturers respond to their IBC subject positioning: stances and actions they take to renegotiate the ways that staff at both campuses relate to each other. Within these framings two general thrusts are visible. One stance—particularly held by senior and mid-level IBC leaders—is to pursue more productive cross-campus relationships and organizational unity, seeking to move beyond the parental framings of these relationships toward one of mutually-supportive colleagues—what I call “Sympathetic Siblings.” A very different yet also visible response to perceived parent-campus disrespect is one of embracing IBC organizational self-othering and pushing for campus autonomy. This stance advocates for reducing the IBCs' reliance on the parent campus for guidance and control. In 4.3.1 I outline the unity-seeking pursuit of Sympathetic Sibling relationships, and follow this discussion with explication of the autonomy-seeking response in 4.3.2.

#### **4.3.1 “It’s About Sharing this Challenge Together”: Pursuing Cross-Campus Unity**

The IBC leader and lecturer H21 described concerns with the authoritative manner in which he perceived that parent-campus coordinators engaged with lecturers at his IBC. He was concerned that cross-campus relationships lacked genuine informal connection and felt that parent-campus coordinators were constructed—and behaved—merely as approvals bodies which exerted control on IBC operations. H21 wished for cross-campus relationships to have a completely different flavor: one of mutual support and collaboration. He argued that these relationships should transcend the current approvals focus, saying:

It's not a question about yes or no: "yes, you can do it," "no, you can't do it." It's a question about sharing this challenge together (H21).

As the extract above explicates, H21 envisioned mutual sharing of challenges as the ideal cross-campus relationship—a stance that echoes H13's framing of the perfect—yet in her eyes unattainable—coordinator who provides autonomy as well as support, depending on the lecturers' needs. Combining these ideas, the preferred parent-campus coordinator would be respectful of IBC colleagues, treating them as capable equals, as well as sympathetic to the unique challenges they face and willing to address these challenges alongside them. In other words, they would engage with IBC staff not as parents but as what I call "Sympathetic Siblings."

The "Sympathetic Sibling" archetype was less articulated in this research data than the parental models described in 4.2. Yet it was resonant throughout the data as a kind of understood baseline ideal against which challenged relationships were assessed. The disrespect perceived from Distant Dads and Micromanaging Mums was viewed as such because a different approach to engagement was imaginable. For some—the self-identified "lucky" lecturers—cross-campus coordination relationships resembling Sympathetic Siblings were in effect and greatly appreciated.

The extract below from H19 provides an example of the Sympathetic Sibling archetype in action. H19 describes her positive working relationships with her parent-campus coordinator and notes how she would feel about the relationship if it was not mutually respectful and supportive:

H19: There's always a two-way conversation... Let's say they change an assessment. And an assessment is too new, it's too difficult. Because it's difficult for me sometimes, because it's so hard to start something suddenly and you only have about one week. Then I say, look this is not working, can I just refer back to the old question? Yes you can... And we can prepare this for coming semester, and he's like fine, perfect. Yeah. So the relationship works.

INT: You wouldn't feel that good about the working relationship if it was one-way?

H19: Yeah, exactly. [Then] it's more of them just barking down orders... Then you won't be able to call this a global university.

In the above extract H19 emphasized the importance of a "two-way conversation" in the cross-campus relationship—striking a contrast to the one-way communication

associated with the Micromanaging Mum archetype. In H19's cross-campus relationship, there is collegial respect: her coordinator listens to her concerns and works with her rather than insisting on blind compliance. Thus, this coordinator relates to H19 as more of a sibling than a parent. The coordinator is also framed as showing sympathy to the IBC needs, allowing her to adjust the timeline for transitioning to a new assessment. H19's description of her parent-campus coordinator exemplifies the approach of "sharing this challenge together" that H21 held up as ideal, exemplifying the rare but appreciated "Sympathetic Sibling" archetype.

H19's framing of her current parent-campus coordinator as a kind of Sympathetic Sibling is further elaborated in her emphasis on the importance of their two-way communication. When I asked her how she would feel if the communication was one-way, she emphasized that she would not frame it so positively if this were the case—it would feel like them "just barking down orders." The "barking" in this framing denotes a disrespectful hypothetical communication style—engaging with lecturers harshly, as with an underling. The "down" provides deictic confirmation of the unequal relationship this one-way communication would invoke: a hierarchical authoritative relationship rather than her current mutually respectful one. H19's final point that with one-way communication "you wouldn't be able to call this a global university" emphasizes the importance of this respectful, supportive communication style for IBC lecturer belonging and morale, demonstrating why lecturers desire the Sympathetic Sibling relational approach.

Thinking of the ideal cross-campus relationship as one of Sympathetic Siblings also suggests sympathy from both parties. While parents are adults responsible for how they engage with their children, siblings are equals who are both responsible for making their relationships successful. IBC staff who shared an interest in furthering cross-campus unity also noted sympathy for the parent-campus coordinators charged with engaging IBC staff. H7, for example, couched IBC course coordination as additional work for which parent-campus staff are not compensated. H14 expressed a similar view, imagining that these coordinators' roles are challenging:

I'm sure they have their own burdens. They have all the pressures that they're dealing with over there. And they're also trying to cope, I think, just as much as we are over here (H14).



R1 was also empathetic, imagining that overcommitted parent-campus coordinators were doing their best, and that what IBC staff may be experiencing as disrespect was simply triage by busy people:

I wouldn't say that they're at fault... It's basically like you tend to look at things which are there in front of you, especially when something is farther away from you, you don't really give more importance to that... They want to pay attention to things that are there at Australia. They want to give first preference to that and that itself takes a considerable amount of time for them. We come in as [second] preference (R1).

In this extract R1 acknowledges that proximity plays a role in prioritization, showing sympathy for the challenges she imagines that parent-campus coordinators face. It is interesting to note that R1 is also one of the most unity-focused lecturers I interviewed. A mid-level manager as well as an educator, she said “I don't see any distinction” between the parent campus and the IBC; to her, these were inseparable entities. This unity mindset may be part of the reason she approaches parent-campus coordinators with sympathy: she sees them as her colleagues, seeking unity even when she does not experience unity behaviors from them.

In this section thus far I have outlined IBC lecturers' desire for Sympathetic Sibling cross-campus relationships and noted how some IBC lecturers promote these relationships by conveying sympathy for parent-campus staff. In noting these phenomena I aim to emphasize that Sympathetic Sibling relationships are a goal that can be pursued by both parent-campus and IBC staff—ideally both simultaneously. The goal pursued by these lecturers is mutual understanding. As H21 said: “We are doing what we can to make sure that the two campuses embrace each other.”

How to pursue this mutual understanding was less clear in participants' perspectives. Generally IBC lecturer mobility to the parent campus was framed as ideal. As H21 said,

I think we really need to fly them to AusCity, let them see for themselves. Let them lecture there for a couple of weeks... We need to do things so they can understand, understand each other (H21).

In IBC literature, flying faculty across campuses is seen as ideal for inducting locally-hired IBC lecturers successfully and building positive relationships. Yet as Wood and Salt (2018) note, cost and visa issues can prevent this occurrence. Contemporary communication technologies which allow remote engagement obviate these issues, making communication across great distances instantaneous and free. Yet in providing this convenience these technologies also sacrifice the relationship building seen as critical to unity development. A quote from H10 exemplifies this point:

In early days of doing my teaching career, we do have funding that once a year, either colleagues from AusCity will fly here, and we also have a exchange of local colleagues can fly... I feel good, in a way, that at least I see the campus. At least I know what the campus is offering, the AusCity campus is offering. And at least you have a face-to-face interaction with your colleagues... But of course, these days with technology you have Skype, you have FaceTime, and you have emails, and things like that. So, we don't really have to fly there anymore. It can be done very fast, and you know, "Hey, look. I just wanted to have a meeting with you." And so, things can be done through Skype and teleconferences, things like that... But in the initial days, I feel that, yeah, this is good. You want us to teach something, here which is quite similar to what AusCity campus is teaching. But then, we also want to feel how is teaching in your [classes] with 300, 100 students... And what that facilities, I want to know, what facilities do they have there, and what is your teaching styles, and how to go about with this particular units, and things like that. So, I think that was quite crucial... I think a human face-to-face interaction is very important. And I think it's also very, very important that you see [the parent campus] first-hand (H10).

In the extract above H10 notes the value of technologies such as Skype for simplifying cross-campus communication, yet he also frames these as making these relationships more transactional. Twice he mentions the value of “face-to-face interaction” with colleagues, emphasizing its importance. He describes appreciating the opportunity to tour the parent campus, to sit in on classes and see facilities used there: all of which he sees as ways of gaining insights for developing better cross-campus cohesion. In Chapter 6 I note that H10 was one of several lecturers who described lowering standards for IBC students based on his perceptions of IBC disadvantage. H10’s desire for more meaningful cross-campus engagement is noteworthy because if his relationships with parent-campus coordinators were less transactional and more collaborative—a model he appears to seek—he may not respond to perceived IBC disadvantage with compensatory behaviors.

A final example of IBC lecturers seeking and benefiting from cross-campus mobility is H18's story of changing his impressions of parent-campus academic staff after spending time with them during a campus visit. In our interview H18 shared how prior to his trip he had taught a locally-managed IBC program and had not interacted with parent-campus staff. He had formed impressions about parent-campus colleagues based on narratives at his IBC that parent-campus coordinators were disrespectful:

H18: Before going to AusCity I always thought that AusCity colleagues are not friendly. I always have this impression because I seldom interact with AusCity colleagues. I just heard experience from some colleagues... I just heard some—something negative... From colleagues who had a bad experience.

INT: You heard that they were unkind, unpleasant?

H18: Yeah. Unkind, not responsive when emailed to them. And, um. Yeah. Not responsive... Not reply to email when asking about our unique context, everything.

I asked him if his trip to the parent campus changed his view of academics there. He replied that it did:

H18: I changed my view, correct. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

INT: How so?

H18: ... I found that the staff in AusCity, quite a number of them are expatriates. They are not Australians. They are from other countries. Yeah, from other countries.

INT: Okay. So you had a perception that they were unfriendly and unresponsive.

H18: Yeah.

INT: And then when you went there did that perception change?

H18: Yes. Yes.

INT: You found that they were friendly?

H18: Ah...

INT: And were responsive?

H18: Not really. I changed my perception after I handled the degree unit. Whereby I need to email, interact with the AusCity counterpart... Maybe I'm lucky, but so far the global staff that I deal with seems to be okay. Friendly. And willing to share the information, their techniques, from time to time, all the changes of the content... So far I'm okay with AusCity... I know the way they talk, you know, how to interact with them, when interact face to face how to talk with them, what are the kind of topics I should start with.

The first revelation H18 shares about his trip to the parent campus is that staff he met there were not exclusively Australian; he described meeting expatriates from other countries—later he mentioned that many were Asian like him. This realization seemed to prompt a considerable paradigm shift for H18, relaxing the differences between IBC and parent-campus staff that he had previously perceived. The fact that H18 frames this realization as part of his improved relationship with parent-campus staff demonstrates a critical point about identity formation. As I discuss in Chapter 5, locally-hired IBC lecturers can see their lack of Australian heritage as impeding their individual membership in their global-university organizations. H18's paradigm shift following meeting non-Australian parent-campus colleagues suggests that exposure to multicultural colleagues based at the parent campus can remedy these assumed biases, showcasing the diversity of heritages possible under the banner of a legitimate AusInt identity.

More generally, this finding also demonstrates the power of communication and rapport-building on locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their cross-campus relationships. H18 began his trip with the perception that parent-campus staff were unfriendly and unresponsive. What is fascinating is that his perception changed, he says, but not because he found parent-campus colleagues to be different than he had expected. Rather, he realized how he needed to change to engage with parent-campus staff. He said "I need to email, interact with the AusCity counterpart," showing his understanding that he should be proactive in pursuing these relationships. He describes his positive current relationships with parent-campus colleagues and attributes these—at least in part—to his understanding of "how to interact with them": how to enter their discourse using "the way they talk" and begin with the right "kind of topics."

H18's story is, like H10's, an example of the rich cultural benefits attainable in investing in cross-campus IBC lecturer mobility. His story also illustrates the power of narrative in forming conceptions and the pliability of these conceptions in the face of human contact. H18, by listening to the stories he had heard about parent-campus coordinators, placed these coordinators in a subject position—assuming disrespect. His reference to IBC lecturers purportedly dismissing questions about "our unique context" is the epitome of the "Distant Dad" archetype. Yet in the way parent-campus academics engaged him, these archetypes complexified. H18 understood through this engagement

how to enter the parent-campus discourse, how to belong to the global university. He learned how to be himself a “Sympathetic Sibling” of his onshore colleagues, and received treatment in kind from his newfound kin.

The extracts in this section showcase the grappling of IBC lecturers toward mutual understanding with cross-campus colleagues, seeking a renegotiated, reimagined relationship of mutual sympathy and support. As these stories show, achieving this goal of cross-campus unity is not a straightforward undertaking; these extracts show lecturers grappling with preconceptions about parent-campus course coordinators, changing their mindsets and hoping for improved relationships.

Yet even for the most hopeful lecturers, the drive toward cross-campus unity is uncertain—particularly when their experiences working with parent-campus coordinators have repeatedly disappointed them. I turn now to discussion of IBC lecturers who express such doubts: views that demonstrate the end result of disrespectful parent-campus coordination on IBC lecturers’ global integration.

#### **4.3.2 “I don’t See Us as Part of AusInt Australia”:** Abandoning Hope for Cross-Campus Unity

As evidenced in 4.3.1, some IBC lecturers hoped that a more productive, collaborative mutually-respectful Sympathetic Sibling-style relationship could be forged across campuses. While this desire was widely expressed across the data for this research, some lecturers felt doubtful that cross-campus unity could be achieved. For these lecturers, frustration in working with disrespectful parent-campus coordinators had accrued to a sense of disillusionment in the dream of unity.

An example of this anguished stance was H21, a leader at his IBC charged with advancing the “one AusInt” vision. H21 shared this vision as an ideal but lamented the profundity of the challenge in achieving it. Frustrated by his impressions of parent-campus disrespect for the IBC, he felt that the daily slights of disinterested parent-campus staff undermined institutional messages of unity, reducing the likelihood of the university achieving the grand vision that he could not quite dare to share:

I understand the push to be one AusInt, but at the same time I also see that the push does not really translate to the outcome (H21).

H21 compared the IBC staff to houseguests staying at the home of the university:

- H21: All the staff here, we are the guest of the university. And now the guest wanting to be part of the university.
- INT: Do you think that your Australian counterparts see you that way? See you as the guest of the university?
- H21: Subconsciously yes.
- INT: But officially no?
- H21: Officially no. Really we try to make—to change things.
- INT: You are one, but subconsciously...
- H21: Things that [they] do. Little things that [they] do... show us that... “I’m not part of you.”

In this extract H21 alludes to locally-hired IBC staff seeking belonging with the global university, striving to renegotiate cross-campus relationships to more productive inclusive approaches. However, he feels that subconsciously parent-campus staff view IBC colleagues as mere “guests,” preventing them from engaging in true shared ownership of the global identity and thus perpetuating problematic parental relationships.

H21’s impressions of the difficulty in renegotiating cross-campus relationships toward a mutually supportive “Sympathetic Sibling” model demonstrates how tenuously these attempts are treated even among official advocates for unity. H21 said he felt that IBC lecturers, after repeated mistreatment by parent-campus staff, were collectively “nonbelievers” in cross-campus unity. While he and others were willing to continue striving for this hoped-for ideal, there was a sense of anguished acquiescence to the possibility that long-term these disrespectful parentally-hued relationships would perpetuate.

For some lecturers, this anguish eventually turned their hope for unity to disenchantment. Frustration over perceived parent-campus disrespect for the IBC led some IBC lecturers to discontinue striving for mutual empathy and collaboration, and instead to advocate for a very different cross-campus relationship: IBC autonomy from the parent campus. A few lecturers expressed neither acquiescence nor hope for improved relationships; instead, they wished to dismantle the organizational hierarchies in existence, breaking from the parent campus and pursuing independence.

I3’s case is a good example of an IBC lecturer desiring campus emancipation. In our interview she had described frustration with the disrespect she perceived from parent-

campus staff toward the IBC, sharing at one point a story of having visited the parent campus and discovering that staff there were unaware of the IBC's existence. She said she felt in that moment that the IBC was like a "poor cousin" to the parent campus—seen as an "unsavory" member of the university family. I3's perception of her IBC's subject positioning by the parent campus was informed also by her relationships and interactions with parent-campus staff. In her early employment with the IBC, she had been eager to advance cross-campus unity, but after perpetually feeling like this "poor cousin," she had shifted her approach. She said:

My allegiance is here... When I started, maybe I was a bit more neutral, but I think my illusions [have] been shattered over the last couple of years. The more that I interact with them at some of these levels... the relation has been shattered, and so in that respect, my allegiance has become even stronger and stronger here (I3).

As is evident in this extract, I3 did not enter her role feeling resentful of her IBC's parent campus, but through repeated bad experience her "illusions" of cross-campus unity and her relationships with parent-campus colleagues were "shattered." I3 says that through this shattering she has developed stronger and more localized "allegiance" to the IBC specifically, disambiguating this campus from the wider university. Her negative experiences prompted her to localize her allegiance and push for organizational separation, a point exemplified in the following extract:

It is a time of change for the university, so I think it'll be interesting to see how the attitudes of our staff in this change have gone with it because I am seeing little bit more fighting back from everybody and I guess I hadn't realized it... a little bit of resistance against the main campus... [The IBC is] sort of ready to stand on their own feet. And realizing that now AusCity, instead of necessarily helping us out is actually maybe keeping us down a little bit (I3).

In the extract above I3 embraces what she sees as an emancipatory movement among her IBC colleagues: she perceives and cheers her colleagues "fighting back" and showing "resistance against the main campus," equating this with budding campus strength: her IBC colleagues being ready to "stand on their own feet." She describes an organizational awakening at the IBC that the parent campus is not helping but hindering IBC development: "actually maybe keeping us down." In this extract I3 is expressing her perception of what is happening organizationally at the IBC, saying that she believes it is

collectively rejecting the parent campus. More importantly, she is constructing this emancipation: in her description of this practice she is willing it to become reality.

I1's case offers another prototypical example of an IBC lecturer advocating institutional emancipation. I1, as demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6, was frustrated by the lack of support for learning difficulties at the IBC and believed strongly that the IBC was being mistreated by the parent campus. Overall I1 was very negative about her IBC's relationship to its parent campus, noting in her interview the following:

I don't see us as part of AusInt Australia... I think a lot of things would be much more simple if we just weren't. If we were an entirely separate university... I think a lot of our Australian links hold us back in some ways (I1).

I1 felt that the IBC was unnecessarily beholden to the Australian campus and suggested that "things would be much more simple" if the IBC could start over as a separate institution. I asked her how she would lead the IBC if she could, and she said "I would try to break away from AusInt University Australia" before acknowledging that "of course it's not possible."

These extracts from I1 and I3 showcase how constructions of parent-campus disrespect can lead to advocacy for organizational autonomy. These lecturers encourage organizational separation—in I1's case literally and in I3's case at the very least spiritually, as she celebrates the "attitudes" of staff primed for "fighting back." These lecturers are actively constructing IBC separation from the parent campus as desirable, suggesting that when faced with parent-campus mistreatment, IBC lecturers begin to cultivate narratives of advocating for organizational separation.

What is important to note in both of these cases is that autonomy advocacy was not the starting point for these lecturers' engagement with their parent campuses; this stance was the final result of several years of feeling marginalized and disrespected. I1 and I3 both described trying to collaborate with parent-campus coordinators but feeling rejected and frustrated by repeated perceived disrespect. Their desire for IBC emancipation was a way of creating equality between these campuses, restoring dignity to the IBC. In other words—and importantly—autonomy was not an automatic inherent desire of these lecturers; it was a consolation prize, sought only when parent-campus disrespect seemed untenable.



### **4.3.3 Summary of Findings on Cross-Campus Relationship Renegotiation**

The data presented in this section confirm that IBC lecturers hold different conceptions of the capacities of their universities for cross-campus unity. Many lecturers express interest in pursuing more collegial cross-campus relationships, replacing unhealthy parental relationships with more equal and mutually supportive Sympathetic Sibling style approaches. In 4.3.1 I shared evidence of IBC lecturers pursuing these more collegial cross-campus relationships: showing sympathy for their parent-campus colleagues' challenges and an openness to rethinking the assumptions that they had previously held for them. These data show lecturers grappling toward a preferred new future: a renegotiated engagement style in which both parties set aside past conceptions and work together as a unified group.

However, some locally-hired IBC lecturers feel that cross-campus unity will perpetually be out of grasp. In 4.3.2 I present examples of IBC lecturers grappling with a sense of disillusionment about the future of cross-campus relationships, with some courting a different renegotiation target: the emancipation of the IBC from parent-campus control. Extracts presented in this section demonstrate that IBC lecturers who feel perpetually disrespected by parent-campus coordinators can eventually give up hope for cross-campus collegiality and unity, advocating for organizational separation as a way of addressing the power imbalance they face. These findings serve as an important warning from university leadership, representing the global-university disenchantment that can occur even among previously unity-driven IBC employees.

## **4.4 Conclusion and Implications for IBC Management**

This chapter establishes the foundation for discussions in Chapters 5 and 6 on how IBC lecturers construct their individual and campus identities. To do so I explicate an important phenomenon which became evident through data collection and analysis for this research: the significance of parent-campus coordinators in IBC delivery of global-university experiences, and the problematic manner in which parent-campus coordinators are currently seen as engaging with IBC lecturers. With positive individual exceptions, IBC lecturers construct parent-campus coordinators collectively as disrespectful toward

the IBC, playing the role of either Distant Dads or Micromanaging Mums rather than Supportive Siblings—a less-observed but widely-desired archetype evident in the data. Distant Dads provide autonomy but not support, Micromanaging Mums provide support but not autonomy, but Sympathetic Siblings provide an appropriate balance of both, making them the ideal parent-campus coordinator archetype desired by IBC lecturers.

The consequences of this narrative of parent-campus disrespect toward the IBC are significant. Many IBC lecturers appear to accept parent-campus coordinators' micromanaging or distancing behaviors as an unavoidable challenge in IBC service delivery. However, some lecturers' interviews suggested that they were seeking to change these dynamics. Some embrace more fruitful relationships with parent-campus coordinators, furthering a sense of cross-campus unity. Others, however, seek to change the current situation in an opposite way, arguing for IBC emancipation from the parent campus, generating equality through autonomy rather than unity. This latter approach provides an important warning for university leaders that even pro-unity IBC lecturers can become disillusioned and contribute to organizational self-othering if not appropriately engaged.

#### **4.4.1 Contributions to IBC Management Literature**

The challenges of IBC lecturers in working with parent-campus coordinators has been established in previous IBC literature (e.g., Chapman & Pyvis, 2013; Dobos, 2011; Edwards, et al., 2014). While much of this literature has not focused specifically on the views of locally-hired staff, the issues observed in these prior works are resonant in this research. For example, Edwards et al. (2014) described the phenomenon of parent-campus staff assuming an authoritative role when engaging with IBC staff, even when academic qualifications and professional responsibilities of both parties would have made the reverse hierarchy more logical. Institutionally, the positioning of parent-campus staff as IBC parents is established—entwined in the word itself. Enhancing this positioning are quality standards which prioritize onshore views without considering offshore needs (Lim, Bentley, Henderson, Pan, Balakrishnan, Balasingam & Tey, 2016).

The limited research exploring transnational educators' perspectives has shown that cross-campus relationships can be effective when communication and relationship-

building are prioritized (Keevers, Lefoe, Leask, Sultan, Ganesharatnam, Loh, & Lim, 2014). The present research contributes to this line of enquiry. This research has yielded a comprehensive understanding of the engagement styles that IBC lecturers find disrespectful from parent-campus colleagues and the alternate approach they would prefer. It showcases that parent-campus disrespect can be manifest in two very different ways: through neglectful distance that all but abandons IBC staff—the Distant Dad archetype—but also through overwhelming exacting guidance that smothers IBC lecturers, demanding their absolute compliance—the Micromanaging Mum. Importantly, this research shows that both archetypes are seen as disrespectful. IBC lecturers do not want to be forced into blind absolute compliance, but they do not want to be left alone, either: they perceive “hands-off” treatment as just as disrespectful as micromanagement. In short, IBC lecturers want support as well as appropriate levels of freedom, undergirded by mutual understanding and respect: they want—and are willing to be—Sympathetic Siblings.

The finding in this research that lecturers value cross-campus connection rather than simply seeking autonomy is a helpful corrective to IBC literature that has assumed otherwise. On an institutional level, some IBC literature has treated the autonomy of these campuses as a foregone evolutionary direction: a sign of maturity widely desired by IBC staff (e.g., Hill & Thabet, 2018). This research suggests otherwise. In this research, IBC lecturers who sought to redress the disrespectful hierarchical cross-campus relationships they perceived did so by striving for more collaborative engagement, pushing for organizational unity. It was only those who felt unsuccessful in forging these relationships, embittered by perpetual disrespect, who finally turned toward autonomy advocacy. Thus, autonomy was a consolation prize, not the goal. Unity and respect were universally valued—they were simply no longer seen as attainable by all.

These findings on IBC lecturers’ organizational stances toward autonomy present critical new insights for IBC management literature. IBC lecturers crave connection with parent-campus colleagues and desire respectful mutually-supportive relationships. They appreciate measures of freedom to localize experiences but prefer to make these decisions with the guidance of parent-campus peers. They are seeking engagement, amenable to

renegotiating the relationship. The question—which future literature should explore—is to what extent parent-campus coordinators are prepared to meet this challenge.

#### **4.4.2 Implications for IBC Management Practice**

IBC leaders I interviewed were profoundly aware that challenges existed in the relationships and engagement between parent-campus course coordinators and IBC lecturers at their institutions. Logistical concerns about the lack of informal communication across campuses surfaced in several of these interviews, as did the perceived need for furthering cross-campus mobility to help locally-hired IBC lecturers gain exposure to parent-campus operations. This research confirms that cross-campus communication is a critical ongoing need in these contexts; in the nuanced picture it represents of IBC lecturers' approaches to their relationships, this research also suggests some potential ways forward for addressing this situation. To move beyond the current perceptions of parent-campus disrespect toward more productive cross-campus relationships, I suggest that IBC and university managers enact a two-pronged strategic approach, seeking to enact change in both parent-campus coordinators and IBC lecturers' approaches to these relationships.

Perhaps the most urgent of these needs lies in how parent-campus coordinators approach their work. IBC lecturers presume that these staff are under-resourced for the work of cross-campus support, taking on these responsibilities as a side project for which they have little time or interest. Cross-campus engagement practices appear to be left to onshore and offshore staff to work out amongst themselves, echoing Chapman and Pyvis's (2013) observation that it is "goodwill" rather than procedures that drives this engagement (p. 94). The present research therefore echoes Chapman and Pyvis's (2013) call for "explicit protocols" mandating set communication schedules to ensure greater consistency in these relationships (p. 94; also see Heffernan & Poole, 2004). The fact that IBC lecturers see their relationships with parent-campus colleagues as reliant on the inclinations of individual coordinators demonstrates that too little oversight is devoted to this critical area of global service delivery. For IBCs to be successful, standardized practices must be implemented and enforced.

It is possible that some parent-campus coordinators are new to leadership roles and are perhaps unfamiliar operating as identity custodians. My research suggests that what is needed in these roles is an orientation toward being an internal university ambassador, aiding IBC lecturers' familiarity with global practices and enthusiastically supporting their needs. Ideally, parent-campus coordinators would be trained in leadership, recruited as cross-campus ambassadors and supported with generous amounts of time and pay differentials to recognize the importance of the parent-campus coordinator role. They would be made aware of IBC lecturers' unique contextual needs—ideally through flying them to the IBC regularly—and would be held responsible for supporting them. The conceptual framework of Micromanaging Mums, Distant Dads and Sympathetic Siblings may prove helpful for training these staff, encapsulating the behaviors seen as disrespectful as well as those seen as desired.

At an IBC level, productive cross-campus relationships could be better pursued by marking a turning point in cross-campus relationships, raising lecturers' awareness of a renewed cross-campus commitment to moving more toward Sympathetic Sibling approaches, and—importantly—ensuring that IBC lecturers understand their own responsibilities in making these relationships work. IBC lecturers should be trained to more effectively self-advocate for their needs, seek the input and support from parent-campus colleagues and report relationship problems rather than letting them fester. IBC managers can support this work through facilitating these mechanisms as well as guarding their own discourse for “us and them” language that perpetuates antagonistic divisions between parent campuses and IBCs. As links between parent campuses and IBCs, managers must retain hope for cross-campus unity and promote these values, encouraging lecturers to assume the best of their parent-campus colleagues and work collaboratively for improved understanding.

#### **4.4.3 Impact of Cross-Campus Coordination Relationships on Identity Constructions**

An emergent finding of this research is the significance of cross-campus relationships in IBC lecturers' individual and campus identity construction. By prefacing discussion of IBC lecturers' individual and organizational identity constructions with this

discussion of how they construct the image of their parent-campus coordinators, I aim to clarify for the reader a key influence on these identity constructions, providing foundational clarity for the following chapters.

The impact of cross-campus coordination relationships is resonant throughout the identity constructions discussed in this thesis. In Chapter 5 I explore IBC lecturers' layered professional identities and their uneven sense of access to global-university identity features, noting that relationships with staff at the parent campus could play a role in aiding—or preventing—IBC lecturers' global-university identification, strengthening their access to global identity resources and perhaps their willingness to invoke them more frequently. In Chapter 6 I discuss IBC lecturers' general construction of their campus identities as disadvantaged, facing in particular gaps in resources and student preparedness which could be addressed through better support from parent-campus colleagues. In both of these cases, parent-campus coordinators emerged as an avenue of potential hope: a resource for helping IBC lecturers feel included and supported. In each of these chapters I highlight the potential of “Sympathetic Sibling” intervention as an implication and recommendation for more fruitful cross-campus IBC engagement.

#### **4.4.4 Chart of Key Findings and Recommendations**

Figure 7 on page 130 summarizes the key phenomena discussed in this chapter, their influences and impacts on organizational integration, and recommendations for how university leaders and parent-campus coordinators might address related challenges. This chart is extracted from Figure 12 in Chapter 7, which presents this information for foci across the full thesis.

**Figure 7: Key Findings and Recommendations in Chapter 4**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions	Recommendations for Managers	Recommendations for Coordinators
IBC lecturers construct parent-campus course coordinators as disrespectful coaches.	Generalizing parent-campus coordinators as either abandoning or micromanaging IBC lecturers.	Negative past experiences in working with coordinators; stories of colleagues' experiences.	Frustration; sense of isolation from parent campus and global university.	Standardize and prioritize IBC engagement; develop coordinators as university ambassadors.	Adopt IBC engagement style of <i>Sympathetic Siblings</i> , showing respect and interest in IBC.

## CHAPTER 5

### FREE AGENTS DONNING TEAM JERSEYS: IBC LECTURERS' LAYERED INDIVIDUAL IDENTITIES

#### **Chapter Summary**

Locally-hired IBC lecturers approach their roles with integrity, striving for excellence in their service to their students and IBCs. In performing this work lecturers enact different aspects of their professional identities—phenomena which across the data reveal a process of identity layering. Lecturers identify most strongly with their occupations and see themselves as temporarily yet enthusiastically serving their employers. In this way they are similar to sports “free agents”—an emic concept I draw upon in this chapter. I theorize IBC lecturers as seeing their occupational identities as core to their being, their IBC identities as removable team uniforms, and their global-university identities as optional league accessories that they wear occasionally, if at all.

In this chapter I outline these various layers of IBC lecturers' professional identities and demonstrate how they are enacted by these lecturers in practice. I highlight the phenomenon of IBC lecturers eschewing organizational identifications in their interactions with students, engaging solely as their core selves, and contrast this with their willingness to represent the IBC at external student-recruitment events—donning the team jersey to support their employers. This identity compartmentalization can cause conflicts in situations in which both occupational and organizational identities may be activated, such as marketing events where priorities for student recruitment and candid advice may clash. I suggest management interventions for mitigating these conflicts, as well as for increasing locally-hired IBC lecturers' sense of global identity options and engaging lecturers more successfully as university representatives.

#### **5.1 Introduction to Findings on IBC Lecturers'**

##### **Individual Identity Constructions**

In this section I briefly reiterate the aims and key concepts that have guided my research on IBC lecturers' individual identity constructions, as well as overview key findings and theories discussed in this chapter.



### 5.1.1 Research Questions and Aims

This thesis presents findings and theories produced through my constructivist grounded theory research on the organizational integration orientations of lecturers working at Southeast Asia-based international branch campuses. Using organizational identity construction as an analytic framework, I seek to answer the following questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In this chapter I focus on IBC lecturers' individual professional identities related to their roles and organizations.

In pursuing insights on IBC lecturers' individual identities I aim to address needs in the IBC management field for information about how IBC lecturers orient to their roles within their immediate and extended organizations. As discussed in Chapter 2, the IBC field is transitioning toward localizing academic hiring rather than relying on seconded parent-campus staff. This trend toward local hiring has prompted some reputational concerns, suggesting that locally-hired IBC lecturers are less likely to represent and support their global universities than their parent-campus colleagues (e.g., Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2016). It has also prompted calls to better integrate locally-hired IBC staff into their wider universities (Wood & Salt, 2018).

The need for organizational integration of IBC lecturers was also noted by the IBC leaders I interviewed as part of this research. IBC leaders I spoke with were concerned about IBC lecturers' global organizational integration, particularly noting the challenges of cross-campus communication across extended geographical distances. They believed that IBC lecturers serve as the representatives of their global universities to students—as the leader H21 emphasized, lecturers “are supposed to represent AusInt, the university brand”; yet they also felt that effective representation hinged on lecturers' identification and engagement with the university. As H21 put it, “how do we represent

something that we do not know about?” Ascertaining how locally-hired IBC lecturers orient to their roles as global service providers is, therefore, a practical as well as a theoretical need.

Responding to a dearth of knowledge about how locally-hired IBC lecturers actually identify as part of their organizations, this chapter aims to present an emic account of IBC lecturers’ perspectives on their organizational integration and the identities which guide their workplace behavior. I outline the features of IBC lecturers’ individual professional identities and the ways they are enacted; I also explore the influences on these identities, articulating insights about parent-campus engagement of these staff members that may aid IBC and university leaders in practice.

### **5.1.2 Foundational Concepts**

In 2.4 I overview the basic concepts of identity construction within organizations—the theoretical framework which I have utilized to analyze data produced through this research. In this chapter my focus is on IBC lecturers’ constructions of their individual professional identities: how they envision their roles and responsibilities as lecturers within their IBCs and wider universities. Section 2.4.4 provides an overview of the concepts I draw upon in this analysis, key points of which I summarize below.

Following Jenkins (2014), this research approaches individual identity as a constant act of *identifying* with social targets and responding to candidate identities imposed in social situations, synthesizing identity features within the “internal/external dialectic” of self- and other-perception (p. 42-43). Individuals may identify more deeply with their occupation or organization (Vough, 2012), drawing from “schemes of perception” accrued through their life experiences (Bourdieu, 1989) as well as influences in their social environments. Individuals are agentive to a certain extent in constructing their preferred professional identities, yet they are also constrained by the identities of their larger organizations and the expectations they perceive to be associated with their roles (Ashforth, 2018).

In this chapter I take participants’ identity claims at face value, seeking to articulate not an objective “true” identity for these individuals, but to render IBC lecturers’ perceptions of these constructions: *their* understanding of who they are and

what their roles entail. As identity is displayed and refined through practice (Pratt, 2012), I also focus on lecturers' perspectives about how they enact their identities in particular situations, glean insights about how these identities are formed and instantiated in practice. Throughout this analysis, my aim is to both describe the identities that IBC lecturers appear to possess as well as detail the manner in which they construct and display them, drawing attention to discursive features that reveal their identity-construction influences, acts and outcomes.

### **5.1.3 Overview of Individual Identity Data**

My interviews with IBC lecturers focused significantly on their individual experiences and orientations to their roles both within and beyond their organizations. Most lecturers I interviewed had been with their IBCs for several years and were satisfied with their work and happy to support their IBCs. The questions I asked about their responsibilities confirmed that the typical academic workload of teaching, research and service is common throughout these institutions. Teaching is seen as the primary focus, research is an emerging but less prioritized focus, and service is also prioritized and unique to the context, requiring typical responsibilities such as committee membership as well as promotional work to build university enrollments: giving disciplinary talks at marketing events, hosting open days, and participating in student-recruitment activities.

In analyzing participants' descriptions of their daily work I began to see evidence for very different kinds of professional identities invoked for different types of tasks. The concept of identity layers began to emerge, and one participant's emic language provided a metaphor of clothing that encapsulated this layering:

AusInt is just like clothes [lecturers] put on. Teacher is the soul. One is appearance... One is inside you, the passion, everything. The other one is just a dress that you wear. You can take off that dress and wear another one, right? But your passion will not—you will not lose your passion (H13).

This lecturers' clothing metaphor summarizes a view of identity that is shared by many of the IBC lecturers who participated in this research: a lecturer's occupational identity is primary, trumping ephemeral organizational roles. The occupation is fused to the self, while the IBC is mere "clothes" and—as it became clear in other data—the

global organization is something of a clothing accessory, superficial and only occasionally salient. This prioritization of the occupational identity extended to lecturers' engagement of students, whom they spoke to not as institutional members but as members of the academic profession. Overall, these lecturers positioned themselves similarly to sports free agents: devoted occupational members who temporarily wear the jersey of a particular team. The core occupational self is constant, while jerseys and accessories may change.

Metaphors embedded in academics' identity narratives can help researchers better understand how participants comprehend their professional identities, revealing "conceptual structures" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 235) which include conscious as well as unconscious conceptualizations of participants (Billot & King, 2015; King & Billot, 2016). Ashforth and Schinoff (2016) note that critical views of identity construction see it as fragmented and contested (p. 112); however the data from this research suggests the more orderly metaphor of identity layering, with identities overlapping each other and the individual making an effort to maintain their harmonious alignment. The metaphor of identity layering is not original to this research; King, Garcia-Perez, Graham, Jones, Tickle and Wilson (2014) describe "the layered self" as one of several metaphors used by university lecturers to describe their identities. In the "layered self" case presented by King, et al. (2014), the individual's professional responsibilities maintained a central dominant position, with home and personal life at the periphery. The layered identities evident in my research focused on delineated layers *within* professional identity, placing occupational identity at a central position and framing organizational identifications as more superficial.

In section 5.2 I outline each of these identity layers, presenting data that evidence their existence as well as theoretical resources that help articulate the phenomenon. In 5.3 I discuss the impact of identity layering on participants' enacted behaviors, addressing IBC literature assumptions about locally-hired lecturers' representational orientations and producing insights about lecturers' organizational belonging to aid participating IBC leaders in their staff-engagement pursuits. In 5.4 I explicate the ways that these findings address research questions relating to IBC lecturers' professional identities as part of their

universities, noting implications for IBC management of ways of better engaging this critical population.

## **5.2 Constructing Individual Identity Layers**

In this section I introduce the professional identities that research participants referenced and invoked in our interviews, showcasing the prioritization schema described above. In 5.2.1 I present the enduring occupational identities that participants claimed as central to their self-concept, contributing to my theorizing of them as “free agents.” In 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 I detail the organizational identifications at work in participants’ professional identities: the IBC institutional “uniforms” they wear daily and the global university “accessories” of which their access is limited and peripheral. In section 5.2.4 I summarize my findings regarding IBC lecturers’ individual identity constructions and discuss the implications they pose for IBC management. Throughout these sections I draw from broad literatures on identity and related phenomena, relating relevant theories and existing knowledge as is helpful.

### **5.2.1 “Teacher is the Soul”: Occupational Core Selves**

As discussed previously, a central finding of this thesis is that IBC lecturers prioritize their occupational identities over other professional self-concepts. My participant H13 expressed this occupational loyalty poetically, calling her teaching identity her “soul”—a “passion” that is inextricably tied to her personhood. Just as one cannot remove one’s soul, in this participant’s metaphor she is perennially a teacher. H13’s prioritization of her occupational identity is echoed throughout these data, with participants generally framing their organizational affiliations as ephemeral and external to their occupational self. They said, for example:

My focus is more on students. No matter where I go, I can still help them, so it doesn't matter the name of the institution... I see myself as a teacher, a lecturer, so I don't tie myself to the AusInt brand name (H9).

Teaching is number one... teacher first, then AusInt is my number two branding... yeah, if you talk about my branding and my identity, I'm a lecturer, but after that AusInt is my second identity (H10).

Even if I'm not a member of AusInt, if I go to any other university also, my attitude, my character is like that actually... Of course, because I'm a member of AusInt, I'm here. So even if I go and do a freelance lecturing or whatever it is, I always do like that actually. It's not like because of AusInt I just do this one, because of other university I do like that: it's not like that. So my area, my profession is more important than where I just teach... Of course, I'm a member of AusInt, I'm really proud of that, but other than that, I do my role. I do my role (H12).

Within these examples, participants' occupational identity prioritization is evident. AusInt is invoked as a possible identity and deliberately de-prioritized. Participants' occupational identities—in these cases, that of teacher/lecturer—are emphasized as being prioritized. All of these participants use explicit language to clarify these prioritized self-concepts: H9 says “I see myself as a teacher,” H10 talks about “my branding and my identity” as prioritizing teaching over institution, and H12 says he is a “member” of AusInt, contrasting this membership with his “profession” of lecturing. Echoing these statements, another participant, I6, said that the AusInt identity “comes second... to you, number one.”

Identity construction has long been theorized as involving interplay between individual agency and environmental structure (Giddens, 1984), and in these research extracts agency is dominant. The structural context of the university is invoked and somewhat rejected: H9 stresses that she does not “tie myself to the AusInt brand name”—she does not depend on the organization for her identity. Likewise, H12 stresses his occupational options: he could work at Ausint or somewhere else. Like H13, these lecturers frame the organizational role as something they agentively and temporarily adopt: a piece of clothing they put on and could take off. While AusInt may be a source of pride—as H12 notes—it is not responsible for participants' occupational self-worth.

These data extracts point to the first principle of my theory that IBC lecturers self-identify as something akin to sports free agents, another group of professionals who are dedicated to their occupation but see their organizational roles as temporary. Like the footballer who plays hard for his team while honing his skills for a potential new employer, these IBC lecturers value and even derive pride from their universities, but reserve their deepest affiliation for their profession. It is the collective of university lecturers which these participants appropriate as part of their own self-identity; their loyalties are to this group, however they may imagine it.

While most of the evidence in this research for IBC lecturers' prioritization of occupational identities revealed participants' central identification as a teacher or lecturer, similar phenomena were visible with different prioritized occupational identities. For I2, it was her pre-academia professional identity that was most important, as she stated clearly in our interview:

Long term, academia has never really been the goal for me... I think [my IBC promotional work] is driven then by my professional identity as a clinical psychologist rather than as a lecturer. If I'm honest that is my identity (I2).

In our interview I2 stressed that she identified more strongly as an occupational member than as an AusInt employee, and in the extract above she clarifies that her preferred professional identity is that of the role she had before entering academia, as a clinical psychologist. She frames this occupational role as "my identity," echoing the singular language of H13's occupational "soul." I2's extract exemplifies the views of lecturers in these data who prioritize an identity as industry professionals, fusing this loyalty with their academic self or even—as in I2's case—considering themselves industry members rather than long-term lecturers. Interestingly, this industrial identity helps to facilitate I2's service to her IBC rather than to interfere with it: it inspires her commitment to quality teaching—a phenomenon I observed in other cases, as well.

An occupational identity less commonly invoked in this research is exemplified by H2, whose identity as a research academic she prized over her organizational identification as well as her lecturing role. Like I2, she emphasized that she did not see herself as a teacher:

I always kind of say I'm an academic first before I'm a teacher because I'm not trained professionally in teaching... for me it was more about kind of ensuring that the knowledge that I gained as an academic gets passed on. So it's not really about teaching; it's about sharing for me (H2).

H2's use of the word "teacher" in our interview appeared to include reference to staff who had taught in secondary-school systems prior to entering academia; the training she refers to is likely a K-12 qualification. In our interview she repeatedly distinguished herself from these colleagues, stressing her focus on academic research and disinterest in teaching-related concerns such as student evaluations. Her pride—and core identity—lay

in her robust research agenda. Though she described enjoying helping students, she considered this secondary to her research, which she noted was internationally recognized and valued at her IBC. Thus, H2 exemplified the same “free agency” that teaching-focused participants did. She was aware of her employment options, deeply committed to her occupational identity, and willing to serve and support her IBC, but not dependent upon it for her identity. H2’s specific variant of free agency—as a research academic rather than an educator—was unique in these data, but may become more widespread as IBCs begin to more ambitiously pursue research outcomes: a trend that Healey (2018) notes is increasing in the IBC sector.

Regardless of the occupational identities they prioritize, what is clear across the data shared in this section is that IBC lecturers exhibit considerable agency in defining themselves within their organizational structures. They feel emboldened to self-define as occupational members more than organizational employees, and they agentively choose between occupational targets for their identification. While most IBC lecturers see themselves as educators above all else, the occupational identities of industry professional and research academic are also visible. Each IBC lecturer featured above prizes their occupational identity and positions it as ongoing and durable, encompassing talents and expertise that they bring to their current organizational roles and may utilize for obtaining new ones. They are free agents honing their craft.

An important observation about these three occupational identities discussed—lecturer, industry professional and research academic—is that they align with three key realms of social capital resonant in the IBC workforce marketplace. Historically these institutions have been primarily teaching-focused (Wood & Salt, 2018), requiring expertise in teaching as well as an occupational dedication that allows stamina for significant courseloads (Neri & Wilkins, 2019). Yet IBCs are also practical institutions, training students for professional life (Knight & McNamara, 2015), making valuable lecturers’ industry experience to mentor students into their professional fields. Finally, as mentioned previously, research is a growing focus for IBCs, and academics capable of producing research outputs are increasingly valued (Wood & Salt, 2018). Thus, across these data we see these occupational free agents not only prioritizing particular target identities, but choosing to prioritize identities that carry cache in the IBC arena. While



likely motivated by occupational dedication rather than simply self-promotion, these lecturers' occupational identities help them to cultivate their professional assets, ensuring that they—like sports free agents—remain marketable for future opportunities.

A final quote on this topic suggests that IBC lecturers' cultivation of their occupational identities is agentic and strategic. In our interview H12 stressed the importance of prioritizing his occupational identity—which he frames as his “self”—and presents this prioritization as a career responsibility:

You need to promote yourself first. You need to show “This is my identity” so the AusInt also are really proud to have you here. If there is no identity, if we always depend on the organization, the problem is, one day they ask you to go out, then your situation is very poor. So you have to be good in this particular sense. So I strongly believe on that... When you are here, you should have your own identity. So if you always depend on someone, if anything wrong with that, you are going to lose many things. If you are strong in your area, you don't have to worry about anything. So people are supposed to depend on you, not the other way round (H12).

In this quote, H12 frames occupational identity prioritization as a job-security strategy: the occupational identity is something one should display for organizational leaders as a way of earning their pride. He also frames this prioritization as an act of self-preservation, ensuring that even if fired from an organizational role, one will be “strong in your area” and thus “not have to worry” about gaining new employment. Occupational identity cultivation is not simply a preference but a value: a way of ensuring ongoing hireability in potentially volatile situations. Like the freelance sports player who may be traded at season's end, IBC lecturers cultivate their occupational social capital as a matter of principle.

### **5.2.2 “AusInt is Just Like Clothes”: Institutional Team Uniforms**

Previously I have introduced the participant H13's construction of her occupational teaching self as her “soul” and her AusInt organizational identifications as “clothes” that envelop it. This prototypical case exemplifies the identity layering I present in this chapter, and I return to it now to explore more deeply the “clothes” that H13 refers to. Immediately following her introduction of this metaphor, I clarified her point and asked her to confirm how her employer fit the clothing comparison:

INT: So your teaching is your soul, your teacher identity is your soul. And your current employer...

H13: It's just a dress.

INT: The AusInt badge is a dress?

H13: You're adorned with it or you groom yourself, that's all.

As mentioned in 5.2.1, the AusInt affiliation is framed in H13's metaphor as ephemeral, with far less identity priority than the "soul" of her occupational self. The extract above confirms this transitory approach to institutional identity and interestingly presents it as something that is either assigned or self-selected: "you're adorned with it or you groom yourself." H13's choice of language—the idea of being "adorned" with the "dress" of the university—aligns with the larger image of IBC lecturers as organizational free agents: just as a sports player is assigned a team uniform, an IBC lecturer entering the organization is given the new identity option of AusInt identification: something they can "groom" themselves with, enhancing their overall individual identity project.

H13's imagery of identity layering complements well another participant's analogy of IBC lecturers as analogous to sports free agents. I6 described an interplay between his occupational and organizational identifications, stressing the importance of prioritizing the occupational self as "number one," but also noting that his identification as a member of the AusInt team inspired and rewarded his occupational dedication:

I6: It's just like a basketball team. Are you cheering for basketball?

INT: I like basketball, yeah.

I6: It's you know that sometimes these professional players move from a team to another, right? When they move, do you think that the quality of the player will change with the name? Yes, of course. If the player or the professional player moved to a better team, they seem like they will become more furious and their performance will be much better.

INT: Their performance will be better because they're part of a better team?

I6: Not only that, actually, because they are living for the name. That's it.

INT: So you feel like the name inspires them.

I6: Of course. Why? Because to get there, it took hard time or it took an effort to reach that point. Starting from the player themselves, they will feel proud that I am here and now it's my turn or my part to prove that I deserve this one. This is how it goes. By being in a top ranked institution, you have the motive now. Number one, you are satisfied. The name is actually attached to your name. After when will people read it, they will know.

In this extract I6 introduces the concept of sports free agency directly, comparing IBC lecturers to professional basketball players who change teams. Importantly, he stresses the inspirational power of the team identity for the players' performance: these ball players—and their lecturer analogs—are “living for the name” of their team. Their identity as an organizational member is a referendum on their occupational success: they “feel proud” to have earned a place on the team and strive to prove that they deserve it. “The name is actually attached to your name,” I6 says, noting the benefit of organizational identification for personal brand enhancement: “when people read it, they will know.”

I6's extract above illustrates another key aspect of my theory of IBC lecturers as free agents. In section 4.2.1 I illustrated the ways that IBC lecturers prioritize their occupational identities and cultivate their occupational talents for future organizational opportunities. In I6's quote above the role of his organization-related identity in this theory becomes clear: lecturers' organizational ties are framed as ephemeral, but they are not unvalued. Rather, organizational identification can be a source of pride for participants: evidence that their occupational identities are thriving, and a “motive”—as I6 claims—for ongoing attention to improving their occupational performance. In other words, in participants' conceptions, occupational and organization-related identities are ranked but compatible, capable of influencing and supporting each other. A strong and productive occupational identity can help a lecturer earn a coveted role as an organizational member, and organizational pride can inspire a lecturer to excel in her occupation.

This latter point about institutional pride has thus far only been illustrated by I6's example, but the topic featured throughout my interviews, with participants repeatedly stressing the identity enhancement they personally derived from the success of the IBC. For example, they said:

I'm actually very proud of [the IBC]. It's pretty amazing that we have built up the campus as it is. When I first started, we occupied two floors of this building. We weren't even the main tenants here. And then to get to something like this. So that's quite something (H14).

There's a lot of pride that was taken in building these [IBC] programs. I think once you get something like this, they take a lot of pride in doing it because it's your name that goes behind it...

You wouldn't want to do something haphazardly or half-heartedly.... You can see the discussion that goes into it, the interest (H19).

I'll be quite happy to say that I'm from AusInt. Because one thing about perception, public perception... The first thing they will ask: "Where do you teach?" Because there are so many local colleges here... So no, I don't teach there. I teach at the university. So with that mindset the perception [will be] a bit heightened already. So I feel glad I'm from AusInt. Yeah, that's the only foreign university in [Local City] (H5).

IBC pride is evident in all of these extracts, with multiple sources of pride mentioned by participants. For H14 and H19, both of whom mentioned the word "pride" (or "proud") directly, this feeling was associated with their sense of connection to the journey of the IBC. Both had been with their institutions for an extended period and had grown with them, seeing their development. For H14, the pride was in the physical development of the campus, which he noted elsewhere had started originally as an institute rather than a university. He says that "*we* have built up the campus" (emphasis mine), including himself in this narrative. His pride is in his contribution to the efforts to develop the IBC site and organization.

H19's sense of organizational pride is similar to H14's, though she focuses more on the development of academic programs at the IBC. A leader in her department, H19 refers to the shared pride of her team in an organizational accomplishment: people whose "interest" and "discussions" have ensured quality program development. Like I6, H19 invokes the idea of name attachment between the lecturer and the IBC, but in her case she references the organizational product carrying the name of the lecturer rather than the lecturer carrying the name of the organization. Occupational identity is therefore mobilized in service of the organization, with lecturers' pride in their efforts occurring "because it's your name that goes behind" the product. Following the sports free agent metaphor, we could say that wearing the IBC jersey entangles one's reputation with that of the IBC, inspiring a strong effort on the field.

H14 and H19's emphasis on the pride of supporting their IBCs differs somewhat from the pride that H5 feels about her IBC employment. H5, who had been with her IBC for a shorter period of time than H14 and H19, attributed her organizational pride to her IBC's reputation, which as an international university was distinct among its local

university peers. In this extract she imagines how people she meets will be impressed when she tells them she works at the university: a “heightened” “perception” of her based on her prestigious affiliation. Like I6, H5 frames her organizational identification as a marker of her success: her perception of its prestige inspires her pride in it and eagerness to affiliate herself with the IBC and university identity.

In H5’s case the institutional ties of the IBC to the global institution are introduced as a reason for the IBC’s perceived high status and the participants’ derived organizational identification. While I6 does not mention the global links of AusInt in his quote, he references the IBC as a “top-ranked institution,” suggesting awareness and appreciation for the global connections. Another lecturer, H4, made a similar connection, saying that being a lecturer at AusInt actually carries more prestige locally than being a full professor at a local university. H4 ties his organizational identification to the IBC but frames the IBC’s organizational appeal as reflecting the efforts of its home campus founders because, he says, “not any parent campus can come to any other country and set up [an] IBC.”

In the extracts shared thus far in 5.2.2 I have illustrated the organizational identifications of IBC lecturers and the ways that they interact with their prioritized occupational identities. The motivations for organizational identification in these data fall into two main categories: the pride in accomplishment formed from service to the IBC, and the pride in attachment to the brand prestige of the IBC. In all cases, the “uniform” of the IBC is worn with pride by the IBC team member, and their organizational membership both inspires and benefits from their occupational efforts. The layered identities of occupational and organizational self are in harmony in these data, coexisting and serving each other.

Yet for some IBC lecturers the sense of pride they derive from their IBC—and thus their organizational identification—are impeded and not fully claimed. My participant H6’s interview data offers one example. We had been speaking generally about the IBC’s reputation and she framed it as “popping” more than it had previously. But interestingly, though she said this development was “cool,” she introduced and rejected the idea of claiming pride in it:

INT: Does AusInt have a very recognizable brand in the region? Do people—

- H6: I think not five years ago.
- INT: Oh really?
- H6: Just recently it is really like, popping.
- INT: Yeah. Yeah, I feel like it is... How does that feel for you, being part of it when it's popping?
- H6: Well, it's cool... I mean, I don't want to sound so pompous, like you know, "I take pride in it." No...
- INT: No?
- H6: Not exactly that, but of course I'm very happy for, you know, [my] place of work, right? Yeah, I'm very happy for it... It's cool when someone [says], for example, I went to a conference and whatnot, said, "Oh, you're from AusInt. Oh, it's a very good university. I've been there. I've been to the branch campus," for example.

H6's reticence to claim IBC pride may simply be due to modesty; she says "I don't want to sound pompous" by saying that she "take[s] pride in it," but goes on to say that she is pleased when people recognize her IBC and think that "it's a very good university." Elsewhere she indicates the prioritization of occupational versus organizational identification noted in 5.2.1, and the language she uses in this extract underscores her sense of separation from the IBC: unlike H14, who uses the pronoun "we" to describe his feelings about the IBC, H6 treats the IBC as an "it"—an entity that she is "happy for" but whose pride she does not own. H6's hesitation to claim and take pride in an organization-linked identity demonstrates that for some lecturers, the "uniform" of the IBC is less symbolically important than for others. H6 guards herself from taking pride in this uniform, treating the organization with affection but distance. The prioritization of occupational over organizational identification appears to be more pronounced in her case, with fewer influential links between the two.

Another example of impeded organizational identification is with the case of I2, who I showcased in 5.2.1 with her example of industrial occupational identity prioritization. In discussing her organizational identification, she notes the complication of her IBC's positive and negative prestige:

I think there's pride of being part of AusInt Singapore because it's well respected. I think what the eye rolling bit becomes is more about being a private university than it is about being thing an international branch. I actually think that I have more pride in the international brand, less pride in it being private (I2).

In Chapter 6 I explore I2's quote above further in conjunction with other IBC lecturer perspectives constructing the organizational identity of their IBC. For this chapter on individual identity formation, this quote is useful for illustrating how individual lecturers' organizational identifications can be impeded by their perception of the IBC's reputation. I2 says she finds pride in the "international brand" and the fact that locally the IBC is "well respected," but finds it "eye rolling" to be part of a private university campus, which she equates to commercial interests that impact negatively on academic quality. As I discuss in Chapter 5, the private status of IBCs is one element that lecturers reference in their construction of IBCs as institutional "underdogs." For I2, who worked for public universities and institutions prior to her arrival in Singapore, the private label is an impediment to organizational pride and identification. As Petriglieri & Devine (2018) note, the perceived validity of an organization impacts the validity of its members' associated organizational identities (p. 244); having doubts about institutional validity can impede full adoption of an organizational identification.

In this section I have demonstrated some of the key ways in which IBC lecturers I interviewed frame their campus-based individual identities. The IBC is a source of pride for many lecturers, with their campus identifications serving to recognize, reward and inspire their occupational identity efforts. However, these organizational identifications are generally framed as secondary to occupational identities, and there appears to be variance in the distance between these first and secondary professional identity rankings across cases. Some lecturers construct occupational and IBC identification as closely intertwined, while others express caution in fully embracing an organizational identification. I2's case in particular showcases the role of constructed organizational identity in individual organizational identification: a problematic identity constructed for the IBC organization impedes identification with the organization. The positive prestige of the IBC's international links aided I2's pride and organizational identification, but the private status—and the associations I2 attached to it—impeded her full embrace of a sense of self as an institutional member.

Despite these variations in orientation to what I term the IBC "jersey," it was generally approached by lecturers as a standard daily uniform. Organizational identifications at the IBC level were assumed and often celebrated. Organizational

identification at the level of the global institution, however, was less frequently claimed. I turn now to an overview of this final element in participants' layered "free agent" identities: the global "accessories" tied to the parent-campus brand.

### **5.2.3 "The AusInt Brand Gives You a Lift": Optional Global Accessories**

Thus far in this chapter I have introduced two elements of my theory of IBC lecturers as uniform-wearing free agents. This conceptual image combines two individual-identity metaphors introduced to me by participants, reflecting IBC lecturers' construction of their occupational identities as primary, fused with the conceived core self, and organizational identities as more transitory and superficial, akin to clothing. Combining the clothing and sports metaphors I have theorized that IBC lecturers' organization-related identities as members of their IBCs are like uniforms they wear and can remove. Extending this metaphor to reflect participants' constructive framings of their larger global universities, I see the global university identification as additive beyond the IBC uniform: akin to a clothing accessory. Just as a footballer wears her team jersey to an event, she may at times don a pin, scarf or other accessory denoting her team's broader league. Yet these accessories are not always available to lecturers or comfortable on their person. Like individuals who vary in their sartorial preferences for accessories atop their clothing, IBC lecturers display a range of orientations to their global university identification options. In this section I outline how the global university identification is constructed by IBC lecturers, showcasing the variability with which lecturers feel that this identity is available to them.

In general across my data the global university brand was seen as recognizable and prestigious, as evidenced by data in 5.2.2 demonstrating participants' pride in their IBC's global links. While some participants had not been aware of their IBC's global connections before they interviewed for jobs there, most shared their perception of students' sense of their Australian universities as reputable global institutions. For some participating lecturers, their constructions of these global universities as prestigious led them to adopt elements of the brand for their individual identity projects. H4, for example, who had transferred to academia after decades in industry, found pride in linking the global brand to his identity:



In the corporate world, if I'm with Google, I'm with IBM or I'm with Alibaba for example. It carries some prestige. Because basically to be an academic in a good or very respected university it gives you some prestige... So actually when we present a card, [a] name card, the logo itself actually elevate your position. [It shows] that you are from a reputable, higher institute of higher learning, you know? So actually the AusInt brand brings you up when you speak, provided you speak sensibly, and possibly gives you a modicum of respect... the AusInt brand gives you a lift (H4).

In this extract we see H4 describing the semiotic impact of his global university's logo in enhancing his individual identity. In doing so he illustrates a key principle of organizational identification: that individual's perceptions of how their employer is externally perceived impact their identification as employees. Perceived external prestige is a powerful force in garnering employees' organizational identification (Mishra, Bhatnagar, D'cruz & Noronha, 2012; Smidts et al., 2001), H4's statement offers further evidence of this link. Note that he actually uses the word "prestige" itself several times, speaking first of the prestige of the brand—"it carries some prestige" and then noting how for the individual bearer, a branded name card "gives you some prestige." This participant was clearly proud to link his name to his global university, invoking his global identification as a powerful accessory and even literally accessorizing himself with the name cards he passed out to his wide network.

While H4's case offers the prototypical example of accessorizing with a global brand, this use of global identification to enhance one's individual identity was evident in several other cases. Some lecturers, like H4, focused generally on the recognizable brand of the global university, but for others their focus was specifically tied to their broader university's academic prowess and its capacity for enhancing their academically-related identity projects. R3, for example, framed the global association as a benefit he could use in his conference participation and papers:

Whenever we do our publication and also presenting our paper in the conference, I regard myself as AusInt University academic staff. So I can actually use AusInt University as my affiliation... If I'm doing my publication research work, then I may use the University of AusInt Australia as my affiliation... But if you ask me, am I an employee of AusInt Singapore or AusInt University Australia? I would consider myself as an employee of AusInt Singapore (R3).

R3 confirms in this extract his prioritized identities, seeing himself as an employee of AusInt Singapore but valuing the global AusInt identity as a resource available for his strategic identification. He, like others, tends to use the word “university” to denote AusInt AusCity, disambiguating it from the IBC; this word choice suggests a perception of the parent campus as more recognizably academic. AusInt globally is an attractive academic accessory, evidenced by R3’s striking choice of modal verbs in describing his use of the AusInt global brand in his academic pursuits: he says that he “*can* actually use AusInt University as my affiliation” and repeats the sentence a moment later with “*may*” (emphases mine). The addition of these words—rather than just saying “I use”—frames R3’s use of the global affiliation as an opportunity that has been allotted to him. The global university identification is an affordance on offer: a job perk that he can access when needed. It is therefore not unlike an attractive clothing accessory: something he does not wear daily—as he does his IBC uniform—but something he can wear, or invoke, as he wishes.

While lecturers such as R3 use the global university accessory for individual identity enhancement, others use it in service of the IBC. I6, for example, said that industry engagement was a major part of his service work at the IBC, and that AusInt’s recognizable global brand was a resource he occasionally used to broker collaborations and opportunities. He said:

People in the industry will not just go in collaboration with a random guy. This is important. They will know, okay, this is a university and—let’s be frank—this university [is] from Australia (I6).

Relatively new to his IBC, I6 was clearly proud to be a part of the organization, as illustrated in 5.2.2 by his comparison of his IBC employment to a basketball player joining a popular team. Here we see the importance of the IBC’s global connections in this analogy. I6 is proud that his IBC has these global connections, and he sees the global links as something to emphasize directly when seeking to achieve opportunities for his IBC. I6’s offhand entreaty to “let’s be frank” underscores this point: the IBC itself offers him an organizational identification that distinguishes him from “a random guy” in the eyes of external contacts, but it is the university’s global brand that provides the reputability needed to secure the deal.

Thus far I have demonstrated that IBC lecturers construct the global university brand as a kind of accessory, which they use to further both individual and organizational projects. H4, R3 and I6 all describe specific instances of their global-university identification, with H4 connecting it to individual image enhancement, R3 using it for academic pursuits and I6 invoking the global brand in industry collaboration development. Most participants who described a global-university association framed it in this way: as something they invoked occasionally, as needed. For a few others, the global-university association is strong and constant, merging with and even eclipsing identification as an IBC employee. H2's case is the prototypical example. In the extract below she describes how her approach to organizational identification changed when she attended a conference at the AusCity campus:

So when you go out and you identify yourself, you have to kind of emphasize that you're not part of the AusCity campus, you're part of the Malaysian campus... Because there's AusCity and there's us... When I went to conferences it would always be kind of AusInt University and in brackets [IBC Name]... Then I went to a conference in AusCity which was organized by AusInt AusCity... [They said] "Why are you putting [IBC Name] at the end of your institution? Because you're a branch, like a campus. It's not like we go out and we say we're [Parent Campus Name]. We don't do that, so just take it off." They did that when I did my presentation... [During the conference] I was introduced as a colleague... They didn't kind of say, "This is a colleague from [IBC Name]. [They said] "this is just a colleague of ours who's presenting" (H2).

The extract above is part of an extended sequence in which H2 constructs her strong and durable organizational identification as part of the global university. She explains how early in her IBC employment she was locally socialized to distinguish the IBC from the global university—an organizational identity construction that she has since challenged. H2 describes a pivotal moment in her approach when at a conference in AusCity her parent-campus colleagues questioned her use of brackets to emphasize her IBC location; these colleagues—and soon, H2 herself—felt that she should simply present herself as an AusInt employee. In our conversation she stressed the point “I was introduced as a colleague,” framing this as a revelatory development. H2 was proud to be seen as equal with her parent-campus colleagues, and after this experience advocated for more globally-integrated ways of thinking at her campus.

H2's extract and my analysis above veer somewhat into the topic of Chapter 6, previewing the differing constructions of their IBC's organizational identity that IBC lecturers perform and negotiate: separation from the parent campus and unity with the parent campus are two competing such constructions. While in Chapter 6 I explore organizational identity construction in greater detail, I share H2's story in this chapter on individual identity to highlight the ongoing resonance of the global brand identification for some IBC lecturers. I also wish to highlight how global identification is accessed. In H2's case, it was only through the encouragement of her parent-campus colleagues that she began to see herself as an equal "colleague." Echoing R3's choice of "can" and "may," H2 frames her agency in this narrative as limited. She has been given permission to claim the global university identity; this otherwise highly agentic and accomplished IBC lecturer needed to be—as H13 phrased it—"adorned" with the global accessory.

The participants I have showcased in this section are examples of IBC staff who adopted—often temporarily—a global identification with the AusInt brand. It is important to note that these lecturers all had access to resources that made it possible for them to access global identification options. H2 and R3, for example, enjoyed positive relationships with parent-campus colleagues and produced research that may have helped them feel like legitimate global-university employees. Likewise, I6 and H4 were personally very outgoing, comfortably deploying global identification as a strategic resource. Yet for several other IBC lecturers I interviewed, the global identification was less accessible and far less comfortable: as an "accessory" it was out of reach and ill-fitting—something they rarely, if ever, wore.

H9, for example, shared that she identified as a part of AusInt but that she prioritized her IBC organizational identification more than that of the global institution:

INT: Do you feel like you identify more with AusInt globally, like "I'm part of the [larger] AusInt family," or more locally, like AusInt Malaysia?

H9: AusInt Malaysia.

INT: More than AusInt globally?

H9: Yes.

INT: Why?

H9: Why? That's a tough question. Probably due to lack of connection, I would say, with the main campus."

In the extract above, H9 does not express distaste for the AusInt global organization; she simply says that she identifies with it less than AusInt Malaysia and does so “due to lack of connection” with that campus. H20 makes a similar point:

I feel like I'm proud to be part of this AusInt... but not fully AusInt in AusCity because as I said, I've never been there, so I don't really feel the attachment so much... I never think of this before, but as you ask these questions, now I realize that... I feel that I am more attached with AusInt Malaysia rather than there, maybe because I've not been there, so I can't imagine what other culture they have there, how they look, what kind of environment they have (H20).

H20 presents the ranking of her IBC and global-university identifications more explicitly, saying that the first she associates with pride but the second is a weaker “attachment.” Like H9, she explains this low global identification with a lack of familiarity, clarifying that having never visited the parent campus she “can’t imagine” the campus culture and environment. In explaining these reasons for her low global-university identification, H20 reveals an important point about IBC lecturers’ organizational identifications: for some lecturers, these identifications require experiential familiarity with the parent-campus “culture.” The semiotic utility of the branded logo is not sufficient for these links to form in all lecturers; for H9 and H20, identification with the broader university requires familiarity with the home campus. To wear the accessory they need to understand what it represents.

For H9 and H20, a lack of familiarity with the global campus prevents them from developing a global AusInt identification. For others, the global identification is simply seen as irrelevant. H13, who spoke eloquently of her willingness to wear the “dress” of the IBC, confirmed that her organizational identification was with the local IBC. I asked her why she prioritized it over the global university, and she replied:

Why AusInt Malaysia? Because physically we are here and changes made in this campus affect me. Changes made in AusInt may not affect me, unless it's applied globally. That's the reason. What affects me influences me (H13).

In the extract above, H13 equates her local campus identification with its impact on her day to day life. She states clearly that “what affects me influences me,” suggesting that she sees herself as a stakeholder in the IBC but not in the full AusInt operation. Since

she sees the parent-campus operation as distinct from that of the IBC, she is not invested in the outcome of decisions made at the global level. H13's case illustrates that for some IBC lecturers, remoteness from the global university can prevent IBC lecturers' global AusInt investment and thus prevent their identification with the global brand.

A final related factor in limiting IBC lecturers' global identification is the level of influence that lecturers feel over their global university's operations. In the extract below, R5 makes a similar point to H13, highlighting her local IBC identification due to the relevance of its activities for her life. She also adds to H13's point, clarifying the disempowerment she feels to impact discussions at the parent campus:

I would feel that I'm representing AusInt Singapore more... Because this is where I stay... And this is where I can make my decision. And then the Australia side, we follow them, we cannot influence discussion (R5).

Interestingly, R5 also brings up the idea of "influence" as an impediment to her global-university identification. While for H13 it was the lack of the parent campus' influence on her that prevented her global identification, for R5 it is her perceived inability to influence the parent campus that impedes her sense of belonging as part of it. She feels that she "cannot influence discussion" at the global level as she can at the local level. At the IBC she is empowered; at the global level, she is not. This impression of herself as incapable of influencing the global organization is introduced as a reason for her low global identification. Lacking global influence, she declines to avail herself of the global IBC accessory.

The overall impression that the cases of H9, H20, H13 and R5 present is one of individual detachment from the parent campus. Considering the full range of orientations to global university identification, it is clear that this global brand "accessory" is more problematically approached by IBC lecturers than is the default IBC "uniform." H2 was one of few lecturers who seem to wear this accessory constantly; for most participants, a global university identification was either strategically and temporarily used, or rejected as an identity option. The opportunity to adopt the global university's semiotic resources for individual and IBC projects was appreciated by some participants, demonstrating that IBCs' global connections can be experienced as a job perk for some employees.

However, to avail themselves of this global identity option, lecturers had to exert agency

in claiming it: something that several were uncomfortable doing. Barriers to global identification included a lack of familiarity with the parent campus, confirming Wood and Salt's (2018) suggestion that physical travel to the parent campus is important for IBC lecturers' global-university integration. Barriers also included perceptions of the global university's irrelevance for IBC campus life, as well as perceptions of IBC staff's low influence in the full organization.

It is important to note, however, that IBC lecturers who feel unfamiliar or unconnected with the global organization do not necessarily wish to remain so. In some of these discussions I had the opportunity to ask participants how they felt their parent-campus counterparts wanted IBC lecturers to feel. They said that they recognized and appreciated attempts to engage them, as the extracts from H20 and H9 demonstrate below:

INT: Do you think that they want you to feel connected to them?

H20: Yes, yes. I believe they do, yeah.

INT: Yeah. How can you tell? What's something that would make you believe that?

H20: For example, the culture that they're trying to show us before... When they visit and the other way they want to connect us with what's going on there, so that we are not far apart, we know what is going on. Recently, it's very minimal. I think that not too many information delivered to us recently, less visit. Like the sausage day, we don't have that anymore.

We used to have... was it AusInt Sizzle Celebrate Australia day in AusInt? It didn't happen this year, so that's why I said that that feeling seems to have subsided. I don't feel as connected anymore and there was no annual dinner. Because that's when the whole university come together, and I think that's important... It brought everybody together and that's the culture there, that I feel is important; that identity, the sense of belonging, which it's no longer there ever since last year. I'm not sure what happened... but I feel that it's good for everyone. I think that's important for staff morale as well. It's the culture that I enjoy working here (H9).

Both H20 and H9 mention their IBC's sausage sizzle—a common Australian celebration often occurring around Australia Day. Staff from the parent campus sometimes attend, and participants seem to approach it as symbolic of the global university connecting with the IBC, when, as H9 says, “the whole university come[s] together.” Appreciation for sausage sizzles and similar Australian-linked events was

widespread in these data. In the remote context of IBCs, Australia-linked activities take on a special significance. These were repeatedly framed as beloved activities that helped lecturers access the culture of the home-campus country—something that H20 noted was important to her self-identification as a global AusInt member. When these activities were absent, they were missed.

These insights from H20 and H9 demonstrate the desire of locally-hired IBC lecturers to be engaged by the parent campus and supported in feeling like full-fledged members of the full university. Comparing their cases to that of H2, who took pride in being “introduced as a colleague” by parent-campus staff but needed their encouragement to see herself as a global AusInt employee, H20 and H9 exemplify how IBC lecturers who have not been adequately globally engaged may feel. Their expressed appreciation for “sausage day” points to the ease at which university leaders could better facilitate IBC lecturers’ development of global-university identifications. Providing information to them, helping them access the culture and engaging with them in celebratory events such as these can help to shorten the distance between the two campuses and help IBC lecturers feel more comfortable availing themselves of global accessories.

#### **5.2.4 Summary of Findings on Individual Identity Layers**

In Section 5.2 I have presented interview data that demonstrates how IBC lecturers who participated in this research construct their individual professional identities. I have explicated the emically-sourced analogy of IBC lecturers to sports free agents, whose occupational identities are part of their enduring core selves but who temporarily wear the “uniform” of the IBC and occasionally don the “accessories” of the global university. In each section I have detailed the characteristics of these various layers, beginning with the one constructed as primary: IBC lecturers’ occupational identities. As evidenced in the extracted data presented in 5.2.1, IBC lecturers construct their occupational identities as central to their being, akin to—as H13 phrased it—their “soul.” The identity of educator was overwhelmingly introduced as the prioritized occupational identity target, however the occupational identities of industry professional and research academic were also introduced. All three of these occupational-identity targets are prized in the IBC arena, suggesting that prioritizing them offered career



benefits for IBC lecturers as they cultivated these occupational strengths and amassed related social capital. As confirmed by the participant H12, prioritizing an occupational identity is not simply a default approach but a career value: a best-practice means for maintaining independence and employability.

“Adorning” the occupational “souls” of IBC lecturers are their IBC uniforms. In 5.2.2 I presented data confirming that IBC lecturers maintain IBC-level organizational identifications that they prioritize below their occupational identities but consider important to their overall professional identities. Across the data, the IBC “uniform” is constructed as one of daily use, yet participants constructed their attachment to it with some variation. Many saw their IBC organizational identification as a source of pride, either due to their shared history as part of the IBC’s development or more symbolically as members of the globally-linked and locally recognized university. Yet for some lecturers, IBC pride was less easily claimed. H6, for example, resisted saying that she felt proud of the IBC; she was merely “happy for it.” This organizational self-distancing suggests that strong levels of IBC identification cannot be assumed through mere employment; some wear the “uniform” while finding it ill-fitting. Additionally, I2’s sense of negative prestige around the IBC’s private structure demonstrates the complex ways that IBC lecturers approach their organizational identification options and the links between these individual-level identifications and the constructed organizational identities of their IBCs—a subject I discuss further in Chapter 6.

The final and most problematically constructed layer of IBC lecturer identification is what I call their “global accessories”: self-identification as part of the global AusInt university. Lecturers’ constructions of global-university identification differed dramatically from their constructed occupational and IBC-organizational identifications. At the global level there was marked variance in their identifications. Some lecturers, particularly H2, felt a strong personal attachment to the global university, proudly wearing this global accessory throughout their daily activities. Others used the global identification more strategically, such as R3 for his academic pursuits and I6 for his industry engagement. And several others reported low levels of global identification due to a lack of awareness of parent-campus culture or a sense of detachment due to low engagement and perceived influence. This variance in IBC lecturers’ sense of access to

global-university identification confirms IBC literature's concerns that IBC lecturers may not identify with their global institutions, but these findings also reveal that the reasons for low identification are not essential qualities of locally-hired lecturers but rather limitations in organizational communication and engagement. As discussed in 5.4, global identification of IBC lecturers can be enhanced by improving communication around the various issues that they have identified.

Overall in section 5.2 my aim has been to describe the content of IBC lecturers' constructed individual identities and explicate the discursive ways in which they construct these identities, mining these data for insights about the experiences, relationships and other phenomena that may underlie them. These data reveal important findings for IBC management, contributing what I believe is the first comprehensive model of IBC lecturers' individual identity constructions to date. Examining this model and the findings that comprise it, we can see the strong occupational identities of IBC lecturers, the ways that organizational identifications connect with them, and the barriers to organizational identification at the local and global levels. With the layered identities of these IBC free agents established in section 5.2, I turn now to analysis of how these identity layers are enacted in various contextual circumstances IBC lecturers engage in.

### **5.3 Enacting Identity Layers with Stakeholders**

Identities are not simply feelings that individuals have about themselves and their various identification targets. Identities drive behavior, leading individuals to perform through "dramatic realization" their identities in social situations (Goffman, 1959). The enactment of identities is socially cued, with different contextual situations making different identities salient (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). Through this enactment individuals amass data about how their interlocutors perceived their performances, leading to the refinement of identities and identity practices for later performances (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Goffman, 1959; Jenkins, 2014).

In 5.2 I presented findings that IBC lecturers have layered professional identities that prioritize their occupational over organizational selves, making them "free agents" who serve their institutions but reserve their greatest commitment for what they see as their long-term occupations. In 5.3 I develop this identity layering further in discussing

the compartmentalized ways in which these various professional identities are enacted by lecturers. Participants in this research demonstrated self-awareness in how they deployed specific identities in specific contexts. A comprehensive example is that of H15, who in conversation about his IBC-promotion activities clarified for me the different identities he enacts in these and other situations. He expressed these identities as different representational styles, each with their own set of clothing:

Speaking towards parents... I need to bring in this AusInt University image: the way I speak, the way I conduct myself, you know? ... Because when I explain about something, when they ask, I have to prepare myself... Because I'm representing AusInt—that's a well-known university. I need to be somebody that uh, it's like a world knowledge?... For students, towards students, not so much. Because if you look at how I dress up, this is how I dress up in class. [NOTE: H15 is dressed in crisp blue jeans and a button-down shirt.] I don't know whether that makes a difference but some students they feel it's more approachable... Some of them they mention to me that if the lecturers stand there wearing neckties and you know wearing proper lecturer style, they feel like they are being teach. They don't want to feel like being teach. They want to feel like being informed, having a sharing discussion, so with the students I'm not really keen on looking to the AusInt identity, I'm being myself as a designer. For industry, back to the parent think (H15).

H15's extract above exemplifies the strategic variation that IBC lecturers bring to the enactment of various identities in their professional activities. He is profoundly aware of his interlocutors' perceptions in each of these contexts, calling to mind Jensen's (2014) point that identity is constructed through an "internal/external dialectic" of self- and other-perception (p. 42-43). He exercises what Bakhtin (1986) calls "addressivity" in considering which of his identities and enacted manifestations industry members and parents of prospective students will value. He works to package his self-presentation to these expectations, striving to display the intellect and oratorical style he associates with these stakeholders' envisioned ideal university lecturer who possesses "world knowledge." Through this extract H15 demonstrates the identity work he engages in to perform his local and global organizational identifications in these settings.

Interestingly, H15 assumes a very different identity in the classroom, where he eschews a necktie and along with it "the AusInt identity." Elsewhere he had described dressing in suits with parents and industry, but in the classroom with students he is "being myself as a designer." This reference to "myself as a designer" underscores the point

made in 5.2 that IBC lecturers fuse their imagined core “selves” with their occupations. It also very clearly articulates the compartmentalization of identity enactment, with different identities performed in different contexts. In the classroom, H15’s AusInt jersey does not accompany him; he is purely his occupational self, deliberately not representing his institution.

Contained within this extract alone are principles of IBC lecturers’ identity enactment that are visible across these data and represent important findings for IBC management research and practice. I develop these findings in the remainder of section 5.3. In 5.3.1 I elaborate on H15’s claim that he does not represent AusInt to his current students, sharing representative data from other participants that confirm that this practice is widespread. In 5.3.2 I unpack H15’s framing of institutional representation as an external practice, demonstrating with additional data how IBC lecturers customize their organizational identification enactments for different stakeholders. In 5.3.3 I present examples of situations in which in the act of identity performance tensions arise between occupational and organizational identifications, showcasing the enactment context in which Miscenko and Day’s (2016) point about these identity tensions is applicable to this research. I close the section on identity enactment in 5.3.4 with a summary of related findings, leading to an overview in 5.4 of the overall management challenges posed by the layered “free agent” IBC lecturer identities.

### **5.3.1 “With the Students I’m Being Myself”: Internally Enacting Occupational Identities**

As demonstrated in 5.2, occupational identities are prioritized by IBC lecturers as central to their core selves. This prioritization is evident in their identity performances. Across the data generated through this research, IBC lecturers emphasized that they are “themselves” with their students, prioritizing their occupational identities in these interactions. Typically these discussions arose late in interviews after participants had described the different kinds of engagement they had within and on behalf of their universities. When they spoke of their institutional representation to students it was often in comparison to other types of engagement. I7 and H6 below are examples of this, with I7 contrasting student interactions with marketing activity participation and H6

contrasting student and community engagement. In both cases, as in many others, self-representation in the classroom was presented as a stripped-down version of their identity repertoires, with only their occupational identities activated:

For the marketing... it's AusInt Global [that I represent]. But in class I just go with my experience... Mostly I'm myself (I7).

With students I would, you know, not really [represent AusInt]. I'm just an academic, let's say. I'm just a teacher, let's say that, and you're students (H6).

Note that the word “just” occurs in both I7 and H6’s descriptions of their identity enactment with students. “Just” is a limiting word, connoting restriction. I7 says he “just go[es] with [his] experience”—presumably his industry experience. H6 says that in the classroom she is “just an academic... just a teacher.” In both utterances the identity that these lecturers “just” display is that of the occupation with which they identify: I7’s industry self and H6’s teaching self. These extracts further support the idea of occupational identity as fused with the core self and prioritized over other identities, but on the subject of enactment these extracts display an additional crucial fact: in the classroom, when engaging with one’s students, these IBC lecturers enact only their occupational identities. Their local and global organizational identities, however valued, are not activated in their engagement with students.

Lecturers’ prioritization of occupational identities and exclusive enactment of these identities with current students emerged as a finding early in my research. In later stages of data collection I probed deeper when participants made these claims, seeking to understand their reasons for compartmentalizing identity performance in this way. H6, discussed above, was one of several lecturers who elaborated on her views by introducing an internal/external framing of professional identity enactment. With people she sees as internal to her life such as friends, relatives and students, she does not represent AusInt; her AusInt organizational identity is reserved for external professional events:

Let's say there's a conference and you know, they're all kind of basic[ally] from different institutions. Like, of course I am speaking as part of AusInt, so probably I'll do that... but... just like with friends, you know, relatives, with students: no. I would, you know, not really [represent AusInt] (H6).

H9 made a similar point, referencing “conferences” as an engagement context in which her organizational identifications would be enacted, but differentiating this from her campus context, in which she does not represent herself as an organizational member:

H9: To my students, it is not so much of the AusInt attitude [I represent] but if I'm going for conferences, then that's when identity becomes more important.

INT: So there's a difference. Why? Why do you think there's a difference?

H9: I guess in the conference environment, it is very distinct that everyone represent some institution, so that sense of representation becomes stronger. Whereas, just teaching here I see myself as a teacher, a lecturer, so I don't tie myself to the AusInt brand name.

H9 uses similar language to H6 in noting that in the conference environment there is a need to explicitly identify oneself as an institutional member, activating organizational identification. Like H6, she contrasts this external performance with that of internal campus life. Like I7 and H6, H9 uses the word “just” in association with her teaching, adding “here” to ground the teaching at the campus. In the campus environment, she says “I don't tie myself to the AusInt brand name”—an explicit confirmation that organizational identification is not deliberately enacted in these spaces.

My focus in this line of questioning had been to understand how the AusInt brand is reinforced to students in IBC classrooms—a key aspect of identity enactment that is unestablished in current literature. Interestingly, what became clear in this research is that participants not only avoid representing the university to current students: they also avoid enacting their organizational identifications on campus in general. Echoing H6 and H9's distinctions between internal and external engagement, H13 made this point explicitly:

H13: There's no point to emphasize [AusInt] because everyone is AusInt.

INT: Yeah. So when you speak to students you're—

H13: Or internal staff or internally. Yes.

INT: Internally in general.

H13: You don't need to highlight AusInt... because everyone is AusInt.

Here H13 combines IBC staff and students into a single group of internal IBC stakeholders who she does not engage with while enacting her AusInt identity because their shared AusInt affiliation is established. H13 framed the idea of referencing the institution at all as distasteful:

- INT: Do you represent the university to the students? Do you speak as a AusInt representative to them? Do you say like, "Here at AusInt we do it like this."
- H13: Oh no, I don't like that kind of [talk].
- INT: No?
- H13: I hate it.
- INT: You hate it?
- H13: Because we are all in AusInt, so we don't have to do that. Yeah. You only do it to outsiders.

This extract reinforces the internal/external framing of occupational and organizational identity enactment in IBC settings. Organizational representation is something that lecturers do, but only for “outsiders.” Speaking on behalf of the university to internal members is internally unnecessary—something they “don’t have to do.” H13’s reaction to the very idea of representing the university to students is emotively pronounced: it is something to dislike—even “hate.”

H12 similarly resists speaking on behalf of his university and said that he avoids doing so from a value standpoint, citing concerns of honesty:

If they go to any university... of course they are going to teach all this kind of thing... If you always force students saying AusInt, AusInt, AusInt always, it's irritating for them... There is not only one university doing all this kind of thing, there are many universities do that... (H12).

In the extract above H12 stresses his belief that his IBC is not unique in its offerings: “any university” would “teach all this kind of thing,” so referencing the university brand name in association with his teaching would dishonestly misrepresent AusInt as the sole provider of this type of instruction. Interestingly, in his rationale for not representing the IBC to students he also introduces a perceived student response: that hearing the university name—and presumably a brand-reinforcing message—from a teacher will be “irritating” for students, possibly because they will share H12’s view that the AusInt curricular product is not unique. H12’s explicit claim about how students will perceive organizational identification from their lecturers showcases the addressivity that drives IBC lecturers’ identity performances, and reveals an assumption of student distaste for lecturers’ organizational identity enactment that may be perceived by other lecturers as well.

Another rationale given for not representing the university to students recalls the finding shared in 5.2 that IBC lecturers resist university identification when they feel reduced agency within their organizations. H18 said he felt that it was important not to represent his institution, due to his inability to control its decisions. In this extract he had communicated a prioritization of his occupational identity in the classroom, and I probed to confirm my understanding of his perspective:

INT: When you speak to students, is it more like your identity is that you're a teacher, then? Is it teacher first and then AusInt employee second? Or is it the other way around?

H18: I have to think this way, yes. I have to think this way. Because I cannot have too much commitment... because after my experience I feel that I should not put too much commitment on the organization. But I'm committed on my job.

INT: Okay.

H18: On my job as an educator.

INT: Okay.

H18: Yeah. Yeah. But not really fully committed to this organization because many things are beyond my control.

H18's initial answer to my question is ambiguous, but I believe his claim that "I have to think this way" is confirming the central phrasing of my question, that he prioritized and enacted his teaching identity with students. He confirms this way of thinking, saying that he purposely guards himself from having "too much commitment" "on the organization" due to some challenges he had faced in his role and his perception that "many things are beyond my control." He stresses his commitment in his "job" "as an educator," deliberately enacting this occupational identity with his students and avoiding enacting his organizational identifications in these environments. H18's account reveals the necessity of IBC lecturers feeling agentive within their organizations to comfortably represent them. He does not feel agentive and thus is not "fully committed to this organization," leading to his lack of organizational representation in the classroom.

Within this section thus far I have introduced the central identity-enactment finding that IBC lecturers enact their occupational identities but not their organizational identifications with students, deliberately avoiding performance of the latter. Reasons given for compartmentalizing occupational and organizational identifications in this way include a general sense that organizational identification enactment is not necessary when



all campus members are AusInt insiders by default (H13), as well as concerns of overstating the university's uniqueness (H12) and of representing an organization that one cannot control (H18). Across these data the idea of not performing the role of organizational salesperson to students appeared to be important. For these lecturers—many of whom engage in marketing promotion regularly as part of their service work—avoiding selling behaviors in the classroom was framed as a matter of integrity. For example, H15, who spoke at length about his engagement of potential students at marketing events, said that he engages with students differently once they enroll:

INT: Do you feel like once students come here you have a role in continuing to market to them or retain them? Like do you reinforce—

H15: Uh, no.

INT: Okay, tell me about that.

H15: Uh, once a student's in I just teach them accordingly. You know properly. I don't really bother whether they gonna quit or they try to make them be—what you call—try to word of mouth? Sell AusInt to friend outside. I don't think about that.

INT: You're not concerned about that.

H15: Not concerned about that. I just teach them.

In this extract H15 again demonstrates his enactment of an occupational identity with his students: “I just teach them,” and clarifies that he is unconcerned about supporting efforts to retain them or cultivate them as IBC net promoters. His role, he clarifies, is to teach students and not to market to them. His awareness of possible ways an organizational identification might be employed suggest that he may have been asked to support student retention or word-of-mouth promotion, and may be taking an agitive stand against doing so. Regardless of the institution's possible attempts to engage him as an organizational representative to students, he displays here a pronounced unwillingness to do so.

The extracts shared in this section represent orientations to identity enactment that participants across this data communicated. In general IBC lecturers were aware that organizational identity enactment in the classroom was a possibility for people in their role, but overwhelmingly it was an identity option that they rejected. Their IBC uniform is one they reserve for off-campus activities; on the “field” of the campus they are simply occupational members, aware of the branded environment but not adopting this branding

themselves. Regardless of the IBC-promotion behaviors that they may perform in other aspects of their jobs, in relating to students and campus colleagues, it is their occupational identities that are exclusively enacted.

In explicating this finding it is important to stress that the IBC lecturers I interviewed consistently communicated a commitment to teaching to a high standard—even for those whose prioritized occupational identities were not that of teacher or lecturer. In their efforts to teach high-quality lessons and engage students as teachers or industry professionals, these lecturers likely do represent their IBC and university in a positive light. The importance of IBC lecturers' brand representation emphasized by Hughes (2011) does not necessarily require them to be mouthpieces for the brand; brand representation could be achieved through learning experiences that meet students' expectations for their global universities. The finding of this research is therefore not that IBC lecturers do not represent their universities to students, since their teaching itself can be representational. Rather, my finding it is that IBC lecturers I interviewed generally do not explicitly and consciously engage their organizational identities during student interactions and avoid speaking on behalf of the university to students; they seem to see this as inappropriate—something that students would protest.

One counterpoint to my findings that lecturers do not speak on behalf of their universities to students is the finding that these lecturers do like to make students aware of particular university opportunities, such as study-abroad opportunities at the parent campus. In Chapter 6 I discuss how promoting short-term student mobility to the home campus is used by IBC lecturers as a way of compensating for the limited resources they perceive at the IBC. In discussing study-exchange opportunities with students IBC lecturers do make their organization-related identities salient, though their occupational identities appear to remain dominant. In other words, in performing their occupational identity a lecturer may activate knowledge from their organizational role to share with students, drawing on their organization-related identity to frame these experiences as positive, but doing so in service to the occupational identity they prioritize with students. This aspect of IBC lecturers' occupational identity enactment with students is important to note, since it indicates how university leaders may be able to engage this population as internal brand supporters, albeit in an indirect way.

Contrary to this section's findings about IBC lecturers' occupational identity activation in internal campus contexts, in the external sphere IBC lecturers are willing and at times enthusiastic brand supporters, enacting their organization-related identities in service of their IBCs. I turn now to discussion of IBC lecturers' external engagement and the organizational identifications that they enact.

### **5.3.2 “For Parents I Have to be AusInt”: Externally Enacting Organization-Related Identities**

In section 5.3.1 I introduced the internal/external distinction that participants introduce to dichotomize their enacted occupational and organizational identifications. As discussed, in regards to their internal campus activities, IBC lecturers see themselves as occupational members only, resisting activation of their organizational identifications. It is in engagement with stakeholders external to the IBC campus that organizational identifications become salient and the IBC uniform and global-university accessories are employed.

External stakeholders mentioned by participants include academics at conferences, industry professionals and—predominantly—the array of potential students and their families with whom participants interact at recruitment events. In IBC settings I visited, lecturers commonly support university marketing activities as part of their service duties, and it was these interactions that they often mentioned when describing themselves enacting organizational identifications. For example, H9, who as discussed in 5.3.1 said that she does not “tie myself to the AusInt brand” in interaction with current students, said that externally with potential students she does invoke an organizational identification:

H9: For official events, I would say that I would feel that representation becoming stronger.

INT: More for external people?

H9: Yes.

INT: And how about for potential students. Is it more for potential?

H9: Yes. Potential students.

H9's comment above suggests that she engages with students differently before and after they join the university. With potential students she performs her organizational

identification, feeling a stronger pull toward organizational representation with these external stakeholders. When potential students enroll and become AusInt students, she sets the AusInt jersey aside and engages with them solely as a lecturer.

The distinction H9 makes between potential and current student engagement exemplifies one of the major findings of this research: that IBC lecturers enact different professional identities with potential versus current students. This observation aligns with the internal/external engagement distinction introduced previously. IBC students transition from potential to current students and therefore from external to internal stakeholders; in doing so, they transition from activating lecturers' organizational and then occupational identifications. H15, whom I quoted in 5.2 as stressing his unwillingness to engage in marketing-style behaviors to his current students, stressed this distinction in contrasting his identity performances with parents of potential students and with current students who have already enrolled:

For parents I have to be AusInt, specifically AusInt University of the AusCity team... This is like a new customer, you have to reel them in... It's different [with] somebody who [you] try to bring in... The students are already in (H15).

H15's comment above demonstrates a view of current students as having different addressivity needs than potential students and their parents. If you're trying to recruit someone, he says, you need to perform organizational identification—"I have to be AusInt." Whereas with current students who are "already in" the IBC, this identification is not performed. Interestingly, H15 also clarifies the specific nature of the organizational identification he feels he should perform with potential students' parents: that of a global AusInt representative. This clarification indicates the strategic variance that IBC lecturers employ in enacting local and global organizational identifications—a point to which I will return.

In H15 and H9's extracts we see IBC lecturers as self-aware participants in university marketing activities: a unique responsibility of lecturers working within these recruitment-focused settings. The prototypical genre of external organizational identification performance that participants introduced during these discussions was that of the marketing or student-recruitment event. At university open days, local and international recruitment fairs and a host of related events, IBC lecturers don the jersey

and often the global accessories of their universities and enact these occupational identifications in service of IBC viability.

IBC lecturers I spoke with generally communicated a willingness to participate in university marketing activities, with some opining about lecturers' responsibilities to do so. I8 emphasized this perspective. Speaking of the IBC's use of lecturers to support student recruitment, he said:

I think it's a smart strategy... you want to get the people who are in the classroom out front to sell the product. I mean that's the difference I think with branches—you know overseas campuses... education has largely been reduced to a commodity. You know, you have to make it saleable. And lecturers are seen as kind of—I hate to use the word window dressing, but that's what it is. That's what you put in the window to sell the products (I8).

In this extract I8 expresses willingness to offer himself up to his IBC as “window dressing,” and his rationale for doing so is the commodified environment of transnational higher education, where education is now a “product” that must be “saleable.” His willingness to enact his organizational identification in service of his IBC is tied to his constructed identity for the IBC: it is not simply a center of higher learning but a business that must be sustained. I8 elaborated on this point, noting the distinctions between university lecturers' roles in the Asian IBC context and the U.S. higher-education context in which he previously worked:

Teaching at an American university, [student recruitment participation] is something they never ask you to do... I think many professors would probably balk at the suggestion that you need to be part of a marketing campaign, that you need to sell the university. They would say... that's not my role. But it is something that's very much expected of you at these campuses because it's so much a part of, you know, the model... it's about profitability (I8).

In this extract I8 equates his “role” and its expectations with participating in marketing campaigns, saying that in IBC contexts “you need to sell the university.” He was the most enthusiastic of my participants in communicating willingness to perform this role, but his view that “sell[ing]” is a part of the IBC lecturers' general organizational responsibilities reflects a widespread understanding of IBC lecturers. I6 made a similar point:

Lecturers as long as they belong to this institution, they are obliged to represent it and also to advertise for it. Yes, because they are actually to keep it going to move it forward. Today we are top 10. What will happen tomorrow if we're not in the top 10? Will you just leave? No, it's not like that. We have to fight. We have to work to keep it like that (I6).

In the extract above I6 was speaking about lecturers' participation in marketing events, saying that IBC lecturers have a responsibility to enact their organizational identifications at these events and “advertise” for their universities. I6 was the participant who introduced the “free agent” analogy for IBC lecturers to me, and in this extract he demonstrates the temporally-bound team commitment he had introduced. He sees IBC lecturers as “obliged” to wear their jerseys off campus in support of the team, binding this commitment to their period of employment. Like I8, I6 sees external organizational identification enactment as part of the IBC lecturer's job.

While it was a widespread belief that lecturers should perform organizational identifications externally, not all IBC lecturers considered themselves effective organizational representatives. I7, who is of African descent, said that he thought his appearance may impede how his enacted identity is received by external IBC stakeholders:

If I'm out marketing, speaking to parents, potential students, then I feel I'm representing AusInt. But somehow, going back to what I said earlier, at the back of my mind, I don't really feel they are seeing AusInt in me, because of my background. So probably they're expecting an Australian accent, and they are expecting a Caucasian. They're expecting a white guy. So some get a bit surprised, you know, here's an African guy working for AusInt (I7).

I7's concern that local potential students and their parents do not recognize him as an AusInt representative demonstrates the internal/external dialectic of identity construction (Jenkins, 2014). In these instances he feels that he is enacting the AusInt organizational identification effectively, but he suspects that his lack of an Australian accent and a Caucasian heritage marks him as nonrepresentational. Comparing I7's perceived organizational identification performativity compared to that of I8—a white non-Australian—we see I8 positioning himself as both a salesperson and a product—the “window dressing” to “sell” the IBC offerings, while I7 doubts his product resonance with the market. I7's uncertainty about the perceived legitimacy of his global institutional

identity highlights a critical point for international universities: that in regions where IBCs are based, local biases linking particular demographic features to the parent-campus identity can have a chilling effect on lecturers' self-identification as legitimate organizational representatives. Given that identity construction is actually a co-construction of self and others (Jenkins, 2014), repeatedly perceiving oneself being placed in the subject position of illegitimate university representative may degrade the organizational identifications of lecturers who, like I7, experience this othering.

In this section I have presented IBC lecturers' willingness to don their institutional jerseys and represent their IBC and global organization externally. I have noted how lecturers like H9 and H15 distinguish their engagement of potential students from current ones, transitioning from organizational to occupational identity activation. I have also showcased the general willingness that participants express to enact their organizational identifications in marketing-specific activities, noting I8 and I6's emphasis on external organizational representation as part of IBC lecturers' roles. However, as I have shown with I7's case, despite willingness to support their universities, not all lecturers see themselves as fully representative of their global universities, a perception that complicates organizational identification and its external enactments.

A final point to make on the subject of IBC lecturers' external enactment of organizational identifications is the strategic variance with which these individuals alternate between local and global university representation. Although they draw a sharp compartmentalized contrast between representing their occupational and institutional identities, participants fluidly alternate between enacting their IBC and global institutional identities, depending on their interlocutor and context. The quotes below from H14 and H10 exemplify this point:

If I'm talking to someone, and you get the sense that this is a very local person, maybe he's speaking in local language, or his style being local and all that, then I tend to talk to him as if AusInt is local, AusInt Malaysia. I'm a marketing guy, so I tend to do stuff like that. You adapt yourself to your customer, right? Yeah, but I think once in a while, you meet people that maybe you can see that this person is a professional. He knows what he's talking about in terms of education and stuff like that. Then, that's an opportunity to talk to him about AusInt Australia. I have found myself doing that (H14).

The local industry they acknowledge AusInt Malaysia rather than AusInt AusCity... I might have a partner with AusCity, and say that, "Okay, this collaboration or this research project is between me and another colleague from AusCity." Then I probably will say, "Look, I [am] representing AusInt AusCity as a whole." Otherwise most of the time I go out and even in my business cards I will just tell them I'm just from [the IBC] (H10).

In the above extracts H14 and H10 both describe adjusting the organization-related identity they enact for their interlocutors, performing as either a local IBC representative by default and occasionally utilizing the accessory of the global organization. H14 for example exercises addressivity in determining from his contact's appearance or language whether the local or global institution will resonate best with him. For H10, whose comments on this point related to industry engagement, the contextual differences depend more on the type of collaboration he is pursuing: he will present globally if he has a parent-campus partner, but otherwise by default enacts a local IBC identity. The representational flexibility that H14 and H10 describe above demonstrates their access to both local and global organizational identification resources and their willingness to deploy these resources in service to their IBCs.

The data shared in 5.3.2 showcases the agency with which some IBC lecturers enact different organizational identifications and the general alignment between these identifications and lecturers' occupational identities. These multiple identities appear to follow a layered prioritization, with preferences for particular identities reserved for particular moments but an overall sense of harmony between layers. Yet in some instances, conflicts arise between occupational and organizational identity layers. In my final discussion of individual-identity findings of this research, I now present an overview of situations in which IBC lecturers' occupational and organizational identifications conflict.

### **5.3.3 "I'm Not Trying to Sell You Stuff": Reconciling Conflict Between Identity Layers**

In the age of academic capitalism (Slaughter, 2014), contemporary higher-educational organizations have "hybrid identities" in that they pursue the contradictory missions of serving students and generating revenue (Pratt, 2018, p. 107). In the international branch-campus context this hybridization is pronounced, with



organizational viability at the forefront of academic staff's minds. I8's point in 5.2 that IBCs are "all about profitability" demonstrates IBC staff's attention to commercial matters; conversely, through their prioritization of occupational identities—and predominant identification as educators—IBC lecturers also maintain a strong focus on the educational aspects of their roles.

In 5.3.2 I illustrated cases in which participants' identity layers appeared to coexist more or less in harmony. In 5.3.3 I detail examples of tensions that can arise between these layers. One such conflict between occupational and organizational identity obligations regards how lecturers spend their time. H17's case is a representative example:

- H17: Private universities, as far as with expectations, you're not just teaching. You better go out and show your face and promote the university...
- INT: How do you feel about doing those things?
- H17: Personally, it's something I have to do, it's not something that I would volunteer to do... I'd rather be focused on doing what I do here. You know? Rather than going out to sell the university.
- INT: Yeah, yeah. So it feels like it's to sell?
- H17: Yes.
- INT: Okay. How does that feel for you, the concept of selling the university? Is that something that you feel comfortable doing?
- H17: I'm used to it now. We've been doing this for several years now and the starters say, that's not my job, but [if] you'd talked to a lot of us at the start, when [we] first came, no, that's not our job to go out and you know? But now, it's accepted practice..

Like I8, H17 references acknowledgement that part of her role as an IBC lecturer is to help "sell the university," and ties this need to the IBC model, which she frames as not specifically international but "private." H17 is less enthusiastic than I8 about marketing-activity participation, saying she would not volunteer to do it but accepts it as necessary. This acquiescence she ties to time with the IBC, saying that IBC "starters" say it is "not my job"—a stance that she took initially as well.

Relevant to the point of identity layering in this extract is H17's reinforcement of the internal/external distinction discussed previously. She says that "just teaching"—in other words, "just" performing one's occupational identity—is not acceptable in the IBC role: one had "better go out" and perform the organizational identification to "promote

the university.” H17’s choice of the word “out” here is echoed later in this extract, where she says she would “rather be focused on doing what I do here” than “going out to sell the university.” Within this summary of H17’s preferences for spending her work time she again draws an internal/external distinction, with her priority lying in “what I do here”: presumably, her occupational identity enactment in teaching and other internal activities. For the first time in the data shown in this chapter so far, H17’s case illustrates a focal tension between working “here” on campus—enacting her occupational identity—and “going out to sell”—enacting her organizational identification. Pressure to do the latter takes time away from the former, and though she accepts this, it is clear that she sees it a conflict.

H17’s point about how she would prefer to spend her work time exemplifies a temporal tension between occupational and organizational identity prioritization: a conflict of choosing which identification she prioritizes in her work day. Other lecturers describe performance-related identity tensions, where they have needed to choose which professional identification to prioritize in a particular social situation. IBC marketing events were introduced as a key context in which the obligations of occupational and organizational identifications can warrant contradictory behaviors. At these events lecturers often engage directly with potential students and thus feel conflicted about whether to engage them as potential customers to recruit or as students to support. In the previous section I noted that H9 and H15 address this identity complexity by simply delineating between current and potential students. Other IBC lecturers feel more conflicted; for example, I5 noted the gravity with which he approaches these situations:

I5: I’m not a marketer... I’m very careful just because I know that, you know, students are investing their future by taking the degree, and that I’m not selling them snake oil. I’m not selling them something they’re not going to get. I’m very conscious of that, so....

INT: So when you are in those interactions with students and they’re asking your advice or you’re talking about their options, your sense of responsibility then...

I5: It’s to them rather than the organization. I’d say.

I5’s self-identification as “not a marketer” clarifies his identity prioritization, resisting the role of institutional promotion. He talks about being “careful” and “conscious” about how he represents the IBC to potential students, noting his sense of

responsibility to “them rather than the organization.” In I5’s words we see a clear discomfort with the idea of being placed in a sales role and a focus on tailoring that role to an engagement that aligns with his core identity. He will not sell “snake oil”; his occupational identity dictates how he enacts—and limits—his organizational identification performance.

An identity process observable in I5’s data is what Goffman (1959) called “performance breaks”: in the act of performing a role, an individual may break character with that identity and revert to one she sees as more foundational. In I5’s case, at IBC marketing events when he is performing his organizational role with potential students, his sense of responsibility to these students prompts him to set aside his organizational identification at times and speak to them through his occupational identity as an educator. He sets aside his AusInt jersey and speaks to the student candidly, fulfilling his occupational sense of duty but also suspecting that this break with his organizational identity responsibilities is not appreciated by IBC management:

I'm sure that some people would be not say happy about the fact that I was saying “Oh you should go to Australia and do this,” or “In fact this maybe isn't the right degree for you.” I think [the marketing] part of the machine probably would not be so happy about that. But you know... I'm not going to get someone into a degree program that they don't want to do, they're not going to be happy with, that's not going to help them achieve what they want to achieve... You don't want to do badly by someone (I5).

This extract showcases I5’s willingness to override his organizational role responsibilities with his occupational identity obligations when these come into conflict at marketing events. My impression from talking to I5 was that he generally is able to align his occupational and organizational identifications; these breaks in his performance only occur when his sense of occupational responsibilities (to support students) directly conflict with his organizational responsibilities (to recruit students). Fundamentally he is committed to not “do badly” by students, and will thus forgo the recruitment opportunity if from his occupational-identity perspective recruitment would not be in the student’s best interest.

A similar emphasis on the necessary alignment of occupational and organizational identity goals in marketing events was made by I8, who noted that his participating at

university marketing events was predicated on his professional belief, as an educator, that the opportunity was a good one for students:

I have a genuine concern for the student... If you don't feel like you can stand behind the education that is being offered—you know, I mean if I was working for a university I thought was junk—then I wouldn't be doing marketing... I wouldn't lie on behalf of my employer... I know that the education we offer will benefit the students and I have full confidence in that. And so I have no problem telling the student this is what you'll get (I8).

I5 and I8's concerns about misrepresenting their IBC are clear: they feel a responsibility to ensure that potential students receive clear information about their IBC options, even if it means sacrificing an organizational sale. This phenomenon of occupational identity challenging organizational identification was present in many data. Even H15, who had spoken with enthusiasm about his ability to promote the IBC to “customers,” said that performing the role of organizational salesperson sometimes gave him pause:

I think myself a marketing person at that time, trying to market a product, but I don't think of myself as a traditional marketing behavior trying to sell the product... Cause I feel, personally I feel like it's not ethical. I'm a teacher here. I'm not trying to sell you stuff. It contradicted what I'm doing here and... I'm just helping out. Explain what the course does. I'm not trying to sell you... hard sell you, you know? (H15).

In this moment I asked H15 about his occupational and organizational identifications, and he said the former identity “supercedes” the latter. Similarly to H17, H15 said that he would prefer not to perform organizational representation at marketing events—in his case, because doing so establishes “promises” he cannot always keep:

Most of the time—originally, honestly speaking, deep down honestly, I dislike the idea of the lecturer have to participate in those things. Cause I do not believe it's good for... It's not a self-sympathy story, but I think it's true. Okay, I was there, selling all this product, all this course, right, and then you enroll. I'll be your teacher.... And then if I keep on saying, you know, giving like huge promises... let's say the student becomes my student, and then he or she didn't perform well: “So where are your promises during the opening?” Maybe they won't ask me, but if they are smart they will have built that connection within your image now as a very strict lecturer and your sweet talk... I dislike the idea, okay, but... we are small. So we have to do anything that we can to make our department grow (H15).

This extract provides an important clarification to H15's stance presented previously, in which he stressed that he does not feel the need to market the university to current students. Despite his descriptions of how he engages potential IBC "customers," H15 says in this late-interview extract that he would prefer not to do this work, because it compromises the integrity of his organizational role. In this extract we see H15 imagining what it will be like to work with the students after they have been admitted. Knowing that they may be admitted makes them potential future insiders: they will see where he has performed "sweet talk," and this will impede his ability to perform his occupational identity of a "very strict lecturer" who is unconcerned with student retention. He is conflicted between his desire to help his department and IBC thrive and his need to protect his occupational identity and reputation.

H15 seems to accept as a role necessity that in operationalizing his organizational identification at marketing events he will make "huge promises" that will be difficult to keep. He dreads having these promises exposed—a point that I2 makes about her marketing-activity participation:

I'm selling at that point... When I've got that [organizational marketing] hat on, you talk about the strengths. You're not open and transparent about the challenges and the problems, or saying why the other university in Singapore that offers the same program might be a better experience. And I genuinely believe we actually do have the better of the two programs, so I don't think that's hard for me to do. But there are areas that I think that's when students go from being an applicant—potential applicant—and then come on the course then you're like, yeah! [Things] become apparent to them that you wouldn't have necessarily said at the time (I2).

Like H15, I2 imagines how it will feel when potential applicants become current students and discover that she has not been as "open and transparent" as she feels she should. She justifies her organizational representation by noting that she "genuinely believe[s]" the IBC's program is the best option for local students, but like H15, I2 struggles with the knowledge that this external stakeholder group of potential students may become internal current students, requiring the occupational self she invokes with them as their lecturer to account for discrepancies between her organizational self's promises and reality. Unlike I5, H15 and I2 appear to perform their organizational roles

without performance breaks, promoting their IBC programs perhaps beyond their level of comfort, and anticipating social consequences after students enroll.

As these extracts demonstrate, IBC lecturers experience identity conflicts in situations in which their occupational and organizational identifications call for conflicting behaviors. Lecturers are most comfortable in marketing situations that do not threaten their occupational obligations; when conflicts between identity layers occur, they resolve them in different ways. For H17, H15 and I2, identity layer conflicts are resolved through acceptance. H17 has resigned herself to the “accepted practice” of needing to take time from her preferred internal occupational role and “go out and sell” as an organizational spokesperson. H15 and I2 have both accepted that they will sometimes need to make promises in marketing events that may be challenged by eventual enrollees, I2, I8 and I5 reassure themselves that they have confidence in the product that they are selling. Finally, for I5, the occupational identity actually breaks through the organizational role performance, with him speaking to potential students as an educator rather than as a marketer, setting aside the IBC jersey to engage with them as an occupational member.

In all of the cases discussed in this section we see participants resisting what organizational literature calls the “undesired self”—a potential identity that individuals see as unappealing and resist adopting (Elsbach & Dukerich, 2018, p. 258). Feeling obligated to perform roles associated with an undesired self can prompt an “identity threat” which must be resolved (Elsbach & Dukerich, 2018, p. 264). For most lecturers who described tensions between their occupational and institutional identities, these tensions were manageable by constraining their institutional behaviors to comply with their occupational standards. However, this was only possible for lecturers who generally felt positive about their IBC’s offerings. The final identity-layer tension I wish to note is that of I1, whose case is discussed further in Chapter 6. I1 was unhappy with her university’s treatment of her IBC and had given notice to leave the university when I interviewed her. She described great discomfort in performing the organizational identification to stakeholders after her multiple negative experiences, describing identity conflicts that she was unable to resolve:

[With] the prospective students, you know, yeah, of course you were kind of “Look, you should come here.” That you're a representative. But I don't necessarily identify with that. You know, so I feel that I have to, but I don't personally feel it?... It's like a dissonance. Dissonance about how what you talk to yourself and how you're actually acting? And it's, yeah, it's just too uncomfortable for me (I1).

This extract from I1 articulates the affective impact of layered identity conflict. She says “I feel that I have to” represent the organization and encourage student recruitment, but she does not identify as a representative and feels a “dissonance” between her inner self-talk and her external performance, with her overarching dissatisfaction with her university preventing her from reconciling occupational and organizational demands. In Chapter 4 I detailed some of I1’s specific challenges in working with the university parent campus and her criticisms of its treatment of students—schemata that likely contributed to the dissonance she felt. Unlike the lecturers profiled previously in this section, reconciliation of this identity-layer conflict was not possible for I1, who at this point was in the process of resigning from her role. Her occupational identification remained strong—she was headed to a new lecturing job, which she hoped would be more compatible with her expectations.

I1’s case illustrates the most extreme example in this data of a participant resolving an identity threat tied to the undesired self. Her solution to this conflict her between occupational and organizational identity layers was the dissolution of the employment relationship. I1’s example showcases an important point about identity layer reconciliation: aligning these layers is only possible if both layers exist for an individual. For I1, by the time of our interview she had resolved her identity threat by relinquishing her organizational identification entirely. She was operating solely in her occupational identity, remaining critical of her university as she did so. Essentially she was a player who had removed her jersey entirely and was unwilling to put it back on. Formal separation from the university was the logical next step.

Overall in this section I have illustrated that the layers of occupational and organizational identification, while often operating in harmonious alignment, can come into conflict over issues of prioritization temporally and situationally. Lecturers recognize these conflicts and can at times find them troubling, requiring them to feel the need to subvert their organization’s wishes—as in I5’s case—or betray their occupational

obligations to secure a new customer, as in the cases of I2 and H15. Identity conflicts are generally reconcilable, though these compromises may have negative effects. However, in cases in which lecturers have become disillusioned with their roles and continued employment is untenable, reconciliation is not possible and the situation can only be resolved through separation.

#### **5.3.4 Summary of Findings on Identity Layer Enactment**

In Section 5.3 I have built upon the identity-layer descriptions of 5.2, in which I presented the metaphor of IBC lecturers as free agents with occupational “souls” wearing the “clothes” of the IBC and the occasional “accessories” of the global institution. While 5.2 was dedicated to explicating the properties of each of these identity layers and how they appear to influence each other, 5.3 detailed the enactment of these identity layers in social interactions with stakeholders.

In 5.3.1 I presented one of the major findings of this research: that in their engagement of current students IBC lecturers exclusively enact their occupational identities and deliberately do not enact their organizational identifications with this stakeholder group. Their language around this compartmentalization reflects the layered identities introduced previously, presenting their occupational-identity enactment in the classroom as a stripped-down version of their fully layered selves, setting aside organizational “jerseys” and interacting with students solely as occupational members. The idea of lecturers representing the IBC or university to students is framed by them as undesirable and problematic—something that they don’t wish to do and even “hate.” This resistance to speaking on behalf of the university to students appears to be tied in some part to participants’ association with organizational representation and selling—a schema they may have developed through marketing-activity participation. Another reason that some participants resist enacting their organizational identifications in the classroom is a sense of low agency in the organizational environment: perhaps aligned with resistance to selling, IBC lecturers who feel powerless to influence their organizations prefer not to associate themselves with their organizations to students.

Related to IBC lecturers’ restriction of their student engagement to their occupational identities is a wider dichotomy between internal and external stakeholder



engagement. As summarized above, when lecturers engage with internal stakeholders including students and colleagues they activate their occupational identities; organizational identification performances are conversely reserved for external stakeholder engagement. In 5.3.2 I present lecturers' agentive deployment of their organizational identifications in external-engagement efforts, showcasing their descriptions of organizational role performance in activities such as marketing events. These descriptions evidence lecturers using addressivity to understand their interlocutors' understanding of the version of AusInt being represented—the local IBC or the global institution—and strategically employing either the default IBC or the global university accessories to customize their identity performance to these stakeholders' expectations.

In 5.3.2 the examples of external enactment of organizational identifications are generally presented as unproblematic, with different identities salient in different situations but coexisting in harmony. In 5.3.3 I present cases in which conflicts occurred between the demands of identity layers: for example, when marketing-event participation required lecturers to balance their occupational obligations to future students and their organizational obligations to recruit them. These conflicts were reconciled in different ways, through “performance breaks” (Goffman, 1959) of interrupting organizational role performance to share occupational advice; through justification, in which lecturers reassured themselves that the layers were not in conflict; through compromise, when lecturers participated in IBC sales and hoped that students would not accuse them of dishonesty; and in one case, through separation with the university.

My aim in section 5.3 has been to illustrate the outcome of individual-identity layering that I established in 5.2. Acting as occupationally-minded free agents, IBC lecturers prioritize their occupational identities as their main identities on campus, leaving their organizational jerseys at the classroom door. They agentively don their IBC jerseys and global university accessories in external-engagement contexts, performing and strategically altering between these organizational identifications for external stakeholders. In selecting between and performing these various identities in the different contextual situations they encounter, IBC lecturers demonstrate their awareness of identity resources. However, these identity resources are not uniformly distributed, and challenges working within and on behalf of the organization can limit lecturers' comfort

in repeatedly enacting organizational identifications. Thus, while occupational identities are prioritized, relatively stable and dominant in the internal IBC activities that lecturers see as their core daily focus, organizational identifications are less prioritized, less stable and less dominant, restricted to external activities and even then sometimes interrupted or uncomfortably deployed.

The findings of this research on IBC lecturers' enactment of their layered identities demonstrates the impact of identity layering on practice. In section 5.4 I summarize the full set of findings on IBC lecturers' layered identities and how they are enacted, noting the contributions of these findings for IBC literature and their implications for IBC management.

#### **5.4 Conclusion and Implications for IBC Management**

This chapter set out to develop understanding of the ways that IBC lecturers orient to their roles as part of their universities: the professional identities which guide their workplace behavior. In pursuing this focus I have strived to address IBC literature which frames locally-hired IBC lecturers as inherently unwilling or incapable global-brand supporters (e.g., Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2016). While my findings support the general concern in this literature that non-parent-campus IBC lecturers may struggle to connect with their wider universities, I find that these identities are not predetermined by national origin but are open to intervention, with IBC lecturers' engagement by their university colleagues and leaders influencing their identifications.

Critical to universities effectively engaging locally-hired IBC lecturers is understanding their current identities. The phenomena of identity layering and compartmentalized layer enactment presented in this chapter reveal important findings about how locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their professional identities. In this section I overview key findings of this research, highlight contributions to IBC literature, and outline implications for IBC management about how to better engage locally-hired lecturers as organizational members and representatives.

### 5.4.1 Answers to Research Questions

In this chapter I pursue answers to the individual aspects of the following research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In 5.2 I present IBC lecturers' construction of individual identity layers and the discursive resources with which they display them. In 5.3 I showcase IBC lecturers' enactments of their identity layers, noting the compartmentalization of their enacted occupational and organization-related identities to internal and external engagement, respectively. In this conclusion section I summarize these findings as they relate to these research questions.

Speaking first of these individual identity constructions themselves, IBC lecturers who participated in this research described their professional identities as existing in layers, aligning with the emically-sourced metaphor of identities as items of clothing. IBC lecturers conceptualize themselves as having a core self which is not only a personal identity but an occupational one. Whether they identify as educators, industry professionals or research academics, their core occupational identity is the version of themselves that they most value. Their organizational identifications are less critical to them—akin to removable “clothes.” Combining this clothing metaphor with another of lecturers as sports free agents, this chapter envisions locally-hired IBC lecturers as sports team members “wearing the jersey” of their IBC: identifying primarily as occupational members, but proudly serving their teams during the duration of their employment.

The “jersey” of the IBC is not the only organization-based identity layer invoked in their identity constructions. Organizational identifications of IBC lecturers are also differentiated by the layers of the IBC and global university. IBC lecturers' daily “uniforms” are tied to the IBC specifically, and more superficial global-university “accessories” are layered atop these jerseys, separate to the IBC identity. Unlike the

standard-issue IBC “jersey,” global accessories are not universally accessible to IBC lecturers. Those who feel comfortable claiming a global-university identity gain prestige leverage in doing so; however, for others these benefits are not seen as available: their isolation from the parent campus precludes them from identifying organizationally beyond the IBC.

Regarding IBC lecturers’ enactment of these identity layers, these enactments mirror their identities’ compartmentalized constructions. Internally on campus, IBC lecturers exercise their occupational identities exclusively, engaging simply as “themselves.” Externally, lecturers don the jerseys, presenting themselves as IBC members and occasionally—if these identities are available to them—global university members. This “internal/external” framing is resonant across the data, with lecturers demonstrating particular preference for eschewing organizational affiliations when engaging with current students. This phenomenon persists even when IBC lecturers may have performed as an organizational representative with the same students prior to their enrollment: Lecturers differentiate between the external “sales”-oriented communicative contexts of student-recruitment events and the internal contexts of classroom teaching. In speaking to current students they are dedicated occupational representatives, committed to supporting students but not consciously speaking on behalf of their universities.

Regarding the second research question addressed in this chapter—the impacts of lecturers’ relationships and experiences on their individual identity constructions—this chapter suggests a range of factors involved. Positive experiences working in industry or education, for example, helped participants hone a strong sense of occupational identity; likewise, a sense of shared history and pride in the IBC made participants proud to wear its jersey. Relationships with colleagues also played a role in individual identity development, particularly in regards to global-university identification. Lecturers who shared a sense of isolation from the global university and a lack of influence in its operations expressed a lack of identification as university members; however, positive cross-campus engagement was associated with more developed global-university identification. These findings suggest that IBC lecturers would more comfortably represent as global university members if they were engaged more effectively by parent-

campus colleagues—ideally the “Sympathetic Siblings” who communicate interest in IBC operations, as discussed in Chapter 4.

On the matter of consequences of this research for IBCs’ global integration and viability, findings discussed in this chapter point to several important findings. Fundamentally, the fact that locally-hired IBC lecturers have inconsistent levels of access to global-identity resources suggests that barriers exist to their global integration. Regarding IBC lecturers’ enactment of their identities, a long-term viability risk exists in the fact that these lecturers do not see their roles as involving brand reinforcement and deliberately refrain from presenting themselves as university members to current students. Given the importance of IBC lecturers in reinforcing the global-university brand of their IBCs to students (Hughes, 2011), the limited global-identity resources and principled resistance to deliberate brand reinforcement are two areas of potential institutional risk identified in this chapter.

In this section I have discussed the answers provided by this research to the individual-identity aspects of my research questions, outlining findings regarding locally IBC lecturers’ construction and enactment of layered individual identities. I turn now to discussion of the contributions of these findings to IBC literature.

#### **5.4.2 Contributions to IBC Management Literature**

As discussed in 5.1, this research aims to contribute to discussions in IBC literature about the engagement of locally-hired IBC lecturers as university representatives and supporters. Recent literature expresses some doubts about the potential of these lecturers to perform this role. For example, Healey (2018) argues that locally-hired IBC lecturers may lack the parent-campus awareness and “institutional loyalty” to represent their global institutions (p. 631). Implied in these literature presumptions is the idea that through their engagement with students, IBC lecturers reinforce ideas about their universities to students, positively or negatively representing the university brand to them and thereby affecting their satisfaction of the parent-campus equivalence of their student experience (Healey, 2018). The findings of this research both confirm and contest aspects of these literature assumptions.

The concern that locally-hired IBC lecturers may lack awareness of the global university's ethos and practices is demonstrated by my findings to have merit. As demonstrated in this chapter, IBC lecturers have varying levels of access to global university identifications, with some agentively deploying these "accessories" while others hesitate to do so. However, this hesitation to fully present as a global-university representative is primarily not an act of rejection of the global university, but rather a lack of agency in claiming its symbolic resources as one's own. Engagement from parent-campus staff appear to be central in forming the confidence needed for IBC lecturers to comfortably identify as global university members. A prototypical example of cross-campus engagement facilitating IBC lecturers' global-identity development is that of H2, who was proud to be "introduced as a colleague" by parent-campus staff at a conference—a positive experience that appeared to directly result in H2's strong global identification and desire for IBC integration with the parent campus.

As H2's example illustrates, locally-hired IBC lecturers look to their global-university colleagues to help them gain access to global-university resources. Openness and interest from parent-campus course coordinators and colleagues facilitates locally-hired IBC lecturers' sense of global connection, effectively "adorning" them with the global-identity accessories they seek. I posit that the global-representation question raised in current literature should be framed as one of engagement, with the onus on parent-campus course coordinators to engage IBC lecturers as part of a global community of practice—and, likewise, on university leaders to develop mechanisms for overseeing and supporting cross-campus coordination and engagement. Literature exploring IBC lecturers' orientations to their universities should avoid making essentialist assumptions of lecturers' identities based on their nationalities, and should instead consider the important role of this global engagement in lecturers' professional identity development.

However, whether or not IBC lecturers identify as local or global organizational members appears to be a separate topic from the question of how they represent their universities to students. A major finding of this research is that organizational representation in general is not happening in the IBC classroom: lecturers do not speak to students as members of their universities or their IBCs, but simply interact with students as occupational members. IBC lecturers leave their IBC "jerseys" and global

“accessories” at the classroom door; they do not see brand reinforcement of any kind as central to their roles. Any reinforcement of the differentiation between the IBC and local universities is therefore incidental, depending upon lecturers’ classroom practices, which appear to be conducted with integrity but may or may not reflect global messaging.

This finding about locally-hired IBC lecturers’ orientation to individual organizational representation suggests a flaw in the premise of literature arguing that IBC lecturers do not represent the global brand to students (Shams & Huisman, 2016). My finding that locally-hired IBC lecturers do not see themselves as representing *any* brand to students—local or global. I therefore suggest that the brand-representation issue is not one of loyalty but rather of IBC lecturers’ conceptions of their roles. Role clarity around IBC lecturers’ representational responsibilities appears to be lacking in these contexts, and given the pride and support IBC lecturers have for their their campuses and their interest in being globally engaged, it seems likely that their active representation of their universities to students can be secured through clear and effective discussion about these expectations.

In addition to these specific findings, this chapter contributes to IBC literature a comprehensive model of locally-hired IBC lecturers’ layered professional identities and their compartmentalized enactment of these layers in different settings. Given the minimal focus in IBC literature on perspectives of staff—particularly locally-hired staff—these findings provide rich insights for improving IBC practice and building upon this research foundation. Particularly noteworthy is the differentiated identity enactment in internal and external engagement, which intersects with the concept of IBC lecturers’ roles in promoting their universities. As highlighted in Swenddal, Nkhoma and Gumbley (2018), occupational and organization-related identity layers come into conflict particularly in situations involving university promotion, such as student-recruitment events. When performing an organization-related identity, IBC lecturers interviewed for this research will interrupt this role performance if an aspect of their occupational identity takes precedence, such as in advising a potential student with concern for their individual needs rather than recruitment numbers. These complex findings—that IBC lecturers are willing to participate in university marketing activities but governed by occupational

commitments—provide a helpful foundation for the nascent area of IBC research exploring IBC lecturers' support for university marketing and viability.

### **5.4.3 Implications for IBC Management Practice**

A fundamental implication of this research on IBC lecturers' individual identity constructions is that lecturers' identities play a critical role in guiding their organizational performances. Locally-hired IBC lecturers' willingness to support their institutions and the confidence they feel to represent their local and global universities are closely linked to how they identify as members of these groups. Previous research has emphasized the need for managers to consider identity when imposing expectations on staff (Kodeih, 2016). Given the complex identity environment of IBCs, managers should be cognizant of the identity resources that locally-hired IBC lecturers need to perform their duties and the identity conflicts that could impede their successful completion.

The findings of this research about IBC lecturers' low prioritization of global-university identities and uneven access to global identity resources reinforce the need to improve IBC lecturers' engagement with their parent campuses. The IBC leaders that I interviewed were aware of this need and concerned that it was not being adequately met. Resources for flying lecturers to the parent campus—perhaps the most impactful and immediate way of aiding their global-university identification—are limited and appear to be inconsistently available. Yet the benefits of face-to-face lecturer mobility are clear for their global identity formation. As illustrated by H2's conference experience and H18's paradigm-shifting trip to the parent campus in which he met other expatriate staff and expanded his sense of global-identity options, there appears to be no substitute for positive in-person engagement for IBC lecturers' global-identity development. To maximize benefits of IBC lecturer mobility, I recommend combining this initiative with the cultivation of Sympathetic-Sibling style course coordinators recommended in Chapter 4, making coordinating IBC lecturers' parent-campus visits part of course coordinators' ambassadorial responsibilities.

In addition, this research reveals that less resource-intensive measures can also help to engender locally-hired IBC lecturers' global identity development. Simple activities such as celebrating Australia Day were cited by participants as appreciated



opportunities to build symbolic connection with their global university. At the parent-campus level, ensuring that global communications such as newsletters are more inclusive of the IBC is another crucial and inexpensive way of enhancing IBC lecturers' global identification. As noted previously, identity development relies on internalization of how one perceives herself to be seen by others; parent-campus staff engaging IBC lecturers as valued colleagues will contribute to their identification as legitimate global-university members.

At a local IBC level, an implication of this chapter's findings is also that managers should be aware of IBC lecturers' compartmentalization of occupational and organization-related identities, and consider these divisions when discussing expectations for various aspects of their work. For example, if university brand reinforcement is seen as part of IBC lecturers' responsibilities, leaders should consider ways in which this work can be framed as complementary to lecturers' occupational identities, rather than in competition with them. IBC managers should also consider the potentially identity-challenging context of student-recruitment activities and take care to help IBC lecturers see this as an extension of their work as teachers or industry professionals. Clearer and more supportive messaging around these activities will aid lecturers' comfort and perhaps increase their eagerness to support these activities.

A final management implication to note in this chapter is that opportunities for IBC lecturers to nourish their core occupational identities may also prove helpful for staff morale. Dugas, Stich and Summers (in press) found that lecturers allowed to devote adequate time to tasks they saw as identity-related were more satisfied in their jobs (p. 11, see also Kodeih, 2015). Finding ways to support lecturers' engagement of what they orient to as their core identities may be possible given the distribution of various occupational identifications within an IBC. For example, if IBC lecturers who identify most as teachers can take on additional classes, more research time could be allotted to staff who identify primarily as researchers—and who, of course, demonstrate this research identification through substantial output. Though this differentiated workload design would need to be developed in consideration of organizational goals and performance structures, at the very least, the knowledge that IBC lecturers prioritize their

occupational identities is helpful information for leaders seeking to engage this population.

**5.4.4 Chart of Key Findings and Recommendations**

Figure 8 below summarizes the key phenomena discussed in this chapter, their influences and impacts on organizational integration, and recommendations for how university leaders and parent-campus coordinators might address related challenges. This chart is extracted from Figure 12 in Chapter 7, which presents this information for foci across the full thesis.

**Figure 8: Key Findings and Recommendations for Chapter 5**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions	Recommendations for Managers	Recommendations for Coordinators
IBC lecturers construct themselves as free agents, independent from their IBC and university.	Identifying minimally and superficially with global university; uneven distribution of global identification.	Lack of influence in parent-campus operations; perception of parent-campus disinterest in IBC.	Sense of isolation and independence from parent campus.	Enhance lecturers' sense of inclusion in global university community.	Connect regularly and respectfully with IBC lecturers; include them in decision-making processes.
	Prioritizing occupational identities, limiting organizational representation to external contexts.	Professional beliefs and values; sense of role appropriacy and desire to avoid "selling" behavior with students.	Limited deliberate reinforcement of university brand at IBC, possibly impacting student retention.	Aid integration of individual identity layers, engage IBC lecturers in brand reinforcement to current students.	Help IBC lecturers learn the benefits of brand representation and see it as part of their role.

## CHAPTER 6

### PLAYING FOR UNDERDOG TEAMS: CONSTRUCTING IBC CONTEXTUAL DISADVANTAGE

#### **Chapter Summary**

Locally-hired IBC lecturers identify themselves as free agents who temporarily wear the team jersey of their IBCs. They construct these teams as striving but perpetually disadvantaged compared to their resource-rich parent campuses. Carrying forward the sports metaphor of this thesis, I compare lecturers' organizational identity construction to that of sports "underdogs": IBC lecturers frame their IBCs as impoverished environments, burdened by limitations that they believe do not exist at their IBCs' parent campuses. They perceive inappropriate consumerist expectations from students and their families; struggle with inadequate facilities and support services; and believe that local students are less prepared and proactive than their parent-campus counterparts.

In this chapter I detail the different ways in which IBC lecturers construct their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs and note the impact of these constructions on course delivery. In particular I point out the phenomenon of perceived disadvantage leading to enactment of compensatory teaching practices such as oversimplifying course content and adjusting assessment standards. I highlight the self-reinforcing result of these compensations, noting the existence of a cycle of disadvantage perception and reification that some IBC lecturers perpetuate while others resist. So powerful is the disadvantage narrative at these IBCs that some lecturers see mobility to the parent campus as the only way for students to gain a truly global experience. I highlight the risks these phenomena pose for IBC quality and viability and recommend ways in which more productive engagement of IBCs by their parent campuses can mitigate this pervasive and ultimately damaging "underdog" construction.

#### **6.1 Introduction to IBC Lecturers' Campus Identity Constructions**

In this section I briefly reiterate the aims and key concepts that have guided my research on IBC lecturers' campus identity constructions, as well as overview key findings and theories discussed in this chapter.

### 6.1.1 Research Questions and Aims

This thesis presents findings and theories produced through my constructivist grounded theory research on the organizational integration orientations of lecturers working at Southeast Asia-based international branch campuses. Using organizational identity construction as an analytic framework, I seek to answer the following questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In this chapter I focus on the collective aspects of this identity construction, seeking to articulate the identities that IBC lecturers construct for their IBCs, the factors influencing these identity constructions, and the consequences of these organizational identity constructions on IBC lecturers' behavior.

In exploring these phenomena I aim to address the need in IBC literature for empirical understanding of the ways in which locally-hired IBC lecturers envision the organizational integration of their IBC teams within their broader universities. As discussed in Chapter 2, the trend toward localizing IBC academic hiring has prompted concern that locally-hired lecturers will steer their campuses away from global ideals, instigating separation with their parent campuses (Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2016). Leaders of IBCs that participated in this research also shared concerns that their campuses' lecturers may not see their IBCs as part of the university whole, leading to a sense of organizational detachment—an “us and them” separation. Insights about IBC lecturers' actual identity constructions of their campuses are needed, but scant literature attention to locally-hired IBC lecturers makes their perspectives unclear.

In this chapter I respond to the need for empirical insights on IBC lecturers' orientations toward the organizational integration of their campuses, clarifying the ways that participating lecturers currently envision the alignment of their IBCs to their parent campuses. I also outline the broad campus organizational identity constructions that

impact IBC lecturers' professional work, noting the perceived contextual challenges that IBC lecturers draw upon in determining how to engage with students in these unique environments. This emic presentation of IBC lecturers' constructions of their campus identities aims to provide new knowledge for the IBC field and practical implications for IBC management, including suggestions about how university leaders may be able to address disalignment tendencies through more explicit staff training and guidance (Wood & Salt, 2018).

### **6.1.2 Foundational Concepts**

Following Gioia et al.'s (2010) conception of "nested" organizations within organizations, in this chapter I examine how IBC lecturers conceptualize at a local level the question of "who are we, as an organization?" (Albert & Whetten, 1985). As noted in 2.4.2 I adopt the now-widespread view of organizational identity as a marriage of the "sensegiving" vision of leaders and the bottom-up "sensemaking" of organizational members who socially construct the organization through their interactions (Gioia et al., 2010). In this chapter I focus on the nature of the latter process of bottom-up organizational identity sensemaking, examining evidence of "interactions, associations and conversations" (Schultz et al., 2012, p. 3) among IBC lecturers which have led to particular shared visions of their IBCs and how they fit within their larger organizations.

Section 2.4.5 provides an overview of these foundational concepts relevant to organizational identity construction that I utilize in this research. Two additional concepts are worthy of reiteration. First, in exploring organizational identity constructions of IBC lecturers I am conscious that contemporary universities are broadly seen as possessing "hybrid identities" in which two potentially conflicting identities are simultaneously true (Pratt, 2018, p. 107). Pratt (2018) cites universities as prototypical examples of identity hybridity (p. 107): they operate to some extent as businesses, marketing and delivering products, but are also institutions ostensibly serving the public good (Slaughter, 2014). Since IBCs are operating at the forefront of higher education's consumerist revolution (McBurnie & Ziguas, 2007), identity hybridity is likely particularly visible in these settings.

It is also important to reiterate the concept of organizational optimal distinctiveness: the idea that entities are always balancing the needs of identity similarity with a group of peers as well as distinction from those peers (Brewer, 1991). Zuckerman's (2018) concept of two-stage valuation in organizational identity development holds that organizations will first seek to establish their value as a member of a particular category—emphasizing their similarity with other members—and then strive to establish their unique qualities that make them an appealing member of this category, emphasizing their distinctiveness (p. 190). Influencing these constructions is IBC lecturers' perceptions of how various publics view their IBC: the “construed external image” (Ravasi, 2018) which IBC lecturers imagine that their stakeholders envision. Since IBCs are positioned as both local and global enterprises, potential IBC images include comparisons with local universities as well as IBCs' parent campuses.

In this chapter I build upon these foundational ideas from organizational identity research and elaborate upon them as needed to highlight the unique identity phenomena of these settings, guided by the overarching focus on locally-hired IBC lecturers' conceptions of their campuses' global integration.

### **6.1.3 Overview of Campus Identity Data**

Though as explored in Chapter 5, IBC lecturers I interviewed tended to identify themselves as free agents within their universities, donning and removing their affiliated team “jerseys” at will, they also generally displayed an appreciation for their IBCs and their colleagues within them, and to some extent expressed a sense of pride at the IBCs' progress and contributions. There was, however, marked complexity in how IBC lecturers constructed their campuses' organizational identities in regards to their university peers and wider institutions. Perceptions of challenges related to the IBC's private university status, limited campus resources and the presumably low preparedness of IBC students contributed to an overall construction of IBCs as disadvantaged, with a campus identity akin to that of an “underdog” sports team which is perpetually disadvantaged. These challenges IBC lecturers see as unique to the IBC model, making their work more difficult than that of their parent-campus peers. Parent-campus environments are idealized and IBCs are framed as comparatively impoverished,

impeding authentic delivery of global student experiences. In 6.2 I outline key areas of these “underdog” campus-identity constructions.

The consequences of constructed IBC disadvantage are also evident in these data. In participants’ descriptions of their own behaviors as well as that of their colleagues, a pattern of lecturers acting upon assumptions of IBC disadvantage is clear. Though IBC lecturers seem generally committed to ensuring that local students gain a parent-campus-evocative experience, they describe a tendency among some of their colleagues to cater to local students’ inappropriate expectations or perceived reduced abilities, effectively lowering standards at the local level. For some, this behavior is justified as necessary. For others, it is a subject of criticism. What connects them is an overall sense that this differentiation is occurring and cannot be easily curtailed: it appears to be a self-reinforcing loop of low expectations. In 6.3 I present these self-reinforcing outcomes of IBC perceived disadvantage, with participants lowering expectations for local students and seeing student mobility to the parent campus as the only means for students to achieve the promised international experience.

## **6.2 Constructing Disadvantaged Campus Identities**

In this section I outline three key ways in which IBC lecturers I interviewed constructed their campus identities as disadvantaged institutional underdogs. In 6.2.1 I discuss the complex construed external image that IBC lecturers perceive in their host-country contexts, seeing their IBCs’ global links as an attractive value proposition but also perceiving that the IBC’s private status creates negative prestige and a transactional approach to enrollment. In 6.2.2 I present the framing of IBC campuses as resource-impooverished, compared to an idealized perception of parent-campus facilities and services. Finally, in 6.2.3 I showcase the final major disadvantage factor evident in these data: the perception that IBC students are less prepared for university study than their onshore peers.

### **6.2.1 “A Lot of Pampering the Kids”: Feeling Burdened by Private-School Expectations**

IBCs are typically established in their host countries as private institutions, operating under the auspices of their larger universities, which may be public. Both the

private status and global links of IBCs are resonant in locally-hired IBC lecturers' construed external image of their campuses. IBC lecturers compare their campuses with local universities, categorizing them as one of many regional higher-education options and differentiating them from competitors by their status as globally-linked, private institutions. These perceptions form a complex identity impact for IBC lecturers, who are simultaneously aware of their IBC's global value proposition and conscious of how the AusInt brand is approached transactionally in the local market.

A useful starting point for exploring this complexity is IBC lecturers' awareness of the importance of the global university brand. The following extract from H3 showcases this understanding:

Without this global brand then we are just another [university], because in Malaysia we have so [many] local brands of universities, so without the AusInt word then we are just like one of them (H3).

In this extract both the categorization and distinctiveness of the IBC image are clear: H3 establishes that IBCs would be seen as "just another" local university if not for "the AusInt word." This "word" itself is a critical differentiator distinguishing IBCs from local universities.

Across the data in this research, IBC lecturers frame their IBCs' global-university name recognition as the primary driver for student enrollments. The following extracts illustrate this point:

They are always coming because of the brand. It's an Australian university, you're going to get an Australian certificate (I7).

The degree is the same wherever you've been in terms of the bit of paper... Aussie [education] carries weight in that it's recognized internationally (I5).

Although they study in Singapore they can get [an] AusInt Australia degree. I think it's the same as RMIT Vietnam. Although they study in Vietnam they get the RMIT Australia name in their certificate (R4).

Within these extracts the general perception of the global-university brand appeal is clear. Attending the IBC is a means of gaining an internationally-recognized global degree, a "bit of paper," as I5 says, that does not differentiate between the IBC and its



parent campus. Importantly, IBC lecturers see the market appeal of their IBCs as offering a testamur that does not simply carry the name of the global university but also excludes the name of the IBC, allowing students to represent themselves as having undertaken their studies in Australia. As H3 noted:

[Students] are very concerned that their certificate will have AusInt University without the pathway of Malaysia. So they wanted to [be] the same like anyone [who] graduated from AusInt Australia: they do not want to have the specificity of Malaysia... When I was in the marketing activities, so parents were always concerned and asked me whether is there a pathway or we should have exactly the same testamur... We always convince them, make sure they understand that we have only one type of testamur... no matter you are here or there (H3).

In this extract H3 emphasizes the value that students and their parents place on earning a degree testamur that does not reflect the IBC location. The perceived market importance of this singular AusInt testamur is evident in my data, indicating the somewhat ironic phenomenon that international branch campuses' key selling point is their promise of degrees that patently refrain from referencing them. As the leader H21 put it, the overall IBC value proposition was "Australian education at a Malaysian price."

The offering of Australian education—or in some views, Australian testamurs—at local prices was seen by participants as central to the IBC image. Alongside this perception is participants' sense that IBC enrollment is available for a price: that unlike prestigious public universities, IBCs were focused on revenue and thereby willing to accommodate a wider range of potential students. As H17 said,

The good students would go to the public universities... A lot of students here are unable to go elsewhere. (H17)

In this quote H17 voices a perception that was widespread in this research data: participants feel that their IBCs are seen as easily accessible for potentially under-qualified students. The following extracts are two additional examples of this view:

I1: I think at a private uni you don't get the same class of students, you don't get the same quality of students. Cause the entry requirements are different.

INT: Oh, are they lower... or more open?

I1: They're monetary, I would say.

R5: Some of them I also guess that maybe they think it's easier to come here first. Comparing to directly going to Australia.

INT: Why?

R5: They get admitted.

In the extracts above, I1 frames the IBC entry requirements as “monetary”—a point she made with a tone of sarcasm but with conviction nonetheless, emphasizing throughout our interview that she felt that her IBC was primarily interested in revenue and would overlook uninspiring or even forged admissions materials. R5 made a similar point, suggesting that admission is more easily attained at the IBC than at the parent campus.

These perceptions of the IBC as offering attractive global degrees but being primarily interested in revenue generation impacts IBC lecturers’ sense of campus prestige, contributing to their construction of the IBC as a university underdog. Many IBC lecturers see public universities as higher-status institutions which draw the most successful students and enjoy more institutional credibility, and believe that members of these higher-status institutions look upon the IBC as lesser. The following quotes illustrate this perspective:

For the local students in Singapore, NUS for example is very [much] higher prestige in the region—NTU as well... if I'm talking to people in government or local academic institutions, I mean the reality is we're not on equal footing to those local institutions... there is no way we compete. We're not competitors. I think we have a different market of students (I5).

We're seen as a private education institute, private education provider, whatever they call them here... [Local academics believe] “You're not one of us. You're just a private company here to make money on our soil” (P1).

An evident phenomenon in the extracts above is that the perception of distinction between the IBC and public universities is so pronounced to some lecturers that it compromises their identification of the IBC as a legitimate member of the category of universities in the region. Instead, they see the IBC as a “private company” serving a “different market of students.” The uniqueness of their institutions is seen as creating more local differentiation than they would actually prefer, resulting in negative prestige.

From this standpoint, IBCs are university underdogs, saddled with private-university stigma and the expectations that accompany it.

The construed external image of the IBC as a private revenue-focused institution was reinforced by IBC lecturers in sharing the challenges they faced in dealing with expectations of students and parents that they considered emblematic of the private-university ethos. The idea that IBC students see themselves as paying customers was an oft-repeated sentiment. As H4 said,

H4: [Students] are not your staff, they're not subordinates, so... to some extent some people can feel like they are actually master. It's very confusing.

INT: They are your master?

H4: Paymaster, because they pay. IBC especially.

In the extract above, H4 frames IBC students as his “paymaster,” highlighting that he must approach them as customers. H4’s reference to IBC students as powerful consumers was a common sentiment in this data. Across sites, IBC lecturers constructed IBC students as approaching their studies with a transactional mentality. IBC students were positioned as students whose families could afford to purchase prestigious educational courses of study, and who entered their study experience with consumer expectations tied to their financial investment.

Related to the perception of IBC students approaching their studies transactionally was lecturers’ understanding of the importance of the global-university testamur in the local market. For some lecturers, these ideas were fused: they felt that IBC students approached their studies with an expectation of progression, targeting the global qualification as the purchased—and expected—product rather than committing to the experience. H2, for example, said that IBC students often expect their client relationship to garner them high grades:

I get a lot of interesting kind of comments, [like] "I'm paying your salary, so why are you not giving me this grade?" I was like, "No, because you don't deserve it." ... A lot of entitled kids as well, they're going, "Do you know who my father is?" (H2).

In H2’s view these students approach their studies with “entitled” expectations, even going so far as to threaten involvement of their locally powerful parents.

Several lecturers noted that parents themselves—the true customers, in some views—advocate for their children’s grades directly. I7 and I1 described experiences with parental confrontations:

Sometimes you have students calling for their script... They come to your office. You need to show them the script. They will go through it, take their sweet time. This is your time as a lecturer, you time should be better used for more important issues... They can take one, two hours, take their time. I've even had situations where I've seen parents come with their kids. They will go through the script, ask you questions. Ask you questions, it's like an interview all over again. Ask you questions. If they are not satisfied, then they go for a second marker...I just feel they are being over-pampered... It's too much power (I7).

It's generally their parents who were paying, [so] their parents get involved, which is completely foreign to me. I would have parents calling me asking me, you know, “My student or my child got this grade and I do not agree, and blah blah”... I've had them come to the campus... So the parents will come unbenownst to their children, or actually knowing sometimes the kids will bring their parents to a meeting and you're just like “What?”... I think because it's a product that they're buying here (I1).

In these extracts IBC lecturers describe students’ and parents’ performance of their consumer power at the IBC. I7 describes parents demanding to review their children’s exam scripts and scrutinizing his assessments to the point that he feels that he is experiencing “an interview all over again.” I1 describes similar situations, with parents advocating with or without their children’s involvement. Her sentiment—that IBC progression is “a product that they’re buying here”—exemplifies well the perspective of IBC lecturers grappling with student-consumer entitlement.

The framing of the IBC education as a product and IBC students and their families as empowered consumers is positioned in these extracts as an affront to IBC lecturers’ integrity. Many IBC lecturers feel that they are diminished by students and their parents, pressured to accommodate their expectations as consumers rather than exercise their professional judgment. Deciding how much to accommodate these demands is a challenge for IBC lecturers regardless of their heritage. In this thesis thus far I have presented data from locally-hired IBC lecturers; however, lecturers hailing from the parent-campus country expressed similar frustrations about their IBCs’

consumer focus. One example of this is the experience of P1, who felt obligated to pander to students who misbehaved in class:

You can't embarrass students in front of other students because they are likely to complain and that might have implications for either the university or for me personally. So if you get student complaints like that—if you've embarrassed them, if you've humiliated me in front of my classmates, then that would mean I would need to apologize to them face to face and I just think I don't want to go there (P1).

In the extract above P1 was discussing her annoyance with IBC students not coming to class, noting that addressing these infractions in front of other students would create a conflict with potential ramifications for her IBC. Her resistance to chastise students in front of their peers out of concern exemplifies how lecturing in the IBC setting is constructed as more challenging than at the parent campus, due in part to the need to accommodate cultural sensitivities and exhibit a customer-service orientation that IBC lecturers believe they would not need to convey at the same level in Australia.

In general, as noted in Chapter 4, IBC lecturers I interviewed understood the unique consumer positioning of the IBC context and were willing to adjust their own expectations and behaviors to accommodate these unique challenges. However, the IBC's private status and related consumption mentality of students was a source of frustration for lecturers, who worried about their IBCs' long-term viability as they made these short-term compromises. As I2 reflected,

It feels like the priorities here are about teaching numbers... They have to survive. They wouldn't exist if they weren't making money. But I think it's a short term strategy... I think they need to shift strategy a bit if they're going to maintain their position (I2).

In I2's view, the IBC's current customer-service approach is critical but untenable. "Making money" is a current need, but indulging private-university expectations indefinitely could risk the IBC's long-term sustainability.

I2's concern above highlights what may be the underlying concern of IBC lecturers who lament their campus' private-university status: the tenuous viability of their IBCs. H20's quote below expresses the fears that IBC lecturers harbor about their IBC's success, demonstrating the reasons they feel obligated to support them:

We all worry because if there's no recruitment ... something bad might happen. What are the future of the university? We feel very afraid... We're just afraid that, because like last year, the student number dropped, so we know that things may be getting worse... [It could be] another sign for us that maybe the university is closing down maybe. We don't know what are the future... Are we open for another 10 more years? Are we still here? (H20)

H20 expresses concern over low student numbers and worries about the future of her IBC, expressing a fear that is likely common at IBCs and uncommon at their parent campuses. As the data presented in this section illustrates, IBC lecturers are committed to their organizations' success, but they construct their IBCs' dependence on student enrollments as a weakness and disadvantage compared to the parent campus. IBCs' constant need to recruit and retain students—and thus indulge consumerist expectations—is part of lecturers' constructions of IBCs as their university's “underdogs.”

### **6.2.2 “The Mother Campus is Far, Far Better Than Here”: Working With Limited Resources**

In Chapter 5 I noted that IBC lecturers draw from their sense of their campuses' identities to construct their individual identities, sharing a quote from the participant I2 who said that though she was not proud of the IBC's private-university status, she felt pride in its global links. This sense of the IBC's international image as a source of pride was resonant across the data; however, accompanying this pride was a belief that the IBC was not truly equivalent to its parent campus. The quote from I3 below illustrates this view:

I think these offshore branch campuses... they're sort of slightly second rank to the real thing. It's where you go when you can't afford to go to Australia (I3).

In this extract I3 frames IBCs as “second rank” to their parent campuses—an impression echoed throughout the data. In general, IBC lecturers see their campuses as only partially comparable to the parent campus experience, with fundamental differences between them, particularly in physical campus facilities and resources. H18 framed this distinction in extreme language, seeing the parent campus as “far, far better” than the IBC:

My mindset changed after visiting the [AusCity] campus... I feel that it is far, far better than here. The mother campus is far, far better than here... In terms of the classroom facility equipment... The environment as well (H18).

H18 elaborated on this comparison by describing the interactive lecture halls that he toured on his visit to the AusCity parent campus. He was impressed with these halls' capacity to project two different images simultaneously—a feature that he said his IBC's limited facilities lack. Even with basic resources such as microphones to ensure that his students could hear him in large spaces, obtaining the equipment he needs requires navigating tedious processes: each day checking out equipment early in the morning, carrying it across campus, and returning it back again after his class. Overall he finds this routine “troublesome” and sees it as emblematic of the IBCs' poor facilities which impede his ability to deliver a high-quality learning experience for students. Even with these resources that he laboriously collects each day, H18 said,

I find that it's still not enough equipment to support my teaching if I want to have more innovative teaching methods (H18).

H18's connection of his IBCs' lack of equipment to his desire to use “innovative teaching methods” demonstrates his framing of his campus's insufficient equipment as impeding his ability to deliver AusCity-quality instruction. His point echoes that of I5, who having experienced standard laboratory facilities in Australian settings felt that the insufficient labs at his IBC were a limitation worth stressing to prospective students:

Facilities wise, it was quite frustrating to me at the lab because I could see [it was] far from ideal, which is why I was very upfront about this [with potential students]: “This is what you can do, this is what you perhaps cannot do (I5).

Like H18, I5 sees his IBC's facilities as limiting the university's ability to fully deliver on the promise of an Australian-style degree. He is so concerned about this limitation that he informs students of it before they enroll, ensuring that they will not be disappointed.

I1 makes a similar point, exemplifying the physical campus distinction through envisioning a cross-campus comparison through the eyes of mobility students:

I do find it interesting actually the students who come on the mobility program from Australia to hear what their experience is. I always wonder what they think when they rock up the first day... I

can see their faces... I think they're surprised like how small it is and everything whereas you know they're coming from a campus, you know a proper campus with like accommodation on campus and stuff. So I think they probably are a little bit surprised (I1).

In this extract I1 frames the parent campus as “proper” and the IBC as surprisingly small, with an environment so uninspiring that she expects disappointment to register on newly arrived students’ faces.

Physical campus facilities are a tangible resource that can be visually observed across campuses, as noted in the above extracts. However, IBC lecturers’ comparisons of campus resources extended beyond physical buildings and equipment. Another key area of comparison was in the support services provided to students and lecturers at the IBC versus the parent campus. Overall, local services were framed as paltry in comparison, requiring lecturers to independently strive to deliver equivalent instruction. H10’s point below explicates this point:

[AusInt coursework is all done in] English and then you have to do proper referencing and things like that. So I know that... in AusCity, I don't think there's any issue because English is already the mother tongue and things like that. But when it comes to here, I know that we're gonna have problems writing, doing referencing, things like that... So as a main [campus] lecturer, as a main [campus] convener, basically they just teach what you need, but then if student have problem with doing citations, they have somebody who can [help]. Because they have bigger campus, they have more manpower, and here we have one little [disciplinary] component, and I'm the only one, the only convener. So where am I gonna look for all the support by to have them doing citations? Who am I going to look for in terms of helping them to improve on their English?... So I have to do everything on my own!... So a three full-person job in AusCity and everything is consolidated into one person here... And you expect to do equally the same outcome and we follow the same outline and things like that (H10).

In this extract H10 makes a number of comparisons between AusCity and IBC campuses, constructing the latter as disadvantaged. He imagines that English-language challenges exist solely for IBC students, erroneously assuming that English is the “mother tongue” for all parent-campus students. To the point of campus resources, he frames the parent campus as having extensive services to help students improve their written work, where at the IBC these responsibilities are “consolidated” and added to his workload. Importantly, he frames the lecturer’s role at AusCity as easier in this way:



main campus lecturers “just teach,” he says, where “I have to do everything on my own.” In expressing these comparisons H10 highlights the hardship that IBC lecturers associate with their roles and the assumptions that parent-campus lecturers do not share this burden.

While H10’s framing of inadequate student-support resources connotes a burden for him as a lecturer, other lecturers also stressed frustration in its perceived burden on students, feeling that students at the IBC are not supported as well as parent-campus students. I1 made this point regarding her feeling that support for learning difficulties is lacking at the IBC:

From an ethical point of view I find it quite tough when I'm teaching students who I know have severe learning difficulties and I feel it's very unfair for them to be in this position, they're not capable of doing it... There is support [at the IBC] but I wouldn't say necessarily that there is adequate support (I1).

Above I1 laments her IBC’s limited resources for supporting student with learning difficulties, adding later in our interview that she believes full resources in this area exist at the parent campus but not the IBC. I1’s belief that her students are incapable of doing the AusInt coursework poses an “ethical” problem for her, putting her in the position of teaching and assessing students that she believes are not being properly supported. She was frustrated by this issue because she felt that the resources to better support students’ learning difficulties were at some level a simple matter of knowledge sharing, yet her requests for better collaboration across campuses had gone unanswered. This point about the importance of sharing resources across campuses was echoed by H11, who said

When we talk about AusInt there is always the face of one AusInt... And whenever discrepancy happens [IBC lecturers] will say that, “Hey we are one AusInt; why don't we have access to this?” (H11).

While some campus facilities are cost-intensive, intellectual resources such as learning-difficulty support practices could be shared easily across campuses; when this does not happen, IBC lecturers feel particularly disenfranchised on behalf of themselves as well as their students.

A final point about how IBC lecturers compare resources across campuses relates to their views of the inherent benefits of a larger campus scale. In the extract below, H15 says that he believes IBC students find their campus “inferior” compared to that of AusCity—a point that H8 makes, as well:

I have a feeling that [IBC students] feel like this campus can be inferior to AusCity. Because over there they have a full-fledged [disciplinary] faculty and over here we are part under [another discipline]. So they don't feel like it's a [disciplinary] culture is happening here. But they do know that in AusInt AusCity you have a huge group of [disciplinary] students that creates this vibrant [disciplinary] environment so that they might feel that. That's why most of the students when I ask them why don't you go to AusCity, because in the end it comes to money... Meaning that if they don't have that problem, they will go to to AusCity... They would choose AusCity I'm sure (H15).

[Students] often question whether or not what they're getting here in AusInt Malaysia's the same as what they will get in AusCity... There's a lot of effort being to done to what we're trying to do here to be identical to what you will get over in AusCity campus, as well. Except the whole lifestyle as a student, the whole cultural effect here you get on campus that we cannot replicate no matter what (H8).

Above H15 equates the “huge group” of students studying his discipline at the parent campus with a more “vibrant [disciplinary] environment”—and thus a superior study experience. He imagines that students see the IBC as inferior and even asks them why they don't attend AusInt at the parent campus instead. Similarly, H8 describes students questioning the value of their experience, and he acknowledges that despite their efforts to create “identical” experiences, the “whole lifestyle as a student” of AusInt AusCity cannot be replicated at the IBC.

H15 and H8's extracts above reflect IBC lecturers' impressions that the IBC is an inferior version of the more desirable AusCity experience: a “underdog” whose key appeal is financial. As I3 said, “it's where you go when you can't afford to go to Australia.” In our conversation I3 explained that although she believes that students and their families would choose the more “glamorous” parent-campus environment if cost were not an issue, she feels that the IBC delivers “a fairly equivalent degree” through experienced and passionate lecturers, creating “a really good, solid experience.” Like many of the lecturers featured above, I3 is proud of her IBC's efforts but conscious of its

contextual limitations and the ways that they are compared with the full-fledged, resource-rich parent campus.

These lecturers' articulated beliefs about how their IBCs are comparatively assessed against their parent campuses demonstrate organizational identity construction in action. Perceptions of how external stakeholders view the organization are often internalized to influence members' constructions of their organizations (Ravasi, 2018, p. 66). In the extracts above, lecturers articulate a "construed external image" (Ravasi, 2018, p. 66) of the IBC campus environment and resources as comparatively lacking, and in doing so reinforce an organizational identity informed by that perceived image. The IBC is constructed as resource-poor, particularly in comparison to the parent campus, contributing to its "underdog" identity.

### **6.2.3 "We Cannot Have High Expectations": Constructing Students as Underprepared**

Another way that IBC lecturers construct a disadvantaged campus identity is in their framing of local IBC students as less prepared for university studies than their onshore peers. Lecturers I interviewed tended to idealize parent-campus students and frame IBC students as difficult to teach. Generally IBC lecturers construct local AusInt students as less prepared for their study experience, either academically or socially. AusCity is seen as a more desirable environment in which to work, where students are motivated and intellectually capable of higher study, contrasted with the less prepared IBC students. The extract from H10 below exemplifies this distinction:

AusCity always has more [disciplinary] students compared to here... some of them also have working experience... whereas our students, actually most of them, they come up directly from high school... Maturity is also one [issue] because we kind of notice that [disciplinary] students in AusCity in their final year in high school have already [been] given some [disciplinary] units to learn and things like that... whereas our students when they enter into our program... they are still very green and not majored yet... so everything have to start from scratch... they're very green, they're very novice... We cannot have high expectation, especially for our local students. So sometime after teaching one or two weeks you realize, "Oh, our students here are not prepared yet." ... So that means we really have to go back to square one and to lower down our teaching expectations (H10).

In this extract H10 describes tangible differences between IBC and parent-campus students, saying that the latter enter their disciplinary courses with academic and working experiences to draw from, whereas the IBC students are “very green” and “very novice.” He describes noticing this distinction and realizing that his expectations should be lowered for local students. Across the data, IBC lecturers make these kinds of comparisons between IBC and parent-campus students, positioning the former as impressively capable and the latter as generally weak. The following extracts from the data further demonstrate this framing:

We do run short programs for the Australian students... the thinking is very, very different... They're very broad-minded. You can give them one topic and they will very diversify and they can talk to you about a various range [of topics]... So they've very, very knowledgeable compared to Malaysian students (H19).

In my class, if I have international students, they are very outgoing, they can voice out what their opinion is, but if it is Malaysian, if I ask a very broad question, if you ask, "Do you have any questions?" Definitely there's no questions... They have very limited idea to discuss... International students, they can tell you what they want, what they think about the issue... The class is more lively (H20).

One of the things that usually come up with [parent-campus coordinators]: they say that we're kind of lenient in our marking... I've seen work produced by students over there. And there is a difference... It seems like they are used to a higher standard. And then here, it's not very good. So, the ones which are average [in AusCity]... would be relatively good here... We're in a different environment here (H17).

In these extracts H19 and H20 describe working with Australian students visiting the IBC on study exchange and being surprised by their range of world knowledge and conversational ability—something they frame IBC students as lacking. H17 also claims awareness of parent-campus students' comparative advantage over IBC students, in her case noting that the written work produced by parent-campus students is generally of a “higher standard” than at the IBC. While H10 emphasizes that contextual differences between campuses necessitate more fundamental scaffolding of concepts, H17 stresses the skill disparity as an assessment issue, noting that “we're in a different environment here.”

The differences that IBC lecturers perceive in their students compared to those at the parent campus relate not only to the knowledge and skill of these students, but also to their orientations to learning. Throughout my research, participants suggested that although the chance to earn a degree carrying the name of the international university name inspired students and their families to choose the IBC, students themselves did not actually crave a fully international experience. The following extract articulates this belief:

On the certificate, they want [AusInt branding]... But in the way that it operates here, if you're looking at day to day students coming into a campus and things like that, I think they would also prefer the local flavor. For example, we find a tendency among some of the local students to talk to people, even the lecturers sometimes, in their own mother tongues, talking to us in Mandarin and things like that (H14).

H14's depiction of what he believes IBC students desire in their experience demonstrates the complexity of delivering on the promise of the IBC's global brand. He believes that they want the AusInt name recognition on their testamur but in their experience "prefer the local flavor," suggesting that students chose to study at the IBC for the very reason that it is not the parent campus and would thus not require them to alter their behavior in the same way that they would at the university's parent campus. R5 offered a similar explanation:

Maybe their family thinks that is a Chinese-dominated culture. So these students come here they can get used to this environment easier (R5).

Language is a part of H14 and R5's construction of the local-campus appeal, as exemplified by H14's reference to students speaking Mandarin to their teachers. However, the primary cultural difference evoked in the "local flavor" participants described local students demanding was that of culturally-resonant values of learning. For example, lecturers noted local teaching-centered practices in which students show respect to their teachers by quietly listening and not speaking in class: an approach that differs from contemporary ideas of university classrooms as dialogic student-centered environments. Striving to help students adjust to global pedagogical practices was seen as a challenge for lecturers, as noted in the extracts below:

Teaching-wise and material-wise we are all the same, but maybe the student community is slightly different... You can see the students [in AusCity] are more proactive... Not so shy compared to the students here... Students here if you ask questions, you may have to call names, you know? Maybe “A, can you please answer?” “B, can you please answer,” and so on. Because they are a bit shy. But then compared to students over there it seems like... they talked spontaneously without being called... I think so because it's our culture here. If you see our secondary and primary school. Majority of the students who are in the class sitting, listen, so they are very used to that, so that—you will think they are [unwilling to] stand in the middle and ask something (H3).

Most of the local students will be pretty quiet and pretty unresponsive... [The transition to university] can be a bit too much because that's pretty different from what we have here in schools. We're brought up in a way not to ask questions or to question things, in particular, so when you make that shift over to university, when your lecturers are asking you to ask things, to be inquisitive, to be curious, as well, many students pretty much don't take it upon themselves to really, really try to make that shift, so much... When it comes to the students locally and we compare them to the international students, that's the gap that the local students have compared to everyone everywhere else (H8).

H3 and H8's perspectives offer an interesting counterpoint to H19 and H20's earlier-stated assumptions about local students' lack of knowledge and conversational ability. H3 and H8 see the issue as more related to permission: local students are, as H3 says, “shy” compared to parent-campus students who “talked spontaneously without being called”—something that in the local culture might be interpreted as rude. H8 makes a similar point, noting that students in his IBC's region are trained to not ask questions, and though his IBC encourages students to adopt international practices such as engaging in class discussions, students struggle to do so. H3 and H8 both see students' reticence toward classroom dialogue as a disadvantage for them—as H8 says, it is a “gap that local students have compared to everyone everywhere else.” As lecturers charged with teaching these students, this disadvantage becomes part of the IBC teachers' challenge as well: a burden that these lecturers see their parent-campus colleagues as not needing to face.

These comments from H3 and H8 showcase how IBC lecturers construct local students as burdened by their conceptions of appropriate student behavior: misconceptions that prevent these students from engaging in learning in the ways that their international colleagues do. Another area of inappropriate student expectations that

IBC lecturers discussed regards how students believe lecturers should behave. A widespread concern noted by IBC lecturers was that local IBC students expect and demand teaching approaches from their lecturers which contradict contemporary approaches to tertiary education.

Lecturers repeatedly framed the rote-learning mindset common to Confucian-heritage countries as a barrier impeding them from successfully engaging students in the critical-thinking coursework of the global IBC. The concept of “spoonfeeding” was introduced repeatedly in this vein of discussion, presented by lecturers as a student expectation for highly simplified distillation of learning concepts, delivered to students in memorizable form and assessed in a predictable way. The following extracts exemplify lecturers’ perceptions of this spoonfeeding expectation:

Coming to university, that's supposed to be a big change from your previous schooling and such but a lot of [students] approach their studies, still, the same way. They still think that, especially here in Malaysia... they feel that they are supposed to be spoonfed a lot of information (H8).

I think over here, by and large, the school system spoonfeeds people. So they teach them to come to class. Turn off your mind and get downloaded stuff. That has always been the case here. So we're trying to get away from this. But it's quite hard for many of them (H14).

In Malaysian education, I believe some of them actually are more towards, how do we call it, spoonfeeding... For example, if you give this question, they want you to provide them with this answer, but, assuming that you actually didn't provide them with the answer... they will actually say that you are not helping them (H16).

I think our undergrads here, they want to be spoonfed still... I bring a little bit more constructivism to the classroom, and the students don't always like it... Or get it. Or it's like, you know, "But she just tells us to talk about it. She doesn't give us the answer" (I3).

In the extracts above lecturers frame the student expectation for spoonfeeding as problematic and attribute it to expectations set by students’ earlier schooling experiences, where they are “supposed to be spoonfed” (H8), absorbing “downloaded stuff” (H14). H16 and I3’s extracts exemplify why lecturers see the spoonfeeding expectation at IBCs as such a considerable challenge: They say that students expect to be given questions and answers to memorize, and if a lecturer does not comply, students “don’t always like it” and will “say that you are not helping them.” Lecturers I interviewed explained that their

local students have spent years being conditioned to see learning as reduced to a series of answerable questions. As H11 explained, in students' pre-university experiences "if they give an answer that's not in the marking scheme, they will definitely be marked wrong." This frustration is understandable: Adjusting to a wholly different learning approach in university is difficult for students, and helping them do so is difficult for their lecturers (Heffernan, et al., 2010).

In my discussions with IBC lecturers, local students' expectations for spoonfeeding teaching styles were often framed as insurmountable: habits of mind that they could not individually overcome at such a late point in students' education. As H19 explained,

When you come to university and you're foundation level, we're teaching you critical thinking. That's too late to teach someone critical thinking. You're 18 already, so when they come to a class they're still hanging on to us like "What do you want us [to say?]" Like you give them an essay question and say "Okay, this is how the essay question is, this is how you write it." And then they go "What do you want?" [and you say] "No, what do you want to see here? What's your opinion of this?" [and they say] "I don't know" (H19).

H19's depiction above of striving to coach students in critical thinking showcases the challenges that lecturers perceived about attempting this paradigm shift with IBC students. H7 makes a similar point, tying students' challenges with critical thinking to superficial investment in their university experience:

Our students... they find [class discussions] more difficult. They prefer that you just follow the textbook. And then tell them okay what are the questions that they need to answer in the exams... So it's very difficult to get students to be interested in the topic for the sake of learning (H7).

In this extract H7 echoes H19's point about students struggling to engage in learning activities that deviate from memorizable known-answer questions and answers. He believes that learning "for the sake of learning" is not a motivator for these exam-focused, superficially-engaged students—a phenomenon that R4 also perceived:

The difference between the Australian university and our campus in Singapore here: I think students in Australia they are more self-learning, not students in Singapore. Students in Singapore they rely more on the lecture... in Australian universities, I needed to participate in several courses there, and I've realized that students after the lectures and tutorials they usually study on their own,



try to understand the materials. They purchase the textbooks to learn. They try to go to the library to search for materials... But here, I realize, maybe 95 percent of students don't buy a textbook. So they just rely on the slides, the lecturers' slides and tutorial question. So yeah, they just focus on studying these materials. I feel like the majority of them don't like to explore further, and they just focus on how to pass the exam, so that's the main focus. But I think I found a higher number of students in Australia are interested in more beyond the lecturers' slides (R4).

Above R4 compares her experiences observing students at the AusCity campus versus students at the IBC, noting like H7 that IBCs students focus primarily on “how to pass the exam” and lack intrinsic motivation to learn the subject material. R4 contrasts local students' approaches with those of Australia-based students, who she believes truly desire to learn “beyond the lecturers' slides.” IBC students, R4 says, don't even buy a textbook; they “rely on the slides” to study. R4 was obviously bothered by this comparison, constructing IBC students' orientations as disappointing; however, she told me later in our discussion that she feels compassion for IBC students and strives to accommodate their needs by making her slides very detailed so that students can effectively study these instead of the textbooks that they do not purchase.

R4's decision to provide her students with distilled learning concepts to sidestep curricular mandates exemplifies the central question at the heart of the spoonfeeding challenge: Is a good teacher someone who accommodates students' desires, meeting their inappropriate expectations, or is it someone who delivers on the promise of the global-university brand, for which spoonfeeding would be a miscarriage of principles? In the contexts I studied, opinions vary.

The lack of consensus on how to address inappropriate student expectations causes additional challenges for IBC lecturers. Many lecturers struggle with the awareness that they and their colleagues are not united in their approach to these expectations and therefore send mixed messages to students. Some lecturers described feeling alone in their efforts to resist spoonfeeding behaviors, feeling that colleagues of earlier courses had indulged these expectations and had thus reinforced them. The extracts below exemplify this impression:

That mantra has sort of been drilled into them... We're not supposed to speak back to the teachers, to the lecturers. We're not supposed to ask questions because they're going to give us the answers. There's a certain level of that as well in Foundation and it's been drilled in them that in

Foundation, "This is what you do and you have to do this right down to the letter. If you don't, you're not going to get marks for it." So by the time they get to degree... and I'm telling them, "There's really no rules. There's no right or wrong answers. There's no mathematical equation which gives you a specific answer that I'm looking for, it's what you understand." They're just completely lost. They say, "But in Foundation we were taught this."... I have to kind of deconstruct them... Then I get kind of colleagues telling me, "Well, you're not supposed to do this because this is what we taught them in Foundation." I was like, "Yeah, but you're not supposed to do that because it doesn't work" (H2).

[I am] not saying all of my colleagues are working in the same way, but I think they probably understand more of the expectations of the students and are able to cater to that... And then [when students advance to] me teaching at a [higher] level they haven't got necessarily quite the foundation that you'd want in the critical thinking skills to continue on the pathway to coming through (I3).

H2 and I3 both describe the challenges of working within IBC contexts in which some staff have reinforced problematic expectations for learning. H2 says that her IBC colleagues in the foundation program have “drilled into” students culturally-resonant and globally-problematic expectations for university learning; so assured are these lecturers of their position that they chastise H2 for challenging it. I3 similarly feels that earlier course lecturers “cater to” students’ expectations, leaving her with a scaffolding challenge at later levels. Early-course lecturers tell students exactly what to do and may even demand full regurgitation; this causes problems when students progress to coursework that is more interpretive and creative. Yet in these extracts this problem is framed as ongoing, with early-course lecturers unwilling to work together toward a more scaffolded approach.

H2 and I3’s description of their colleagues’ orientations to IBC teaching demonstrate how problematic student expectations are framed as a major contextual disadvantage for IBCs, as lecturers fulfill problematic expectations instead of challenging them, reinforcing rote-learning mindsets. H2 said that even when students themselves attempted to break free of these cultural behaviors, some lecturers resisted their deviance:

If [students] do a semester or even a year's exchange and they get so used to how things are being done in Australia and when they come back here, they speak up in class, lecturers get offended, personally offended... It's just because they're so used to students, kind of Asian students, again,

ticking that box and being kind of quiet and doing whatever it is that they're told to do and not having an opinion about anything (H2).

I7 made a similar point, suggesting that IBC lecturers' indulgence of problematic student orientations to learning prevent them from receiving the Australian educations they have signed up for:

When they're coming they're expecting all Australian style... but somehow I believe they're not really getting that full feel of Australian institution... If I were to rate it from one to a hundred, [the IBC is] probably around 35% feel of Australia, because of the lecture materials. We get our lecture materials from main campus, and we try to modify the findings for local context... [However] if you want to [recreate] an Australian environment, you should have staff that are... let me not say fully Australian, but at least have that Australian mindset. So there's a bit missing there. You still have lots of Chinese staff, and they also come in line with the mentality of the students (I7).

I7 clarified for me that his point was not about country of origin—he himself is from Africa, not Australia. Rather, his point about lecturers who “come in line with the mentality of students” related to the cultural reinforcement of expectations for student and lecturer behavior. In this extract I7 articulates clearly the perspective underlying many lecturer constructions of students' orientations to learning as a contextual difference between campuses: that in indulging students' desires lecturers are robbing them of the experience they have paid for, delivering in his estimation only 35 percent of the AusInt experience. Australian materials alone are not sufficient, he says; a full brand-reflective experience requires collective lecturer commitment to adopt “that Australian mindset” and wean students of inappropriate expectations. Barring this collective approach, students' AusInt experience is incomplete.

Cumulatively these inappropriate student expectations are constructed by IBC lecturers as a frustrating contextual challenge of which their colleagues at the parent campus are unburdened. IBC students are framed as less prepared, less active and more insistent on problematic teaching practices than students at the parent campus, making IBC students themselves an impediment to IBC lecturers delivering the full AusInt experience, contributing to their overall construction of the IBC as a comparatively disadvantaged environment—a perpetual campus “underdog.”

### 6.2.4 Summary of Findings on Campus Identity Constructions

In this section I have demonstrated some of the ways in which IBC lecturers construct their IBCs as contextually disadvantaged compared to their universities' parent campuses. Lecturers' awareness of IBCs' private-university status lays the foundation for these perceptions of contextual disparity, with participants describing students and their parents having transactional approaches to IBC enrollment, diminishing lecturers' roles in ways that lecturers imagine parent-campus staff do not experience. Participants also describe physical facilities lacking basic equipment and complain that IBC support services fail to compare to those of the parent campus, creating inequivalence in how students are supported. Finally, participants construct student expectations as a challenge, suspecting that IBC students want Australian degrees but not necessarily Australian experiences, citing student demand for problematic "spoonfeeding" teaching approaches that conflict with curricular foci on critical thinking.

The differences that IBC lecturers perceive between their campuses and their university's parent campuses contribute to an overall framing of IBC contexts as contextually impoverished, shackled by limitations these lecturers see as insurmountable. IBC lecturers I interviewed widely framed university parent campuses as resource-rich and comparatively easier places in which to work, where students had appropriate expectations and were academically prepared, intrinsically motivated and eager to engage in class discussions. IBC lecturers are deeply aware of the unique perspectives of their campuses' consumers—students and their parents—whose expectations contribute to the campus identity. As Philips, Tracey and Kraatz (2018) note,

organizational identities are constructed, not only through the interactions and interpretations of organizational members, but through communication with external actors designed to signal the organization's relationship to particular categories (p. 367).

By emphasizing their financial outlay for education and citing unique demands—e.g. for spoonfeeding—IBC consumers emphasize the business category of the hybrid IBC identity, conflicting with educational dogma and thus leading IBC lecturers to see these contexts as uniquely challenged.

It is important to note, however, that many of the challenges lecturers see as exclusive to the IBC context express exist in onshore locations. For example, Australia-based higher education enrollments include a substantial number of English-language learners, making English-communication support a widespread need rather than one that is limited to IBC settings. Likewise, research on academic identities shows that university lecturers generally perceive a trend toward students approaching their education transactionally rather than with intrinsic desire to learn (Acker & Webber, 2016). IBC lecturers who see student consumerism as exclusive to the IBC context may be idealizing their impressions of onshore students, intensifying the distinctions between them and their offshore counterparts. Lecturers' perception of their IBCs as uniquely bearing these burdens contributes to their overall construction of their campus identity as disadvantaged: institutional underdogs facing unique challenges.

In this section I have chronicled IBC lecturers' impressions of inappropriate student expectations for teaching and transactional approaches to learning, mentioning at times their sense of obligation to cater to these needs in service of their student clients. These perceptions of IBC disadvantage set the stage for corresponding action, with some IBC lecturers responding to perceived disadvantage with compensatory teaching behaviors, while others encourage student mobility to the parent campus as the only way of gaining the true global-university experience.

### **6.3 Responding to Perceived Campus Disadvantage**

In this chapter thus far I have outlined the ways that locally-hired IBC lecturers construct their IBCs as institutional "underdogs" both locally and globally, hampered by limited resources, underprepared students and inappropriate consumer expectations. Identity and action are closely linked (Pratt, 2012); a critical question for this research is therefore how the "underdog" IBC identity manifests in lecturers' behavior.

In this section I elaborate on the outcomes of underdog IBC constructions, highlighting the ways that lecturers enact IBC disadvantage by either subverting parent-campus oversight by lowering standards for IBC students or embracing student parent-campus mobility as the only means for experiencing a truly global education. In 6.3.1 I outline the processes involved in IBC lecturers compensating for perceived disadvantage,

illustrating how these compensations can accommodate and reinforce lower expectations. In 6.3.2 I showcase the ways that IBC lecturers seek to help students to escape the cycle of reinforced disadvantage by participating in exchange programs at the parent campus, where they can experience what participants frame as more authentic forms of the intended university experience. In 6.3.3 I summarize these findings.

### **6.3.1 “Of Course We Are Still Spoonfeeding”: Enacting Disadvantage through Compensatory Teaching Practices**

In this section I elaborate on the ultimate outcome of the “underdog” organizational identity: lecturers giving in to the pressure to deliver on student expectations for teaching practices that deviate from global standards. The practice of IBC lecturers indulging problematic student expectations was introduced in 6.2.3 with a quote from R4, who said that she added detailed information to her lecture slides so that her students could avoid purchasing and reading her course’s textbook. I shared how lecturers who strived to resist spoonfeeding behaviors struggled when their colleagues reinforced these practices, adding to their construction of problematic cultural expectations as contributing to IBC disadvantage.

Across the data, there is significant evidence that IBC lecturers feel compelled to indulge student expectations that they see as unique to the IBC. Many strive to strike a balance between meeting local expectations and scaffolding toward global standards, while some are adamant that local students require specific ways of teaching, framing practices like spoonfeeding as a kind of student-centered localization. The extract below from my interview with R5 showcases how IBC lecturers enact perceptions of IBC disadvantage through their delivery of culturally-resonant teaching practices:

- R5: When you come into university you shouldn't expect the lecturer is going to spoonfeed everything... Of course, we are still spoonfeeding... We inform the students don't expect that. But I think we still have to, particularly for the first term. They are still kids... I come from [Asian country] so I really understand the situation... This might be a bias but my personal experience would be like those students, for example coming from some like Asian countries... spoonfeeding is not that rare during their high school... So learning on their own could be

quite

new to those students.

INT: Do you worry that they won't be able to transition? Like if you're spoonfeeding, spoonfeeding, spoonfeeding, you know, at what point do they need to become independent?

R5: I'm not worried... Those who can grow, they will grow.

In this extract R5 introduces the topic of spoonfeeding as a problematic expectation, saying that students “shouldn’t expect” this behavior from lecturers. Then she acknowledges that “of course” her IBC is “still spoonfeeding” even though they tell students not to expect this practice, and she follows this with a personal value claim, saying “I think we still have to.” The account she gives for this belief is based on her perception of students’ maturity, cultural background and schemata: They are “still kids” and since most come from Asian countries they will expect spoonfeeding and not be prepared for “learning on their own.” R5 does qualify her claim somewhat, saying that spoonfeeding is necessary “particularly for the first term,” but when I asked her about how lecturers might scaffold students toward independence, she professed ambivalence, saying that it was up to individual students to “grow” if they “can grow.”

R5, like all participants I interviewed, seemed to be a caring and committed lecturer, and the stance she communicated in the final sentence of this extract may not fully represent her approach to teaching. However, the adamance with which she expresses this point and her overall endorsement of spoonfeeding suggest that in her teaching she deliberately enacts a very different approach to education than what she sees as ideal from a global perspective. She distinguishes her students from their onshore peers in framing them as unprepared for “learning on their own,” and advocates for indulgence of student expectations. Her logic appears to be that high school is the place for developing learning independence, but since Asian students do not receive this learning opportunity in high school, spoonfeeding should continue into university. Lecturers in this view hold no responsibility for helping students develop academic independence; it is up to individual students to pursue and achieve it.

R5’s practice, in short, is to perform spoonfeeding at the IBC while outwardly decrying spoonfeeding as inappropriate. This combination of actions could be seen as a way of localizing the global AusInt curriculum, referencing the ideals of student-centered

education while in practice indulging and reinforcing local preferences for learning. In other interviews as well, participants framed spoonfeeding and other locally-preferred teaching practices as necessary in their local contexts. Often, like R5, they emphasized that spoonfeeding was particularly needed at early stages of tertiary education. The extracts from H11 and H14 below emphasize this point:

Some people are not spoonfeeding; some people getting the students to actually learn by themselves. But, the problem of learning by themselves here is that if [students] don't have foundation knowledge of what they should actually know and then [we] go and encourage [them] to explore, explore, explore, what will happen is that once they are exploring the whole of information, they are not sure what is right and what is wrong... Because the foundation knowledge was not solid enough... So the spoonfeeding in terms of creating a foundation knowledge... Spoonfeeding actually does a good job in providing the foundation (H11).

The problem [with spoonfeeding] is that if you don't do it completely, then you're going to alienate a whole bunch of people, because they don't know how to do it. So you still have to give a certain amount of that. But you have to stop at a certain point and say, "Here's something for you to hang on to. But on this, you have to build on this. And you have to run with it yourself and do something else with it." I think it has to be like that (H14).

In these extracts H11 and H14 appear to be responding to critics of spoonfeeding by arguing for the necessity of the practice. H11 says that students “learning by themselves” is a “problem,” since “foundation knowledge” can only be delivered, in his view, by spoonfeeding. H14 similarly advocates for some level of spoonfeeding, in his case saying that not doing it will “alienate a whole bunch of people.” Both H11 and H14 describe scaffolding students to gradually become independent, providing straightforward guidance at early stages and then requiring more independent thinking. This approach is itself uncontroversial—scaffolding toward independence is a basic teaching value—however, the fact that these practices are in both extracts prompted by perceived IBC disadvantage is important to note: H11 frames spoonfeeding as necessary to compensate for a lack of foundation knowledge, and H14 frames it as necessary due to students’ lack of schemata for independent learning. Thus, perceived IBC distinction from its parent campus is being enacted in the IBC classroom, as these lecturers utilize compensatory strategies to adjust for what they perceive to be local students’ disadvantage.



The comments of R5, H11 and H14 advocating for spoonfeeding in the IBC classroom comprise one form of lecturer enactment of the “underdog” IBC identity, catering to the perceived disadvantages of local students. Yet enactment of IBC disadvantage exists beyond spoonfeeding. In addition to adjustments in instructional practice, an outcome of the IBC “underdog” identity is lecturers adjusting expectations for student work. H10, for example, said that he adjusts the assignments in the global course he teaches to make them more achievable for local students, whom he perceives to be less capable than parent-campus students. He said:

I adapt, and sometimes I have to kind of redo some of the assignments, or probably bring it slightly lower down. AusCity would probably would expect three, four writing assignment probably. I have to only expect them locally to do probably two. And that's what I am thinking of planning to do this this coming semester, maybe the other one is more two presentations skills and things like that instead of writing. So four writings thing I might reduce to two writings here, and the other two could be more on presentation... it's a different core of students (H10).

Recall that in 6.2 I quoted H10 saying that at the IBC lecturers needed to “lower down our teaching expectations.” In the extract above we see the enactment of this expectation lowering: the reduction in the number and scope of course assignments at the IBC. Four writing assignments at the parent campus becomes two at the IBC, with presentations introduced as a more accessible way of achieving the course outcome. In this extract the phenomenon of lecturers enacting the “underdog” IBC identity is explicit: H10 directly ties his lowering of standards to the difference in students across campuses. At the IBC, he says, “it’s a different core of students.”

In addition to adjusting assignments for IBC contexts, lecturers responding to perceived IBC disadvantage may also adjust assessment standards. H17, for example, described applying locally-lowered standards and evading parent-campus awareness of this practice by avoiding cross-campus moderation with parent-campus staff. Prior to this extract H17 had described disagreeing with parent-campus colleagues about IBC students’ work. I asked her to elaborate on this process:

INT: So what happens in that situation where you think a paper for example is good and then [parent-campus staff disagree]?

- H17: We know it's not, we know, you know? So for example, we would have full moderation, there'd be a few scripts from there, two scripts from here... You know and when you mark the way when they mark ours... [IBC students do not do well].
- INT: Do you disagree with them? You argue with them?
- H17: We have to. It's like, nevermind. We'll just do our marking over here. Because we can't go, you know, at that standard, our students would all fail.
- INT: So are you able to do that? Are you able to say "Thank you very much for your opinions but we'll do it ourselves?"
- H17: Yeah, we do it ourselves. Yeah.
- INT: Okay. And you have the freedom to do that?
- H17: Well, they're not going to check everything, right? So, but yeah, generally... We do try to adjust to meet expectations, but we have to be realistic as well.

In this extract H17 describes participating in a full cross-campus moderation of exam papers and seeing a noticeable cross-campus difference in student work—a point showcased in 5.3 for its construction of the IBC identity as disadvantaged. In this extract H17 describes acting on her sense of perceived IBC disadvantage. She feels that the parent-campus standard for student work is too high for IBC students: if imposed “our students would all fail.” As a solution she resists moderating with parent-campus staff, saying “we’ll just do our marking over here,” and she is able to successfully do so thanks to parent-campus colleagues’ unwillingness or inability to “check everything.” H17 perceives that sharing this challenge with her parent-campus coordinator will not engender sympathy, so she obscures this information from the parent campus, unilaterally deviating from set standards.

The standards adjustments that H10 and H17 describe making are based on their expectation of lower local-student preparedness at the IBC. The pressures of IBCs’ commercial environments can also be a factor in IBC lecturers deciding to adjust their assessment standards, as evidenced by the quote below:

I think it can be quite tough to the students when they're the customer they're the ones paying, and our students would have no problem with voicing that. So if you're looking for, you know, plagiarism issues or students who've failed, there often can be kind of implicit pressure to pass them anyway because they have paid. You know it's not explicit, but they can be you know and also even just from that point of view, they are paying huge amounts of money, and sometimes you just genuinely feel sorry for them. You know, “Do I, like, ten-thousand-dollars know that they

failed this piece of work? Or is it a bit more borderline?" It just brings a few grey areas I think in (I1).

Above I1 describes questioning her professional judgment about the appropriate grade to give students in consideration of the cost of their IBC education. I2 voiced a similar concern, saying that she feels pressured by her IBC marketing department to accept some students who would likely not be admitted to the AusCity program, and then feels she must help these students "scrape through" due to the magnitude of their families' investments:

They're paying a lot of money for this course. And I know we shouldn't factor that in, but that's hard not to (I2).

These extracts from I1 and I2 illustrate the ways that IBCs' private status and perceptions of related inappropriate expectations can compel IBC lecturers to adjust their standards. Drawing on the findings in Chapter 5 regarding IBC lecturers' identity layers, these extracts present another example of tension between IBC lecturers' occupational and organization-based identities. In this case it appears to be lecturers' organizational identifications that override their occupational judgment: Their role as part of the IBC enterprise necessitates a commitment to delivering on consumer expectations, driving them to adjust their standards despite the higher standards they may hold as an occupational member.

Overall, these IBC lecturers' deviation from global educational approaches demonstrates the power of the "underdog" narrative to shape IBC operations. Framing students as underprepared with problematic expectations leads to enactment of the IBC disadvantaged organizational identity through self-othering behaviors, with locally-compensatory educational practices reshaping global educational products and reinforcing discourses of IBC disadvantage. I see these phenomena as part of a self-reinforcing cycle in which perceived disadvantage results in lowered expectations for students, lowered expectations result in lower standards, and IBC students perform to these lower standards, fulfilling these lowered expectations and recursively evidencing perceived disadvantage. Though perceptions of IBC students as a "different cohort" from those at the parent campus are likely grounded in tangible experience, the cycle of

lowering expectations and assuming disadvantage blurs the lines between cause and effect, suggesting a pervasive self-fulfilling narrative of IBC disadvantage.

For many lecturers, IBC disadvantage is assumed and treated as taken-for-granted knowledge that necessitates compensatory behavior. For some participants, however, this compensatory behavior itself is seen as a problem, leading them to seek ways in which this cycle could be broken—or at least evaded. I turn now to a brief discussion of the final example of IBC “underdog” identity enactment in this research: lecturers’ encouragement that students participate in mobility programs at the parent campus to gain an authentic AusInt experience.

### **6.3.2 “See What It’s Like Over There in AusCity”: Encouraging Student Mobility for the True AusInt Experience**

As noted throughout this chapter, participants in this research believe that local students—and in some accounts, Asian students in general—maintain strong culturally-sourced convictions about how students and teachers should behave, causing them to resist engaging in class and expect educators to deliver highly simplified teaching content to them in memorizable form. IBC lecturers construct these expectations as a problematic disadvantage, yet many report catering to them as well, feeling compelled to align their practices with these perceived needs, particularly when their colleagues are reinforcing rather than challenging students’ expectations. Above I suggest that en masse this lecturer participation in compensatory practices such as “spoonfeeding” exacerbates a cycle in which problematic expectations are met, standards are lowered, and the individual lecturers hesitate to interfere with the cycle.

Instead of collectively interfering with this cycle of reinforcing problematic expectations, IBC lecturers accept that IBC othering is taking place and strive to help IBC students gain what they frame as a more authentic AusInt experience by studying for a semester at the parent campus. IBC lecturers frame these overseas mobility opportunities as life-changing for their students: a path for them to attain the educational approaches that IBC lecturers associate with the onshore students whose skills they tend to idealize. As H19 explained:

We have students from Malaysia that... go to AusCity directly and then they come here for the mobility program... [Their] train of thought is completely different.” ... [And] those who are from here, they go over to AusCity and then they come back... they come back changed. It's very, very, wow—like, yeah, we never imagined it was going to be like that (H19).

H19 contrasts onshore AusInt students with local IBC students, describing these groups as having “completely different” “train[s] of thought.” Importantly, she suggests that the more desirable AusCity train of thought can be developed: IBC students who participate in mobility programs “come back changed,” amazing their IBC lecturers. H19’s depiction of student mobility’s transformative power showcases an important point about lecturers’ construction of IBC students’ potential: though as discussed in 6.2 IBC lecturers tend to idealize onshore students and see local IBC students as comparatively less capable, they tie this differentiation to cultural norms and exposure, not inherent ability.

Participants in this research linked IBC students’ short-term AusCity mobility with the development of globally-desired student orientations. Some, like H19, approached this development almost mystically, focusing on holistic change made possible through immersion in the parent-campus study culture. Other lecturers isolated specific features of parent-campus mobility that could provide IBC students with experiences that were less likely to occur at the IBC. A straightforward example of this phenomenon is evident in data for P1, who said she encouraged IBC students to take part in mobility offerings partly due to the more expansive laboratory facilities at the parent campus:

When students are very keen and they come to me [for mobility advice], I would say go, go, because I know at the moment you will get better hands on here [experiences] than you would here, so if you are prepared to go then go (P1).

P1’s mobility encouragement to students—”go, go”—is echoed by other IBC lecturers. I5 also spoke about the benefits for students of experiencing AusCity facilities, but spoke also to the larger cultural appeal of engaging with a wider global community of learners:

I try and encourage as many as possible to go and spend some time in the Australian campus... I think they benefit not just from facilities, but I think the personal growth... I don't think they're as

mollycoddled over there than they are here perhaps?... Very few of the [IBC] students whether they're international or not come from outside Southeast Asia or outside of Asia. So there's probably not as much of a cultural adjustment for students coming here as there are for Australia. So I think they come back and they've matured a lot. Yeah. You can see it instantly (I5).

In the extract above I5 introduces the term “mollycoddled” to describe the general IBC practice of indulging students’ culturally-sourced educational expectations, noting that for the predominantly Asian IBC student body there is “not as much of a cultural adjustment” involved in attending a Southeast Asia-based IBC as there would be in going to Australia. Importantly, I5 presents being “mollycoddled” as an inherent drawback of the Asian IBC experience, preventing students from gaining the maturity they would at the parent campus. This extract provides further evidence for IBC lecturers constructing student-expectation fulfillment as a reinforcing loop that cannot be collectively overcome at IBC: to avoid “being mollycoddled,” students must “spend some time in the Australian campus,” from which they will return having “matured a lot.”

I5’s framing of IBC student mobility to the parent campus as the only way for them to escape performed expectations at the IBC was resonant in other interviews, as well. In the extract below, H8 also references student maturity development as an outcome of AusCity mobility, articulating in greater detail the framing of the IBC as a culturally impoverished environment that students need to leave to reach their full potential:

I think [IBC students’] level of maturity definitely increases [following a semester at AusCity]. They're much more aware what it's like, what the task is like to become a student... what their counterparts and their other students actually help and contribute towards their learning, as well. I think being stuck in your culture and being familiar with everyone else around you—most of the people around you—sort of puts you into this comfort zone that gets you a little bit too complacent with everything... I do encourage them to go abroad and take a semester over in AusCity, to recognize that the campus life coming to university isn't coming to [secondary] school again. You're not just here to study and graduate and go somewhere else and end up somewhere else, that it's a whole learning experience (H8).

H8 referenced the idea of IBC students being “stuck in [their] culture” several times in our discussion, tying it as above to students being in a “comfort zone” that restricts their development. He says that familiarity with campus interlocutors—

presumably literally as well as culturally—makes students “a little bit too complacent,” and like participants in 5.2 he references the idea of IBC students failing to understand the difference between secondary school and university. H8 sees taking a semester of study in AusCity as a powerful means for students to gain this understanding of what in his view university life involves—what their “task” is as students and how to orient to their classmates as fellow learners. Like I5, H8 frames IBC student mobility as delivering the full AusInt experience, training students in how to orient to their experiences in a way that the culturally-imprisoned IBC cannot.

Participants who emphasized the benefits of student mobility for overcoming problematic cultural expectations for learning tended to focus on two areas of benefit. Fundamentally, as demonstrated by extracts from P1, I5 and H8 above, IBC lecturers see short-term mobility to the AusCity campus as a way of ensuring that the AusInt brand promise is fulfilled in the experiences of individual students. However, lecturers also constructed student mobility as benefiting the IBC community, providing students with schemata that supports lecturers’ classroom actions. H16, for example, shared how mobility experiences help socialize students to see the value in critical thinking:

In AusCity, they are being encouraged onto critical thinking. We try our very best to actually explain that to the student the importance of critical thinking as well in our [IBC] campus, but sometimes when they've never been to the other side, they will not be able to understand. They will try maybe they will at least say that we are giving them a hard time to, you know what I mean, to crush their mind or brain (H16).

H16’s reference to IBC students accusing lecturers of trying to “crush their mind or brain” evocatively demonstrates the pressure that lecturers feel to continue the IBC cycle of indulging students’ problematic expectations for highly simplified, straightforwardly delivered teaching content. In H16’s view, spending time at the parent campus is a way of shifting these problematic expectations. She says “when they’ve never been to the other side, they will not be able to understand,” echoing I5 and H8 in the suggestion that changing problematic student expectations is not possible at the IBC and can only be achieved through mobility. H16’s challenge is palpable: she says that she and her IBC colleagues “try our very best” to champion critical thinking, but students’

thinking only changes when they receive these messages in the parent-campus environment.

Like H16, H8 also encouraged IBC students' temporary mobility to AusCity as a way of socializing them more successfully to adopt AusInt global ideals. His vision of these benefits was more ambitious, suggesting that with more IBC students going overseas and returning to the IBC with globally-imbued revised expectations, the problematic collective expectations of IBC students could be slowly eradicated:

The whole lifestyle as a student, the whole cultural effect you get on campus we cannot replicate no matter what. So that's why, I suppose, I've always been so encouraging towards getting them to see what it's like over there in AusCity and they can bring a bit of that back. The entire exchange program is pretty much supportive of that. You get former students who have gone over and come back to actually preach about it while they're here. Promote it. To encourage students to actually go over there, as well, and tell them how to adjust and tell them what to expect and tell them to also come back and encourage students after them to do the same... A number of them have, actually, taken advantage of their experience and learned to take a bit more charge of their life here on campus, their life here as a student (H8).

For H8, IBC student mobility to AusCity offers the potential of a sea change in students' thinking. He describes the AusCity "lifestyle" and "cultural effect you get on campus" as not replicable at the IBC—suggesting to some extent student-life activities such as clubs, but more holistically student orientations toward their study experience. H8 sees AusCity mobility as an avenue for the IBC to get students to "bring a bit of that back"—"that" being the orientation toward learning that helps students "adjust" and understand what to expect, as well as to "take a bit more charge of their life on campus."

H8 was the prototypical advocate of student mobility, envisioning it as a catalyst for a wider movement toward IBC culture change. He noted the success of the exchange program to date in getting former exchange students to "preach" and "promote" the benefits of AusCity mobility and to champion global approaches to learning; his emphasis on students learning to "take charge" of their IBC experience was at its heart part of a wider hope that students would achieve what he framed IBC lecturers as not being able to do alone: pivoting the IBCs' culturally-resonant but problematic approaches to teaching and learning toward the global approaches he saw as ideal. He said:



If the academics try to [enact global approaches] themselves and students don't embrace it and say that that's trying to be too harsh and too rigid of them, then there's gonna be a matter of some resistance... I think it's a lot easier if students adopt it first. If they fully embrace it... But they do need to [be] open and say that if they want the recognition to be fully and absolutely Australian education they're getting, they have to live up to that expectations. Currently, I don't think that they are doing just that (H8).

H8's hope, in essence, is that IBC students will visit the AusCity campus en masse and be compelled by their experiences to collectively transform expectations at the IBC. Instead of problematic student expectations prompting indulgent lecturer behavior, H8 hopes that IBC students will “adopt” and “fully embrace” global orientations to learning, and be clear that they desire “fully and absolutely Australian education,” prompting lecturers to change their practices accordingly. H8's focus in this extract on student contributions to IBC collective orientations is crucial: he says that he feels that students are not currently “liv[ing] up to” the “expectations” of the global AusInt education, preferring—to quote H14 from 6.2.3—the “local flavor” of culturally-resonant teaching approaches.

The extracts above from H8 explicate an assumption evident throughout data on participants' enactments of the “underdog” identity: lecturers see IBC students as powerful in perpetuating problematic teaching and learning expectations and lecturers as relatively powerless to oppose them. Studying for a semester at the AusCity campus can help students temporarily escape the cycle of perpetuated disadvantage at the IBC, and by doing so can instill in them alternative learning approaches that lecturers hope will gain in popularity at the IBC. Student mobility is therefore a mechanism for gaining a truly global experience as well as potentially a means of reframing IBC approaches to align with global ideals.

### **6.3.3 Summary of Findings on Enacted IBC Disadvantage**

In this section I have explored the enactment of IBC lecturers' constructions of a disadvantaged campus identity. As I highlight in 6.3.1, one way IBC lecturers enact disadvantaged campus identities is by adjusting their teaching practices and standards. IBC lecturers who perceive students as preferring “spoonfed” information engage in spoonfeeding, justifying these behaviors as necessary. Some lecturers also reduce the

scope of assignments and soften assessment criteria, deviating from global standards and at times acquiescing to inappropriate consumer-based expectations. Across the data examples exist of IBC lecturers feeling the need to give into pressure for localized interventions that perpetuate narratives of disadvantage. These lecturers care about their students and their IBCs; they want them to succeed. However, these interventions inadvertently reinforce lower expectations for the IBC, exacerbating the disadvantage.

Some lecturers respond to perceived IBC disadvantage not through compensatory behaviors but through encouraging study abroad. As noted in 6.3.2, some IBC lecturers strive to provide a globally-equivalent student experience, but the recursive cycle of disadvantage is so powerful that they choose to work around it, encouraging students to travel to the parent campus to gain the fully international student experience. For these lecturers, the limitations in the IBC environment—both physical and cultural—may be causes for them to champion, but these challenges are weighty and not easily addressed; mobility is seen as a viable short-term solution.

#### **6.4 Conclusion and Implications for IBC Management**

My goal in this chapter has been to explicate the ways in which locally-hired IBC lecturers construct nested organizational identities for their campuses as part of their larger universities. In doing so I have strived to examine the veracity of assumptions in IBC literature that locally-hired IBC lecturers will steer their campuses away from their global university standards. Interestingly, I find that the phenomenon of IBC lecturers deviating from parent-campus approaches does exist, but the factors prompting these actions differ from the “institutional loyalty” gaps assumed in IBC literature (Healey, 2018, p. 631). These deviations are born of circumstance, not disloyalty: they result from lecturers grappling—typically without full support from parent-campus coordinators—with what IBC lecturers see as a marked gap between global expectations and local capacities.

IBC lecturers construct their campuses as contextually disadvantaged, burdened by private-university consumer expectations, limited campus resources and low student preparedness. These constructions exert pressures on IBC lecturers to perform compensatory behaviors in their teaching and assessments, as well as to advocate for

student mobility opportunities as the only way of gaining a parent-campus experience. In this conclusion section I outline this chapters' findings in regards to the research questions, noting its contributions to IBC literature and implications for university leaders seeking to enhance IBCs' global integration.

#### **6.4.1 Answers to Research Questions**

In this chapter I have strived to address the campus-identity aspects of the following research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In 6.2 I addressed the construction elements of the first question above, explicating the ways in which IBC lecturers I interviewed constructed an “underdog” organizational identity for their campuses. In doing so I showcased how experiences that IBC lecturers had within their roles had led to these perceptions and constructions. In 6.3 I linked these identity constructions with IBC lecturers' responses to the underdog campus identity, showcasing ways that it leads IBC lecturers to either engage in compensatory behavior or encourage study abroad for the full AusInt experience. I will now summarize findings for each of these areas.

The first and most fundamental question addressed in this chapter is that of how IBC lecturers construct identities for their campuses. Seeing IBCs as “nested” organizations within organizations (Gioia, et al., 2010), thus capable of having their own organizational identity, I have strived to understand how IBC lecturers answer the classic existential question of “who are we, as an organization?” (Albert & Whetten, 1985). Organizational identity construction involves establishing both unity within a category and distinction from other categorical members (Zuckerman, 2018); in the IBC context this work is complex, since IBCs are simultaneously part of their local category of higher-education institutions and part of the global category of their wider university.

Overall, the campus identity constructed by IBC lecturers in this research is one of disadvantage. Though many feel pride in their IBCs and willingness to support them, these lecturers also feel that the IBC context presents several unique disadvantages that collectively cast their IBCs as institutional “underdogs.” IBCs’ local image is part of this, with their private-university status creating a sense of negative prestige among their public-university peers as well as creating—in participants’ views—consumerist expectations from students and their parents. The limited resources of IBCs compared to their parent campuses also contributes to these constructions: differences in facilities and support services are two examples that lecturers gave of areas in which they saw the parent-campus environment as far surpassing that of the IBC. Finally, IBC students are framed in this research as underprepared for university study compared to their parent-campus counterparts, with lower levels of technical ability, world knowledge and conceptions of how to engage in contemporary learning environments. Altogether these perceived disadvantages contribute to a campus identity as an institutional “underdog,” under-resourced and laden with contextually unique burdens.

The “underdog” identity that these IBC lecturers construct for their campuses is enacted in their reported behaviors. Perceptions of low student preparedness and students’ desire for inappropriately simplified learning materials lead many lecturers to accommodate these preferences, delivering information in ways that may undermine the critical-thinking focus of the curriculum. Compensatory enactment of IBC disadvantage also manifests in IBC lecturers simplifying assignments, lowering standards for local students’ work and passing students who in a less commercially-focused environment they may have failed. Collectively these behaviors seem to form a cycle of disadvantage perception and enactment that lecturers must vie with regardless of their beliefs in its appropriacy. For some lecturers, awareness of IBC disadvantage and self-othering behaviors lead them to advocate for student mobility to the parent campus as the only way of gaining a true global experience.

Regarding the second question of experiential and relationship influences, it is clear that IBC lecturers’ constructions of their campus identities as disadvantaged university underdogs draw heavily on their experiences in grappling with contextual challenges as well as their relationships with IBC parent-campus coordinators. Repeated

experiences of students and their parents exerting consumerist expectations; repeatedly feeling that campus resources are inadequate and students are underprepared; and repeatedly idealizing the parent-campus teaching experience while noting the IBCs' comparative failings have coalesced to form a pervasive sense of the IBC as a disadvantaged university underdog.

Interestingly, while IBC lecturer mobility to the parent campus is seen as offering individual-identity-development benefits, on a campus level this activity contributed to disadvantage construction, with IBC lecturers witnessing the scale and affordances of the parent campus and feeling comparatively inadequate. IBC lecturers' constructions of parent-campus coordinator disrespect contributed to this sense of isolation: These colleagues were seen as enjoying the luxuries of the headquarters location while ignoring the needs of IBC lecturers. The combination of experiencing IBC disadvantage and witnessing what they interpreted as parent-campus disinterest in the IBC exacerbated the sense of local disadvantage and IBC distance from the global organization.

This sense of organizational distance speaks to the final research question above regarding the ultimate consequences of IBC lecturers' campus identity constructions. IBC lecturers' constructions of their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs poses a considerable threat to the long-term organizational integration of these campuses. The compensatory practices of spoonfeeding, while perhaps justifiable from a localization perspective—can easily cross a line into more overt forms of standards adjustment, as is evident in the examples of IBC lecturers simplifying assessments and avoiding cross-campus moderation. The compensatory behaviors noted and the work-around of encouraging student mobility to the parent campus may be temporarily allowing IBCs to deliver on their value proposition, but as the participant I2 suggested, the short-term focus of IBCs to grow student enrollments may need to give way to a more long-term focus on sustainability. If the cycle of reinforced disadvantage continues unchecked, global integration—and thus, the IBC brand value—could be imperiled.

#### **6.4.2 Contributions to IBC Management Literature**

In 6.1 I highlighted my aims for this chapter to bring empirical focus to the question of IBC campuses' organizational integration with their wider universities.

Assumptions in recent IBC literature that locally-hired IBC lecturers will steer their campuses away from global standards frame localizing IBC hiring itself as an institutional risk (Healey, 2018). In this chapter I have strived to test these assumptions, exploring the nuances of IBC lecturers' constructed identities for their campuses and what these reveal about their approaches to global integration.

In theorizing IBC lecturers' as constructing "underdog" campus identities I have highlighted the many ways in which IBC lecturers envision their campuses as uniquely disadvantaged, essentially "othering" the IBCs from what they see as more ideal, resource-rich parent campus environments. Private-university stigma, inappropriate student expectations, resource limitations and low student preparedness collectively form a sense of IBCs as challenged, disadvantaged environments; as I have illustrated, IBC lecturers act upon these perceptions in their teaching and assessment, engaging in compensatory teaching behaviors. Thus, my findings demonstrate that locally-hired IBC lecturers do in fact participate in IBC self-othering, veering away from global approaches.

However, the appropriacy of IBC lecturers' localization choices is not my chief concern here: As Heffernan et al. (2010) note, some degree of localization is necessary for cultural sensitivity in transnational educational contexts, and it is possible that the adjustments made would have been approved if reviewed by parent-campus curriculum designers. From the standpoint of IBC lecturers' constructions of their campus identities as part of their universities, what is most notable in this research is not the fact that localization is occurring but rather the narrative that informs it: the construction of a disadvantaged campus identity which necessitates "spoonfeeding" accommodations.

My findings that locally-hired IBC lecturers construct their campuses as contextually-impooverished disadvantaged underdogs yields an important clarification to the assumptions in IBC literature that locally-hired IBC lecturers' lower "institutional loyalty" and parent-campus knowledge will lead them to steer their campuses away from the global university identity (e.g., Healey, 2018). Though deviation from global standards and practices is occurring in the data for this research, it appears to be taking place not due to a lack of loyalty or knowledge: IBC lecturers are making these adjustments due to pressures they perceive as part of the disadvantaged IBC environment.

Remarkably, these practices of accommodating perceived contextual demands could actually represent the opposite of organizational disloyalty: These are customer-service actions that could just as easily be prompted by lecturers' desire to support their IBCs and universities. As discussed in 5.1, the identity hybridity of entrepreneurial universities which must simultaneously serve the public good and operate like businesses is particularly salient in viability-focused IBCs. IBC lecturers are acutely aware of their institutions' consumerist foci and feel compelled to support their IBCs. Catering to student needs and expectations—even when they saw these as problematic—is part of these lecturers' service to their IBCs', helping them to ensure customer satisfaction and thus viability. In other words, IBC self-othering is occurring, but the motivation is not one of disloyalty: Rather, it appears to be predicated on loyalty to the IBC, commitment to its success, and the perception that as a disadvantaged institution it needs compensatory behaviors to survive.

These findings represent a new knowledge for the IBC field. Fundamentally they demonstrate that enhancing locally-hired IBC lecturers' institutional knowledge and loyalty—while desirable from an individual identity perspective—will not alone foster IBCs' organizational integration. The root issues of perceived disadvantage must be addressed. Lim and Shah (2017) suggest that global universities' emphasis on profit generation may adversely impact the quality of IBC service delivery, interfering with them “ensuring rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to safeguard standards,” (p. 260). This chapter provides important insights into how IBCs' commercial focus can impact on lecturers' perceptions, causing them distress and leading to short-term behaviors which may inadvertently impact the IBC's long-term global reputation. It also demonstrates the impact of perceived limited resources and student underpreparedness on IBC lecturers' campus identities and behaviors, showcasing the consequences of unaddressed disparities in these environments.

An additional contribution of this chapter is that it demonstrates the uncertainty and disagreement among IBC lecturers about which product they are actually selling and providing to students. IBC dogma holds that students desire the same standardized experience that students receive at the parent campus (Wilkins & Rumbley, 2018). As Girdzijauskaite and Radzeviciene (2014) put it:

local students are attracted by the foreign institution and expect to be treated exactly the same as home students and provided with identical materials (p. 308).

My literature suggests that IBC lecturers may disagree with this literature assumption that students demand experiential equivalence with the parent campus at their IBC. The more cynical narrative visible at my research sites is that it is *testamur* equivalence that students seek, achieved through a locally-filtered, more accessible student experience. The insights in this research on IBC lecturers' stances toward their IBCs' value proposition reveal an underlying collective identity crisis around this topic, with some lecturers for example rejecting "spoonfeeding" while others embrace it. That a profound lack of clarity exists on the question of the experience IBC students actually desire and how far IBC lecturers should go to provide it suggests that on this matter bottom-up "sensemaking" is insufficient and clear "sensegiving" about the university product vision is needed. In Chapter 7 I expand upon this recommendation.

#### **6.4.3 Implications for IBC Management Practice**

In Chapter 2 I recounted IBC leaders' concern that the commercial nature of their campuses may be internalized by IBC lecturers, impacting their identities and behaviors. I have also highlighted IBC leaders' beliefs that the remoteness of the IBC from parent-campus guidance and resources may complicate IBC lecturers' working experiences and lead to a sense of campus isolation. This chapter has demonstrated that IBC leaders were correct to be concerned about both of these matters. IBCs' physical distance from their parent campuses as well as a strong awareness of IBCs' commercial responsibilities have contributed to their sense of their IBCs as contextually disadvantaged "underdogs" as compared to what they idealize as resource-rich and desirable parent-campus working environments. Referencing comparatively inferior IBC facilities, support services and student-preparedness profiles, IBC lecturers construct their campuses as contextually disadvantaged, leading to organizational self-othering and compensatory behaviors.

Findings in this chapter point to several implications for IBC management practice. The first is that IBC leaders should consider the impact of the commercial-viability discourse prevalent in these settings on IBC lecturers' campus identity constructions. As participants in IBC marketing activities and organizational members



committed to growing their departments, IBC lecturers are aware of the need for organizational viability. They are perhaps correct to construct their campuses as recruitment and retention-focused; and perhaps this orientation helps to drive desirable behaviors, such as student-recruitment participation. However, IBC lecturers' construction of their campuses as consumer enterprises appears to also pose challenges for IBC management, contributing to their construction of their IBCs as disadvantaged—since consumer-focused thinking is seen as unnecessary in parent-campus environments. IBCs' consumer focus also likely contributes to lecturers' sense of stigma regarding their campuses' private status, leading them to feel disempowered when students and parents exert consumer demands. That IBC lecturers feel compelled to act upon these demands suggests that greater clarity is needed in these contexts regarding managements' vision for reconciling customer service and global quality standards. IBC managers should seek to balance the focus on enrollment generation with a commitment to quality, including a willingness to assess student work fairly by global rubrics.

Other factors in constructed IBC disadvantage also suggest implications for leaders. The perception of comparatively limited campus resources, for example, may never be fully eradicated given the scale difference between IBCs and their parent campuses. However, simple steps such as expediting systems for materials lending and improved cross-campus sharing of informational resources could be undertaken with minimal expense and effort, and would likely go far to reducing IBC lecturers' sense of isolation and campus disadvantage. For example, the information about disability-support best practice that I1 sought could be shared electronically; a more ambitious yet still achievable intervention would be to make writing-support from parent-campus student success areas available to global students, for whom English is typically an additional language. These digital means of sharing resources across campuses are straightforward solutions which could immediately improve parity in these areas.

On the matter of student preparedness perceptions, there is also a need for better information-sharing across campuses. IBC lecturers seem to idealize parent-campus students, seeing them as universally prepared for study, enthusiastic in their participation and capable of complex critical thinking. These perceptions heighten the sense of difference that IBC lecturers envision when comparing parent-campus students to IBC

students, prompting compensatory behaviors. These perceptions could be addressed in part by more robust cross-campus dialogue. When parent-campus staff engage with IBC lecturers, talking through teaching challenges across sites would help local lecturers see that they are not alone in their experiences, and perhaps provide them with supportive resources for redressing—rather than indulging—local appetites for spoonfeeding.

In general, better communication with parent-campus staff about shared challenges will reduce locally-hired IBC lecturers sense of isolation, raise their awareness about the universality of challenges they see as unique to IBCs, and provide them with community sounding boards for solutions that address the root causes of perceived IBC disadvantage. IBC lecturers' constructions of their campuses as uniquely disadvantaged are exacerbated by their perceptions of parent-campus coordinators as disrespectful Distant Dads and Micromanaging Mums. Distant Dads leave lecturers to reconcile global gaps themselves; Micromanaging Mums insist on imposing parent-campus standards unilaterally. Both styles lack the support of a Sympathetic Sibling, who would engage IBC lecturers in discussing their unique contextual challenges, respectfully hear their concerns and collaboratively share their burdens. Engaging parent-campus coordinators as Sympathetic Siblings may not eradicate perceptions of local disadvantage, but it would mitigate many of these issues and assumptions, and perhaps most importantly it would help locally-hired IBC lecturers feel the support of the full university in serving IBC students.

#### **6.4.4 Chart of Key Findings and Recommendations**

Figure 9 on page 238 summarizes the key phenomena discussed in this chapter, their influences and impacts on organizational integration, and recommendations for how university leaders and parent-campus coordinators might address related challenges. This chart is extracted from Figure 12 in Chapter 7, which presents this information for foci across the full thesis.

**Figure 9: Key Findings and Recommendations for Chapter 6**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions	Recommendations for Managers	Recommendations for Coordinators
<p>IBC lecturers construct their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs.</p>	<p>Seeing IBCs as uniquely disadvantaged, with limited resources and low student preparedness.</p>	<p>Experience working with limited IBC conditions; exposure to favorable parent campus conditions.</p>	<p>Deviation from global teaching and assessment standards; seeing student mobility as only route to global experience.</p>	<p>Reduce sense of cross-campus disparity by sharing resources and dispelling idealized myths.</p>	<p>Show empathy for IBC needs; share own challenges to help dispel myths; provide resources, collegial support.</p>
	<p>Framing IBCs as consumer-focused enterprises, with student/consumer expectations.</p>	<p>Experiences facing inappropriate student demands; exposure to IBCs' recruitment and retention focus.</p>		<p>Ensure appropriate approach to customer service; maintain global standards.</p>	<p>Reinforce experiential focus and outcomes; help lecturers resist consumerist pressures.</p>

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

#### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I summarize theories presented in this thesis about how locally-hired IBC lecturers view the collective of parent-campus course coordinators and construct their individual and campus identities. I address the question of IBC lecturers' individual- and campus-level organizational integration, presenting findings shared previously and synthesizing them to showcase the overarching process of the IBC Othering Loop. I overview the contributions that this research makes to knowledge about locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives, and I contrast my findings to previous assumptions about IBC lecturers' institutional loyalties and orientations.

Following explication of these theories and contributions, I reiterate their practical implications for university leaders. In particular I stress the importance of improving cross-campus engagement and recommend specific steps that global universities and IBCs can take to sustainably enhance these practices. I also recommend steps that IBCs might take to ensure that the consumerist discourse at their campuses leads to desired lecturer behaviors rather than adversely influencing their identities and identity enactment. I conclude with discussion of the limitations of this research and suggestions for future research that can continue supporting improved global-university engagement of IBCs and their locally-hired lecturers.

#### **7.1 Free Agents on Underdog Teams:**

##### **Summary of the Full Grounded Theory**

In this section I synthesize phenomena presented in Chapters 4-6 to outline my multi-part grounded theory on the organizational integration of IBC lecturers' constructed individual and campus identities. In 7.1.1 I summarize my key findings and discuss how they address the research questions posed in this thesis. In 7.1.2 I showcase links between these findings, which collectively drive a self-reinforcing "IBC Othering Loop" of global-university isolation and enactment. In summarizing these theories and explicating

their connections I present the foundation for the contributions and implications discussed in subsequent sections.

### **7.1.1 Overview of Findings on Locally-Hired IBC Lecturers' Orientations**

In this thesis I have explored the ways that locally-hired IBC lecturers who participated in my research construct identities for themselves and their campuses. My focus has been the organizational integration of these identities: how these IBC lecturers see themselves and their IBCs as part of their global universities. This work has addressed three primary research questions:

- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers construct and enact their individual and campus identities as part of their universities?*
- *How do locally-hired IBC lecturers' relationships and experiences impact their identity constructions?*
- *What are the consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' identity constructions for university integration and IBC viability?*

In Chapters 4-6 I have explored these questions in regards to locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their parent-campus coordinators as a collective, as well as their individual and campus identities. Overall I find that locally-hired IBC lecturers tend to feel isolated from their global universities at both the individual and campus levels, due in part to inconsistent global engagement and perceptions of IBC disadvantage. This isolation, I argue, poses risks to IBC global integration and ultimately IBC viability.

My conceptualization of locally-hired IBC lecturers' image and identity constructions has been aided by metaphors comparing them to sports players on a team within a larger league. IBC lecturers' parent-campus course coordinators, for example, could be seen as headquarters coaches, responsible for guiding lecturers in reproducing parent-campus activities at the local site. These coordinators are however collectively seen by IBC lecturers as disrespectful, alternately abandoning or micromanaging lecturers. Lacking a consistent sense of global-university connection, IBC lecturers construct their professional identities as "free agents," prioritizing their occupational identities and avoiding representing their universities to students. IBC lecturers also construct their campuses as uniquely burdened as compared to their resource-rich global

universities, seeing their IBCs as impoverished “underdogs” with limited facilities, low student preparedness and consumerist student expectations. As “free agents on underdog teams,” locally-hired IBC lecturers operate at a kind of double remove from their parent campuses, viewing themselves as independent operators within independent campuses. Importantly, however, these constructions are accompanied by a clear desire for positive cross-campus relationships and global connections: Within every phenomenon that my research presents, I see evidence that IBC lecturers’ global isolation is remediable through improved cross-campus engagement.

Underlying IBC lecturers’ constructions of their parent-campus coordinators and individual and campus identities are experiences and relationships which have influenced them. Informing their low levels of individual global-university identification are their perceptions of parent-campus disrespect toward the IBC and limited IBC lecturer influence in global university operations. Repeatedly not seeing the IBC highlighted in global communications, for example, amplifies the sense of IBC as a forgotten university appendage rather than a central part of the university’s mission. IBC lecturers I interviewed crave a sense of global inclusion—noting appreciation for cross-campus social activities like Australia Day—but the absence of regular engagement and the perception of parent-campus disrespect creates a feeling of parent-campus othering and IBC isolation. These feelings of isolation are exacerbated by IBC lecturers’ day-to-day contextual challenges and their exposure to parent-campus working conditions which are seen as superior to those of the IBC. For some IBC lecturers, repeated failed attempts to gain support from the parent campus increase their sense of campus isolation.

IBC lecturers’ constructions of individual and campus isolation from their parent campuses reveal challenges in organizational integration, suggesting significant potential consequences for IBC viability. Lecturers’ generally low sense of global-university connection limits their capacity and inclination to reinforce the IBCs’ global brand to students. Likewise, the sense of global isolation present in lecturers’ individual and campus identities and their perceived limited interest from parent-campus coordinators complexify the already difficult challenges of global service delivery, making IBC lecturers feel that they alone are bearing the burden of reconciling global standards and local limitations. The result of this constructed isolation and disadvantage is a

complement of compensatory behaviors including pedagogical variations and altered standards for student work. While some of these adjustments may be legitimate localizing practices, they are constructed by lecturers as potentially problematic, resulting from individual problem-solving that they would prefer to conduct with the support of more invested and sympathetic parent-campus coordinators.

Figure 10 below showcases the central findings of this thesis regarding locally-hired IBC lecturers’ identity construction and related phenomena, including the influences on these constructions and the outcomes arising from them. These findings form the foundation for the discussion in 7.1.2 of an overarching process visible across these construction phenomena: what I call the “IBC Othering Loop.”

**Figure 10: Chart of Research Findings in Response to Research Questions**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions
IBC lecturers construct parent-campus course coordinators as disrespectful coaches.	Generalizing parent-campus coordinators as either abandoning or micromanaging IBC lecturers.	Negative past experiences in working with coordinators; stories of colleagues’ experiences.	Frustration; sense of isolation from parent campus and global university.
IBC lecturers construct themselves as free agents, independent from their IBC and university.	Identifying minimally and superficially with global university; uneven distribution of global identification.	Lack of influence in parent-campus operations; perception of parent-campus disinterest in IBC.	Sense of isolation and independence from parent campus.
	Prioritizing occupational identities, limiting organizational representation to external contexts.	Professional beliefs and values; sense of role appropriacy and desire to avoid “selling” behavior with students.	Limited deliberate reinforcement of university brand at IBC, possibly impacting student retention.
IBC lecturers construct their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs.	Seeing IBCs as uniquely disadvantaged, with limited resources and low student preparedness.	Experience working with limited IBC conditions; exposure to favorable parent campus conditions.	Deviation from global teaching and assessment standards; seeing student mobility as only route to global experience.
	Framing IBCs as consumer-focused enterprises, with student/consumer expectations.	Experiences facing inappropriate student demands; exposure to IBCs’ recruitment and retention focus.	

### 7.1.2 The Overarching Phenomenon of the IBC Othering Loop

The consequences of locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions of their parent-campus coordinators and identities connect to form a recursive process of framing the IBC as distinct and isolated from its global university. Identity construction is a cyclical process, intertwined with action (Pratt, 2012). Whether the entity being constructed is an individual or a collective, it is shaped not through static pronouncement but through a repeated cycle of forming and acting upon assumptions. Goffman (1959) famously described this process in a dramaturgical metaphor: Individuals believe themselves to have a particular identity, then perform that identity, bringing it to life. Whether or not their original assumptions were correct, their identity enactment reifies this candidate identity, and feedback from interlocutors helps shape it further. This action is the very heart of construction: acting identities into being.

In this research locally-hired IBC lecturers' constructions can be seen as processual at multiple levels. Their experiences have helped them to forge assumptions of who they are within their organizations and how their IBCs are situated within their global universities, and when they enact their identities and assumptions, they simultaneously reinforce them. The pattern discussed in Chapter 6 of compensating for presumed IBC disadvantage showcases this process: IBC lecturers enact the identity of university underdog by lowering standards for local students, and when these students fail to perform to the level of their parent-campus counterparts the narrative of IBC disadvantage is reinforced.

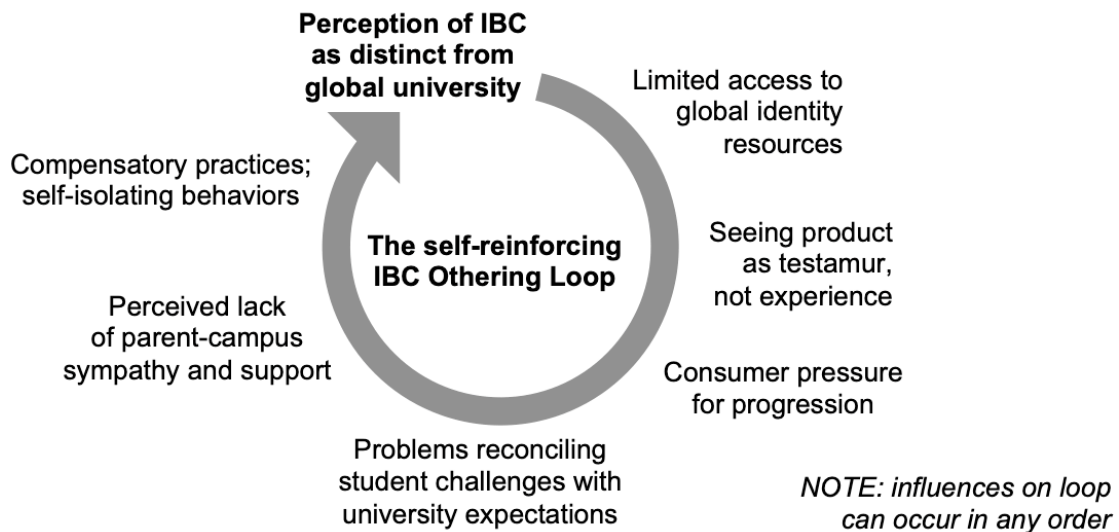
Encapsulating this disadvantage-reinforcement phenomenon is a wider overarching process evident across the findings discussed above: the contribution of these various constructions to an overall cycle of self- and other-imposed isolation which I call the "IBC Othering Loop." In using the term "othering" I refer to the act of treating something as separate from its encompassing peers or components. Recall that in Chapter 2 I discussed the concerns of IBC leaders that parent-campus staff would orient to the IBC as other—separate from the global university due to the former's commercial orientation. The reported behavior of parent-campus course coordinators—acting as Distant Dads and Micromanaging Mums—seems to confirm this concern; however for this research I am more interested in the self-othering behaviors of IBC lecturers. The



process described by the IBC Othering Loop denotes acts of IBC self-othering: locally-hired IBC lecturers treating the IBC and themselves within it as distinct from their global universities. This organizational distance does not necessarily represent their desires, as noted above: It is the enactment of their feelings of isolation, produced partly in response to perceived othering from their parent-campus colleagues. IBC othering is therefore co-constructed by IBC lecturers and their parent-campus colleagues.

Figure 11 below presents my conception of how this IBC Othering Loop might operate. Phenomena noted in findings throughout this thesis are presented as part of a process of constructing the IBC and its lecturers as separate from their larger university. This process begins and ends with a sense of IBC distinction from the global university: a presumption that is reified by IBC lecturers’ limited access to global university resources, awareness of students’ consumerist expectations, challenges in reconciling global standards and local limitations, and perceptions of limited parent-campus support. These framings and assumptions lead to the enactment of IBCs’ organizational distinction through behaviors such as compensatory teaching practices, leading to IBC lecturers’ resistance of parent-campus involvement that in some cases promotes calls for IBC autonomy. The narrative of the IBC as separate from the university is therefore reinforced through behaviors, and the cycle begins again, gaining greater momentum.

**Figure 11: Theorized Process of the IBC Othering Loop**



An important influence to highlight in the IBC Othering Loop is the impact of the narrative of the IBC as a consumerist enterprise. This framing is a connecting theme across the data. At an individual-identity level, for example, lecturers note discomfort with the private-university status of their IBCs, equating this label with negative prestige. At an organizational-identity level, many lecturers note IBC students' consumerist expectations and envision the IBC product in students' eyes as a mere global testamur. These conceptions amplify the sense of IBC distance from the global institution and could lead lecturers to see their role as aiding student progression toward a global testamur rather than ensuring a global student experience—an identity which when enacted would reinforce the IBC Othering Loop.

The involvement of IBC lecturers in student recruitment likely contributes to this consumerist narrative. A key way that organizations propagate organizational identities among stakeholders is by creating “staging” situations in which stakeholders are encouraged to enact these candidate identities (Schinoff, et al., 2012). By involving lecturers in student-recruitment activities, IBC leaders may be inadvertently contributing to a narrative of consumerization that contributes to the “underdog” organizational identity and leads to IBC self-othering. Rather than inspiring lecturers to represent their universities to support student retention—a role that Hughes (2011) seeks IBC lecturers as needing to perform—the consumerist framing of IBCs appears to be feeding the narrative of IBCs as impoverished working environments with conditions that warrant pedagogical variation, thus feeding the IBC Othering Loop.

Envisioning the phenomena presented in this thesis as part of a connected IBC Othering Loop demonstrates the self-reinforcing power of IBC lecturers' constructions of their coordinators and of their individual and campus identities. The IBC Othering Loop highlights the pervasive effects of problematic cross-campus engagement and narratives of organizational distinction, both of which can impact lecturers' identity constructions and behaviors. My overarching theory of the IBC Othering Loop and individual theories of locally-hired IBC lecturers as free agents on underdog teams represent important new knowledge for the IBC management field. I turn now to discussion of the contributions of this research.

## **7.2 Contributions to Literature**

The findings of this thesis summarized in 7.1 above make a substantial contribution to the field of IBC management, illuminating the perspectives of locally-hired IBC lecturers who have to date received little research attention. Throughout this thesis I have noted contributions of individual findings and theories for aiding understanding of locally-hired IBC lecturers' orientations; in this section I briefly synthesize these observations, highlighting salient impactful contributions of this work. In 7.2.1 I outline the comprehensive knowledge that this research contributes to the understudied focus of locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives; in 7.2.2 I showcase how this research challenges assumptions about non-parent-campus IBC lecturers' global-university orientations; and in 7.2.3 I emphasize the importance that these findings place on the role of parent-campus course coordinators in supporting locally-hired IBC lecturers' global-university integration. This overview focuses primarily on contributions to literature which might inform management practice, leading to my discussion in 7.3 of practical implications for university leaders and managers.

### **7.2.1 Providing Comprehensive Theory of IBC Lecturers' Individual and Campus Identity Constructions**

As discussed in Chapter 2, IBCs are a remarkably understudied context, and research on IBC staff perspectives is even more limited. Previous studies of IBC lecturers' views have prioritized views of lecturers from the parent-campus country teaching at the IBC temporarily as either fly-in faculty or expatriates on short-term contracts. This work has chronicled some of the contextual challenges of the IBC environment, but it has not adequately examined how locally-hired host-country and third-country academics orient to IBCs as part of their global universities and see their roles within their institutions.

The present research is the first effort that I am aware of to directly explore the identity constructions of locally-hired IBC lecturers for themselves and their IBCs. The insights this research provides represent comprehensive new knowledge for the IBC field. My theoretical framing of locally-hired IBC lecturers as free agents serving underdog teams synthesizes the many findings in this research on these lecturers' sense of isolation

from their parent campuses and role independence within their universities. My research participants are resourceful professionals, deeply committed to students within and beyond their institutions, yet they are hampered by a sense of disconnect from their parent universities and a sense of campus disadvantage, with limited resources, underprepared students and a pervasive narrative of consumerism that confounds their academic obligations. Operating at a double remove from the global university, locally-hired IBC lecturers enact their teaching roles independently from their IBCs and see their IBCs as distinct from their parent campuses. Perceived disrespect from parent-campus course coordinators influences their sense of isolation, and their enactment of IBC difference through compensatory and isolating behaviors reifies these distinctions, feeding the ever-churning IBC Othering Loop.

These theories and the findings which inform them contribute comprehensive new knowledge to the field of IBC management, providing clarity about locally-hired IBC lecturers' perspectives which had previously been largely unknown to the field. My thesis forms a foundation of knowledge on this topic and invites additional work in this important research area: Each of the theories and phenomena listed in Figure 10 could form the basis for future inquiry. My work also addresses specific questions raised in IBC literature about locally-hired IBC lecturers' orientations, a topic I turn to now.

### **7.2.2 Reframing Literature Assumptions about Locally-Hired IBC Lecturers**

Though initially my research set out to develop understanding of IBC lecturers' orientations generally—an underdeveloped research area in the IBC field—as noted previously my focus sharpened on locally-hired IBC lecturers during my data-collection process, in which primarily locally-hired host- and third-country lecturers responded to my call for participation, coinciding with recent IBC literature which casts doubts on these lecturers' “institutional loyalty” (Healey, 2018) and representational capacity (Shams & Huisman, 2016).

As I discussed in Chapter 2 and have highlighted throughout this thesis, the ways that locally-hired IBC lecturers have been framed in recent literature have warranted investigation. Often their hiring has been positioned as a necessary evil, pursued solely purely for financial and logistical reasons. IBCs increasing their reliance on non-parent-

campus faculty has been treated as involving significant risk, with assumptions that their inherently “different cultural values” preclude them from acting as university representatives (Shams & Huisman, 2016). Oblique claims of cultural distance are cited at institutional levels as well, with Healey (2018) suggesting that lower levels of “institutional loyalty” among these lecturers could cause them to steer their IBCs from their global connections, ultimately undermining IBC viability.

I have suggested that these framings promote an essentialist view of identity, seeing it as predetermined rather than constructed—an alternative approach that I have adopted in this research. Part of my aim in exploring locally-hired IBC lecturers’ identity constructions has been to assess the veracity of IBC literature’s essentialist framings of these lecturers’ orientations against emically-sourced insights from these lecturers themselves, examining how they understand their roles and IBCs as part of their global universities.

If glossed superficially, the findings and theories that I have presented in this thesis could be interpreted as verification of the essentialist assumptions that locally-hired IBC lecturers pose a risk for IBC viability. This would be a misreading of my findings. What I believe I have shown is that the risk of IBC self-othering does indeed exist, but that this risk is born not of lecturers’ nationalities but of their circumstances working within the IBC and larger institution. The challenges that IBC lecturers face—particularly the sense of being under-resourced and burdened with consumerist expectations and underprepared students—invite them to frame their contexts as unique, and in the absence of adequate collaboration with parent-campus lecturers, they make decisions in this vacuum which perpetuate the IBC Othering Loop.

In each of the phenomena presented in this thesis, remedies exist for global universities to engage with and support locally-hired IBC lecturers, reducing cross-campus disparity and cultivating them as committed and aligned global-university representatives. Helping IBC lecturers feel a sense of institutional influence; sharing resources across campuses; combatting myths of idyllic conditions at parent campuses; engaging as Sympathetic Siblings—all of these are examples of tangible actions that universities can take to remedy the current sense of isolation at these locations. My focus on potential management interventions in the “free agent” and “underdog” identities

forms the central distinction between literature framings of locally-hired IBC lecturers and the conclusions of this thesis: I see the solution to IBC Othering as not one of hiring but engagement, remediable through the concerted efforts of parent-campus course coordinators and their leaders. I turn now to discussion of this research's findings regarding cross-campus engagement.

### **7.2.3 Identifying Needs and Opportunities for Parent-Campus Engagement of the IBC**

Throughout this research it has been clear that locally-hired IBC lecturers are not being adequately engaged by their parent campuses: They desire positive relationships with parent-campus colleagues and wish to see themselves as legitimate members of their global universities, but repeatedly opportunities to engage them are missed. On some level these issues are institutional: parent-campus messaging repeatedly not mentioning the IBC, likely reflecting an “out of sight, out of mind” oversight of university communications staff. The discontinuation of activities such as Australia Day barbecues and celebrations with visiting parent-campus dignitaries are also institutional measures that would likely be reconsidered if their impact on locally-hired IBC lecturers' identities were revealed. This research demonstrates the importance of tending to IBC inclusion at institutional levels such as these and highlights the potential for future inquiry using organizational communication paradigms on how parent-campus messaging might become more inclusive.

Beyond these general institutional-engagement findings, this research provides extensive evidence for the need for more robust, systematic and supportive human connection across campuses. As discussed in Chapter 4, parent-campus coordinators are positioned as identity custodians for the IBC, embodying the amorphous and perhaps intimidating parent-campus concept in an ideally accessible and inviting human form. As people whom IBC lecturers need to engage with regularly as part of their roles, parent-campus coordinators represent considerable potential for positively engaging these staff and socializing them as part of their global institutions. The agency assumptions of locally-hired IBC lecturers are relevant here: Recall that the participant H2 claimed a global-university identity only after explicitly being encouraged to by parent-campus colleagues; as H13 said, organizational identities are something that lecturers are

“adorned with.” Parent-campus coordinators are best positioned to perform this adorning. They are the logical sharers of resources—the ideal confidantes for lecturers struggling with contextual challenges. My research demonstrates the importance of these coordinators in the process of IBC organizational integration, inviting future research aimed at improving these relationships and functions.

In this section I have noted that my findings about the importance of cross-campus engagement form an important contribution to IBC literature, elucidating avenues for enhancing locally-hired IBC lecturers’ sense of organizational integration. In 7.3 I build upon these points with discussion of tangible actions that university leaders might take to enhance management practice in light of these findings.

### **7.3 Recommendations for University Leaders**

The summary of findings and contributions above entail implications for university leaders based at the IBC as well as the parent campus. In particular, the need for improvement in cross-campus engagement has been highlighted, with responsibilities for this engagement falling primarily to parent-campus course coordinators who are ostensibly overseen by parent-campus academic leaders. In 7.3.1 I discuss specific management steps that these university leaders can take to enhance the function of cross-campus engagement and ensure the effective performance of employees charged with course-coordination responsibilities. In 7.3.2 I discuss ways in which IBC leaders can help to minimize the IBC Othering Loop by providing “sensegiving” clarity to IBC lecturers about how the IBC should be seen as part of its global university and how IBC lecturers should engage with students and other stakeholders on the university’s behalf. I argue that specific guidance is needed from local managers to ensure that IBCs’ status as enrollment-focused enterprises does not create campus-undermining applications of the consumerist narrative.

#### **7.3.1 Recommendations for Parent-Campus Leaders: Enact Robust, Comprehensive, Well-Resourced Cross-Campus Engagement**

A major finding of this research is that IBC lecturers construct themselves and their campuses as isolated from their global universities. Perceived parent-campus

disrespect is in part to blame for this isolation, demonstrating an area of negative impact which should be remedied. There also exist several examples of missed opportunities for cross-campus engagement which could enhance locally-hired IBC lecturers' sense of global-university inclusion. The role of parent-campus course coordinators as the embodiment of the link across parent and branch campuses has been repeatedly identified in this thesis as a primary function for ensuring locally-hired IBC lecturers' identification and alignment with their global universities.

While some IBC literature has assumed that IBC lecturers crave autonomy from their parent campuses and emancipation from their course coordinators, my research suggests that locally-hired IBC lecturers value these relationships and simply prefer to see the occasional positive relationships they experience become a more reliable rule rather than an anomaly. The archetypes that they have introduced to generalize about negative relationships demonstrate what is not wanted in parent-campus coordinator styles: Distant Dads who abandon the IBC, providing autonomy but not support, and Micromanaging Mums who overwhelm IBC lecturers with direction, providing support but not autonomy. In Chapter 3 and throughout this thesis I have highlighted the appeal of an alternate archetype who combines the best parts of these negative models: a Sympathetic Sibling who demonstrates interest in the IBC and appreciation for its challenges, as well as respect for locally-hired IBC lecturers as colleagues rather than mere subordinates.

Sympathetic Siblings perform a style of IBC-lecturer engagement which is widely favored by participants I interviewed. Sympathetic Siblings proactively connect with IBC lecturers—informally as well as officially—sharing global-university resources and guidance, as well as displaying genuine interest in unique IBC contexts. Sympathetic Siblings listen to IBC lecturers, appreciate the insights that they provide and recognize that at times these lecturers' expertise about a subject area or contextual need may surpass their own. Yet Sympathetic Siblings do not abandon IBC lecturers, treating abandonment as an autonomy reward: They assess their IBC colleagues' needs and draw upon their insights, collaborating with them to determine the ideal way of addressing each localization challenge. They perform the spirit of the participant framing which has



in many ways become the battle cry of this thesis, H21's longing for a new order of parent-campus engagement that embraces "sharing this challenge together."

If the parent-campus coordination function could be recast in Sympathetic Sibling form, additional affordances would emerge for addressing other needs highlighted in this thesis. Locally-hired IBC lecturers' sense of global-university identity could be enhanced by Sympathetic Siblings who engage with them as colleagues and support their global-university socialization, perhaps by involving them in departmental decisions to increase their sense of global-university influence. Sympathetic Siblings could also help to mitigate the sense of campus impoverishment that locally-hired IBC lecturers perceive by helping to dispel myths about idyllic parent-campus situations and students. For example, they could share their own experiences dealing with consumerist assumptions and low student motivation, helping IBC lecturers see this as a universal challenge rather than one exclusive to the IBC. Sympathetic Siblings may even be able to help IBC lecturers see themselves as university brand representatives, influencing their in-class representational practices. By sharing ways of invoking the university brand to set expectations with students, for example, Sympathetic Sibling-style course coordinators can encourage IBC lecturers to perform their representational duties more effectively.

To gain these many benefits of Sympathetic Sibling-style parent-campus coordinator engagement, university leaders need to ensure that this function is appropriately managed and supported. My recommendations represent a sizeable investment of time at this coordinator level, and although my research did not focus on the experiences of course coordinators and thus does not indicate their current workloads, the perceptions of IBC lecturers I interviewed suggest that these coordinators present themselves as very busy. Adequate time must therefore be provided for them to fulfill this work, alongside training as identity custodians and accountability for their consistent engagement of IBC colleagues. In short, parent-campus course coordinators must be uniformly cultivated to ensure their effective uniform cultivation of IBC colleagues.

To achieve the ambitious goal of recasting all parent-campus course coordinators as Sympathetic Siblings, I recommend reframing this coordination function as overtly ambassadorial, articulating engagement responsibilities and providing appropriate levels of time, training and accountability to ensure course coordinators' success. The role and

responsibilities of parent-campus course coordinator should be thoughtfully redeveloped through a collaborative process involving coordinators, IBC lecturers and leaders at each site. Engagement aspects of the role should be clearly articulated, with specific guidelines including clarity about the mode, scope and frequency of cross-campus conversations. Parent-campus coordinators should receive significant time release to accomplish this work, and they should be coached themselves by leaders who help them develop the leadership and engagement skills needed to thrive.

Concerted efforts to redevelop and appropriately resource the parent-campus course-coordination role will help to address many IBC-isolation issues noted in this research. In addition, I recommend that university leaders think holistically about how to enhance the global-university inclusion of IBCs and their employees. Communications staff, for example, should be engaged to help frame the IBC as a top-of-mind component of the overall university, referencing campus activities in university-wide communiqués and normalizing this inclusive framing. University leaders should be encouraged to visit IBCs and engage with staff while doing so, recognizing the desire among IBC lecturers for greater connection to their parent-campus colleagues. The language of belonging that is helping workplaces adopt more inclusive approaches should be extended to IBC staff and encouraged among parent-campus colleagues at multiple touchpoint areas, making IBC belonging an institutional goal shared across the university.

### **7.3.2 Recommendations for IBC Leaders: Provide Clarity about IBC Global Alignment and Lecturers' Representational Responsibilities**

In addition to the need for more robust cross-campus engagement of IBCs and their lecturers, this research has highlighted the need for IBC lecturers to have greater clarity about their IBCs' roles and intended ethos as part of their universities. The finding that IBC lecturers see themselves as free agents who deliberately avoid referencing their universities when engaging with students suggests that the university-representational responsibility that Hughes (2011) sees as paramount for IBC lecturers is not understood in these contexts. IBC lecturers I spoke with were generally proud of their campuses and willing to support them, doing so for example by participating in marketing and student-recruitment events. Thus, their insistence on not referencing the university to current

students suggests a lack of management direction on this issue: I suspect that they have not been engaged as university representatives by leaders at the IBC and parent campus.

The apparent lack of clarity about IBC lecturers' representational responsibilities extends to their understanding of how leaders envision the IBC's alignment with the parent campus. Lecturers' constructions of the IBC as a disadvantaged university underdog and their resulting compensatory behaviors contribute to an IBC Othering Loop that poses threats for the resonance of the university brand at the IBC, and thus could adversely affect viability. As part of these phenomena, the consumerist framing of the IBCs—which many lecturers experience directly during student-recruitment activities—appears to be contributing to the overall sense of otherness and perhaps even spurring self-othering behaviors such as spoonfeeding. These occurrences suggest a need for management clarity about what the IBC is, how it functions as a consumer-driven enterprise, and how IBC lecturers can appropriately support its success.

IBC leaders should demonstrate collaboration with their parent campus by eschewing “us and them” distinctions and furthering global-university communications strategies for furthering a “one-university” narrative. They should be unequivocally clear to IBC lecturers and staff that the IBC is part of the global-university enterprise and holds the same standards for course delivery and assessment of student work. They should emphasize—assuming they share this view—the important role of IBC lecturers in representing their universities to students and reinforcing the global-university ethos, recognizing their role as agents of global-service delivery and not simply independent lecturers teaching students who happen to be enrolled at the IBC. Perhaps most importantly, IBC leaders should be honest with IBC lecturers about the importance of maintaining enrollments but ensure that they understand appropriate avenues for their support: Participation in student-recruitment activities may be requested, for example, but lecturers should be assured that they are not expected to support student progression beyond the levels of appropriacy, regardless of consumerist complaints that might emerge from students and their parents. In short, IBC lecturers should receive clarity about where to draw the line between sales and standards, and should feel safely supported by their IBC leaders in doing so.

### 7.3.3 Full Chart of Research Findings and Recommendations

In Chapters 4-6 I ended each discussion of management implications with a chart outlining the findings and recommendations relevant to that chapter. Figure 12 below is the consolidated full complement of this information, representing key findings and related insights for research discussed throughout this thesis.

**Figure 12: Key Theories, Findings and Recommendations of this Research**

Grounded Theory	Key Phenomena Observed	Influences on Constructions	Consequences of Constructions	Recommendations for Managers	Recommendations for Coordinators
IBC lecturers construct parent-campus course coordinators as disrespectful coaches.	Generalizing parent-campus coordinators as either abandoning or micromanaging IBC lecturers.	Negative past experiences in working with coordinators; stories of colleagues' experiences.	Frustration; sense of isolation from parent campus and global university.	Standardize and prioritize IBC engagement; develop coordinators as university ambassadors.	Adopt IBC engagement style of <i>Sympathetic Siblings</i> , showing respect and interest in IBC.
IBC lecturers construct themselves as free agents, independent from their IBC and university.	Identifying minimally and superficially with global university; uneven distribution of global identification.	Lack of influence in parent-campus operations; perception of parent-campus disinterest in IBC.	Sense of isolation and independence from parent campus.	Enhance lecturers' sense of inclusion in global university community.	Connect regularly and respectfully with IBC lecturers; include them in decision-making processes.
	Prioritizing occupational identities, limiting organizational representation to external contexts.	Professional beliefs and values; sense of role appropriacy and desire to avoid "selling" behavior with students.	Limited deliberate reinforcement of university brand at IBC, possibly impacting student retention.	Aid integration of individual identity layers, engage IBC lecturers in brand reinforcement to current students.	Help IBC lecturers learn the benefits of brand representation and see it as part of their role.
IBC lecturers construct their campuses as disadvantaged university underdogs.	Seeing IBCs as uniquely disadvantaged, with limited resources and low student preparedness.	Experience working with limited IBC conditions; exposure to favorable parent campus conditions.	Deviation from global teaching and assessment standards; seeing student mobility as only route to global experience.	Reduce sense of cross-campus disparity by sharing resources and dispelling idealized myths.	Show empathy for IBC needs; share own challenges to help dispel myths; provide resources, collegial support.
	Framing IBCs as consumer-focused enterprises, with student/consumer expectations.	Experiences facing inappropriate student demands; exposure to IBCs' recruitment and retention focus.		Ensure appropriate approach to customer service; maintain global standards.	Reinforce experiential focus and outcomes; help lecturers resist consumerist pressures.

## **7.4 Limitations and Future Research Possibilities**

Though the research presented in this thesis makes a substantial contribution to current IBC management literature and practice, it is important to clarify the limitations of these findings as well as the opportunities for future research in building upon it. In this final section of this chapter and thesis I briefly overview these points.

### **7.4.1 Temporal and Locational Boundedness of this Research**

Perhaps the most critical point to make about the limitations of this research is that as a constructivist grounded theory study it is necessarily bounded by time and space. Qualitative research in general eschews claims of generalizability; in constructivist grounded theory this point is particularly important, since findings are grounded in the social constructions of the particular participants studied. Phenomena observed is exclusive to these particular sites in Singapore and Malaysia, in the particular time of data collection. The situation even in these locations may have changed since my data collection last year; findings should therefore be understood as capturing a snapshot in time rather than speaking for all locally-hired IBC lecturers everywhere.

Where quantitative positivist research courts claims of generalizability, constructivist grounded theory attempts the more modest pursuit of presenting theories for potential and considered applicability to related contexts. My theories of locally-hired IBC lecturers seeing themselves as free agents and their IBCs as university underdogs may prove resonant with stakeholders and researchers of other IBC sites—or even of stakeholders of similar enterprises, such as MNE subsidiaries. IBC and university leaders reading this thesis and associated papers will need to exercise their own judgment about the applicability of findings to their contexts, and may feel that they only partially apply. My goal is not to claim absolute widespread understanding of these phenomena but to simply highlight the emic framings of lecturers at these particular four sites in 2018—information that may prove helpful for research and practice in other contexts.

### **7.4.2 Lack of Cross-Cultural Comparison in this Research**

Another limitation to note in this research is that my focus on the perspectives of locally-hired IBC lecturers is not a background-comparison study. With only two

participants hailing from the parent-campus country I do not purport to contrast the views of locally-hired and parent-campus lecturers. This comparison would have been interesting and may have resulted if my call for participants had yielded more parent-campus faculty participants. Since it did not, this research simply provides insights into the views of locally-hired IBC lecturers—views which may or may not vary from those of parent-campus faculty. Future research may serve to disambiguate these perspectives; I turn now to discussion of these and other future-research possibilities.

### **7.4.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Viewing constructivist grounded theory as providing the “grist” for additional research (Charmaz, 2014) positions the current research as a rich source of inquiry potential. My theories about locally-hired IBC lecturers’ constructing identities as free agents on underdog teams warrants explorations of applicability to other contexts, including IBCs within and beyond Asia, and possibly even multinational enterprise subsidiaries, which as nested organizations may share some of these contextual phenomena.

These grounded theories, the overarching IBC Othering Loop, and contributing phenomena such as the course-coordinator archetypes of Distant Dads and Micromanaging Mums could also inform a range of additional inquiries. For example, future research might use quantitative tools to confirm IBC lecturers’ preference for Sympathetic-Sibling-style course coordinators, highlight the types of resource improvements that would improve their sense of cross-campus parity, or assess their responses to inclusive messaging in global communications.

Additional research could also build upon these findings with studies of other stakeholders’ perspectives. For example, as mentioned above, further studies could contrast views of locally-hired and parent-campus IBC lecturers. Additional research could also explore how students see their lecturers as university brand representatives, as well as how the findings of this thesis might apply to non-faculty IBC staff. Perhaps most urgently, parent-campus course coordinators could be engaged in research to explore the findings of this thesis in light of their perspectives, examining the challenges that they

face that may need to be addressed to successfully implement the recommendations discussed above.

My hope is that this PhD's exploration of the identity constructions of locally-hired IBC lecturers will provide the inspiration and foundation for many more studies of the IBC context and the critical stakeholder group of locally-hired IBC lecturers, yielding insights that will help global universities more inclusively engage this important population.

### **7.5 Final Reflection from the Researcher**

I began this research journey as an IBC quality manager seeking academic insights to a key management challenge: how to engage IBC lecturers as supportive global-university representatives. I saw identity as the ideal exploratory catalyst for this pursuit and embarked on a course of inquiry that has expanded, sharpened and generated significant new knowledge throughout these past three years. This thesis is my attempt to present my key findings within the span of a single publication; yet as confident as I am in the thoroughness of this work, it is but partial evidence of the transformative effect this experience has had on me.

By speaking candidly with so many IBC lecturers and immersing myself in the literatures of transnational higher education, organizational behavior and identity, I have gained a new understanding of the complexities of the IBC lecturer role. I have learned about these lecturers' cross-campus coordination challenges, discovered the nuanced layers of their professional identities, and witnessed the campus disadvantages that they perceive and strive to overcome. My grounded theories of IBC lecturers as free agents on underdog teams encapsulate these findings, showcasing the sense of global-university isolation that pervades these lecturers' individual and campus identities. Collectively these theories point to my overarching takeaway from this research: that the IBC Othering Loop is an existential threat to IBC viability, but that supportive engagement from parent-campus colleagues can curtail this distancing process.

Perhaps the most poignant discovery I have made in this research is that locally-hired IBC lecturers generally desire deeper connections with their parent campuses, both for themselves and for their IBCs. In my previous professional work I had encountered

IBC lecturers who displayed a cynical detachment from their parent campuses, and I expected the narrative of pursuing IBC autonomy to dominate my research. Yet this narrative was not prominent in my findings; in its place I observed participants' palpable hope for improved cross-campus connection and appreciation of parent-campus colleagues who took the time to interact with them. The issue I had set out to address—how to engage IBC lecturers globally—is not as difficult as I had imagined, since the desire for engagement already exists in this population.

My favorite extract from hundreds of pages of transcripts illustrates this concluding impression. At the end of our interview, my participant H17 and I were saying goodbye, and I asked her if she wanted to elaborate on anything before I turned off my recorder. She shared this final thought:

You have actually given me a lot to think about. At the start, right when you were talking... suddenly it dawned on me: You know when you come here, day-to-day basis, you forget that, you know, you're part of a bigger university (H17).

H17 smiled broadly as she reflected on her institution's global connections, placing her IBC and herself in this larger encompassing context. "It's part of something bigger," she said. "Very human I think to want to be in something."

IBC lecturers want to be part of their global universities. They want to engage with their parent-campus colleagues; they want to belong. With locally-hired IBC lecturers emerging as the sector's primary workforce, I urge global-university leaders to temper literature assumptions of these lecturers' institutional disloyalty with the nuanced portrait of IBC lecturers' identities and engagement potential that my research has revealed. The impediments to global integration of IBC lecturers' identities that I have discovered all invite engagement solutions. If my 36 participants at these four IBC sites are an indication of the overall IBC lecturer population, the challenges to IBC global integration are wholly remediable. Proactive, sympathetic and respectful cross-campus engagement is the key.



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## Appendices

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### Appendix 1: Letter of Approval from RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee



Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)  
Research Integrity, Governance & Systems

Email: [humanethics@rmit.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@rmit.edu.au)  
Phone: [61 3] 9925 2251  
Building 91, Level 2, City Campus

19 December 2017

**A/Prof Mathews Nkhoma**  
School of Business & Management  
RMIT University

Dear Mathews

**RE: HREC21204 A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus Lecturers**

Thank you for submitting the above ethics application for consideration by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of RMIT University.

The application was considered and reviewed by the HREC at meeting 11/17 held Wednesday 12 December 2017.

**Status: Approved without requirement for further amendments**

In accordance with the requirements of the *National statement on ethical conduct in human research, NHMRC, 2007* (NS) the HREC approved the above application for human research ethics approval.

The Committee noted that the application including a copy of participant 'withdrawal of consent' form, which they suggested was unnecessary. It was recommended that you did not circulate this form to participants. If participants do later indicate their wish to withdraw then this can be communicated by them in writing or in person.

If there is anything in this letter that you are unclear about or require further clarification upon then please contact the HREC secretary, Dr Peter Burke.

Yours sincerely

**IMAGE REDACTED**

**Professor Penelope Weller**  
Deputy Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee  
RMIT University

cc Ms Heather Swenddal, Associate Supervisor/Co-investigator  
Dr Sarah, Gumbley, Associate Supervisor/Co-investigator  
Dr Peter Burke, HREC secretary.

## Appendix 2: Sample Inquiry Letter to Potential Research Sites

Dear [Head of Research Office / other appropriate leader],

I am writing to seek permission for research that I am hoping to conduct at [IBC] this year.

I am an American PhD student (and staff member) at RMIT University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. My thesis focuses on the professional identities of lecturers at international university branch campuses like RMIT Vietnam and [IBC approached]. I am interviewing academic staff at several of these institutions to explore how they see themselves as representatives of their university in their interactions with students and other stakeholders.

Given the strong reputation of [IBC approached], it would be a great honor to be able to include your university in my study. With your permission, **I would like to visit your campus for a 5-day period this May**. With the support of your office, I would recruit interested participants and collect data in optional, private one-on-one interviews.

My research plans have been approved by RMIT Vietnam and RMIT Melbourne's research ethics committees, and follow the highest possible standards of discretion and care for participants. Participants in my research thus far have found the experience enjoyable and illuminating, providing an interesting reflection opportunity to reflect on professional identity.

To provide more information about my research interests, I have attached a related paper that I presented at the International Conference on Education, Psychology and Social Sciences in Bangkok last August. I have given several talks on professional identity in the branch-campus environment, and would be happy to do so during my visit if this appeals to you.

Thank you for considering this request, and please contact me at [heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn](mailto:heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn) with questions or advice. Thank you in advance for any support you can provide!

Sincerely,

**Heather Swenddal**

BA Journalism, MA TESOL, PhD Candidate

**RMIT University Vietnam**

### Appendix 3: Introduction Letter to Potential PhD Sites from Primary Supervisor



MARCH 2018

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT  
YOUR INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUS

Dear university leaders,

Thank you for your interest regarding Heather Swenddal's request to conduct research at your university this year.

As discussed, Heather is a staff member and HDR student at RMIT University Vietnam, pursuing a PhD in Management. This letter is written on behalf of Heather and her primary supervisor, Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma, to provide more information about Heather's research and what data collection at your university would entail.

Heather's thesis is entitled "A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus Lecturers." This research explores the professional identities of lecturers at international branch campuses (IBCs), examining their perspectives on their roles as representatives of their institutions to stakeholders. The topic of IBC staff identity is underexplored in current literature, and we believe this research will generate contributions to both knowledge and practice in IBC settings.

This research uses constructivist grounded theory—a methodology that involves engaging participants in dialogue about their perspectives on the topic of enquiry. Heather is conducting interviews with 25-50 IBC lecturers across three to five international branch campuses in Asia, and hopes to recruit at least eight participants at each location.

With your permission, we would like to arrange for Heather to conduct research at your campus over a 5-day period this May or June. The specific days can be determined based on your recommendation.

Pending your agreement and the confirmation of dates for Heather's visit, she will conduct the following steps:

- **WEEK PRIOR TO VISIT:** Work with organizing leaders to modify and send the attached Call for Participation email (Attachment 1) to university lecturers. Schedule interviews for Days 2-5 of visit.
- **DAY 1 OF VISIT:** Arrive at campus, greet organizing leaders, and establish private space for interviews. **OPTIONAL:** Give 30-minute presentation on topic of IBC lecturer identity for interested guests and potential participants.
- **DAYS 2-5 OF VISIT:** Conduct interviews as scheduled in 60-minute blocks, with up to five

**Saigon South**  
702 Nguyen Van Linh,  
Tan Phong Ward, Dist. 7, HCMC

**Hanoi City**  
Handi Resco Building,  
531 Kim Ma, Ba Dinh Dist, Hanoi

**P** +84 28 3776 1300  
**E** enquiries@rmit.edu.vn

**P** +84 24 3726 1460

## 2 | Request to conduct research – Heather Swenddal, PhD student, RMIT Vietnam

interviews per day. Interview procedures are as follows:

- Go over the Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form (Attachment 2), ensure participants' understanding, and gain written permission before proceeding.
  - Ask participants open-ended questions in a semi-structured format, following steps in the Interview Protocol (Attachment 3).
  - Audio-record interviews and make notes. (Every precaution will be taken to protect privacy: names and key identifying characteristics will be anonymized, and data will be stored securely. These plans were detailed in an application to RMIT's Human Research Ethics Committee and approved in December 2017--see Attachment 4.)
- DAY 5 OF VISIT: Brief organizing leaders on status of research and discuss possible plans for a future follow-up visit (this may not be necessary). OPTIONAL: share generalized preliminary findings with organizing leaders about lecturers' perspectives on institutional representation aspects of their roles.
  - FOLLOWING VISIT: Analyze data in conjunction with data collected at other sites. Findings will be shared through academic conferences and papers, including the PhD thesis, and possibly in a future book. In all cases, the identity of the institution and participants will be kept confidential.

Attached please find the following materials referenced above:

- Attachment 1: Call for Participation email text (to be copied and modified as you see fit)
- Attachment 2: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form
- Attachment 3: Interview Guide
- Attachment 4: Letter of Ethics Approval from RMIT University's Human Research Ethics Committee

Thank you for considering this request, and please contact either of us with any questions about this proposal.

We hope to hear from you soon.

Best regards,

**IMAGE REDACTED**

Ms. Heather Swenddal  
PhD Student  
RMIT University Vietnam  
[heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn](mailto:heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn)

Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma  
Head of School of Business & Management  
RMIT University Vietnam  
[mathews.nkhoma@rmit.edu.vn](mailto:mathews.nkhoma@rmit.edu.vn)

#### **Appendix 4: Sample Text Provided to IBC Contacts to Help Recruit Participants**

Dear colleagues,

Heather Swenddal, a PhD student at RMIT University Vietnam, will be visiting our campus next week as part of her thesis research, A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus (IBC) Lecturers.

Heather's research explores the experiences of lecturers in the international branch-campus context, looking particularly at their professional identities and how they see their roles in relation to their institution.

Heather is seeking lecturer volunteers to participate in one-hour confidential interviews during her visit from July 16-18. Participants will not be paid, but they may enjoy the opportunity to reflect on their professional identity, and they will also benefit the academic community by furthering research in this area.

Please see Heather's interview schedule [link] and Participant Information Sheet & Consent Form [link] for further details. To sign up for an interview or enquire about Heather's research, feel free to get in touch with her directly at [heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn](mailto:heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn).

Thank you,

[IBC contact name]

**Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form**



**Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form**

<b>Social Science Research - Adult providing own consent</b>	
PROJECT TITLE	A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus Lecturers
SHORT TITLE	Institutional Representation in IBC Lecturers
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	Heather Swenddal, PhD student at RMIT Vietnam
ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS	Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma, Head of School of Business & Management, RMIT Vietnam. Primary PhD supervisor.  Dr. Sarah Gumbley, Visiting Professor, RMIT Vietnam. Secondary PhD supervisor
RESEARCH LOCATION	<i>(information will be customised for each site)</i>

**Part 1 What does my participation involve?**

**1 Introduction**

You are invited to take part in a research project, titled *A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus Lecturers*. You have been invited to participate because you are a lecturer at an international branch campus. Your experiences and opinions about your role in your university are therefore valuable to this research project. Your contact details were obtained when you responded to the researcher’s call for participation.

This Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form tells you about the project and explains the processes involved, to help you decide if you want to take part.

Please ask questions about anything that you don’t understand or where you want to know more. Before deciding whether or not to participate, you might want to talk about it with a relative, friend or local health worker.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary.

If you decide you want to take part, you will be asked to sign the consent section. By signing it you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read
- Consent to take part in the research project
- Consent to be involved in the research described
- Consent to the use of your personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information and Consent Form to keep.



## **2 What is the purpose of this research?**

This research examines the perspectives of international branch campus lecturers about their roles in their universities. Our main focus is on lecturers' professional identities and how they think of themselves in relation to their institution—for example, the extent to which they think of themselves as representatives of the university to students. As a grounded-theory study, this research prioritises the perspectives of lecturers working in these environments to generate theory about how international branch-campus lecturers orient to their roles.

The number of international branch campuses worldwide has increased rapidly in recent decades, yet only limited research has explored the lives and perspectives of the people who staff them. Some studies have chronicled the experiences of expatriate international branch campus staff in adjusting to new cultural environments, but no research to date has explored the perspectives of expatriate and local academic staff on the subject of professional identity and institutional representation. This research aims to address this important gap in the literature.

Findings from this research will contribute to knowledge about the needs of lecturers in international-branch campus contexts, and may provide practical insights for university leaders working in these environments.

This research has been initiated by the researcher, Ms. Heather Swenddal. The results of this research will be used by Ms. Swenddal to obtain a PhD degree from RMIT University Vietnam.

## **3 What does participation in this research involve?**

Participation in this research is voluntary and will only proceed if you decide to sign the consent form included in this document.

After your consent is granted, you will participate in a one-on-one interview with the principal investigator of approximately one hour. This interview will follow a semi-structured format, which means that the researcher will ask you several pre-established questions, but you will determine how to respond to each, and you and the researcher may collaboratively explore related topics as your conversation progresses.

This interview (and any subsequent interviews) will be audio-recorded using two devices, and the researcher will also take notes during your discussion. Audio recordings will be transcribed, and your identity in these transcripts will be anonymised. These recordings and notes will be secured during and following this research project, and will not be shared with anyone other than the investigators.

This interview will be held in an office or meeting room reserved for this purpose. You and the interviewer will be the only people present during this interview. If you would like to use an alternate space for this interview, please inform the researcher.

Following this interview, the researcher may invite you to participate in a follow-up interview at a later date. You may choose to decline this request for any reason.

This research project has been designed to make sure that the researchers interpret the results in a fair and appropriate way.

There are no costs associated with participating in this research project, nor will you be paid.

**4 Other relevant information about the research project**

As part of this research project, the principal investigator is interviewing 25-50 lecturers working at three to five international branch campuses in Southeast Asia.

**5 Do I have to take part in this research project?**

Participation in any research project is voluntary. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage.

If you do decide to take part, you will be given this Participant Information and Consent Form to sign and you will be given a copy to keep.

Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with your university, the researcher, or RMIT University Vietnam.

**6 What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

We cannot guarantee that you will receive any benefits from this research; however, possible benefits may include the opportunity to reflect on your professional experiences and identity, and the knowledge that you are helping the researcher develop theory that may illuminate the perspectives of international branch campus lecturers.

**7 What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?**

Possible risks and disadvantages of participating in this research are as follows:

CATEGORY	RISK/DISADVANTAGE	NOTES
Privacy Breach	Your colleagues may observe you meeting or arranging to meet the researcher, and may become aware of the fact that you are participating.  Your colleagues or others may read excerpts from your interview in publications on this research, and may attempt to infer your identity from these.	Interviews are strictly confidential. The researcher will take steps to de-identify you in all published data and will not reveal your identity to anyone, even if asked.  The specific institutions included in this research are also confidential, decreasing any likelihood that you will personally be identified in published data.
Psychological discomfort/distress	You may feel that some of the questions asked are stressful or upsetting.	If you do not wish to answer a question, you may skip it and go to the next question, or you may stop immediately.  If you become upset or distressed as a result of your participation, the research team will be able to arrange for counselling or other appropriate support. Any counselling or support will be provided by qualified staff who are not members of the research team, and will be provided free of charge.

**8 What if I withdraw from this research project?**

If you do consent to participate, you may withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw, you will be asked to complete and sign a 'Withdrawal of Consent' form; this will be provided to you by the research team.

If you decide to withdraw from this research project during the initial interview, personal information collected during the interview will be deleted following your completion and signing of the 'Withdrawal of Consent' form. If you decide at a later date to withdraw your participation, the researchers will not collect additional personal information from you, although personal information already collected will be retained to ensure that the results of the research project can be measured properly and to comply with law. If you do not want your data to be included, you must tell the researchers when you withdraw from the research project.

**9 Could this research project be stopped unexpectedly?**

This research project may be stopped unexpectedly for a variety of reasons. These reasons may include illness or personal circumstances of the researchers, or a natural disaster or political disruption in the region studied. If the research is stopped unexpectedly, all processes described for protecting participant confidentiality will continue to be maintained.

**10 What happens when the research project ends?**

This research project is expected to conclude on or before February 2020. Following completion of the project and publication of the findings, the researcher will notify participants via a 'blind cc' email, ensuring privacy of all participants. This email will include a link for participants to download and read the full thesis, as well as any other publications from this research.

**Part 2 How is the research project being conducted?****11 What will happen to information about me?**

By signing the consent form you consent to the research team collecting and using personal information about you for the research project. The personal information that the research team will collect and use includes your oral statements during the initial and possible subsequent interviews, as well as your information on the participant consent form.

Any information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you will remain confidential. Transcripts of audio recordings will use pseudonyms, and any key identifying details will be de-identified: for example, unusual job titles will be changed to more generic terms.

The original audio recordings and researchers' interview notes that include identifying information will not be shared with anyone outside the research team. They will be analysed using NVivo software on the primary researcher's computer, which is password protected.

Confidential physical materials including audio tapes, researchers' interview notes and participant consent forms will be stored in a locked fire-safe box placed inside a locked cabinet in the Research Office of RMIT Vietnam. Keys to this storage box will be held by the primary investigator and primary supervisor; keys to the cabinet will be held by the current and future

managers of the RMIT Vietnam Research Office. Access will not be granted to anyone other than the investigators.

Following completion of this project, the audio files used in the research will be downloaded to a remote hard drive and removed from the researcher's computer. This hard drive will be placed in the fire-safe box in the locked cabinet in the RMIT Vietnam Research Office. These materials will be stored in this manner for a minimum of five years following publication of the researcher's PhD thesis. If the primary researcher leaves RMIT Vietnam, the fire-safe box will be removed and carefully transported to an equally safe facility under the care of the researcher.

Your information will only be used for the purpose of this research project and possible related future studies conducted by the principal investigator using these data. Your information will only be disclosed with your permission, except as required by law. Any information obtained for the purpose of this research project and for the future research described that can identify you will be treated as confidential and securely stored. It will be disclosed only with your permission, or as required by law.

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified, except with your express permission. Your confidentiality will be maintained by the use of pseudonyms and alteration of any key identifying features, such as a very specific job title or background.

In accordance with relevant Australian and/or Vietnamese privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to request access to the information about you that is collected and stored by the research team. You also have the right to request that any information with which you disagree be corrected. Please inform the research team member named at the end of this document if you would like to access your information.

## **12 Complaints and compensation**

If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to do so either orally or in writing to the principal investigator, Heather Swenddal, or to her PhD supervisor, Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma. See page one for contact information.

If you suffer any distress or psychological injury as a result of this research project, you should contact the research team as soon as possible. You will be assisted with arranging appropriate treatment and support.

In the event of loss or injury, the parties involved in this research project will discuss the matter to determine an appropriate solution.

## **13 Who is organising and funding the research?**

This research project is being conducted by Ms. Heather Swenddal, Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma, and Dr. Sarah Gumbley.

RMIT University Vietnam may benefit financially from this research project if, for example, the project assists RMIT University Vietnam in any commercial enterprise. You will not benefit financially from your involvement in this research project even if, for example, knowledge or discoveries resulting from your information prove to be of commercial value.

**14 Who has reviewed the research project?**

All research in Australia involving humans is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC).

The ethical aspects of this research project have been approved by the HREC of RMIT University. Ethical aspects of this project have also been approved by the RMIT Vietnam Ethics Committee.

This project will be carried out according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

**15 Further information and who to contact**

The person you may need to contact will depend on the nature of your query. If you want any further information concerning this project or if you have any problems which may be related to your involvement in the project, you can contact the researcher at **+84 (090) 319-0626** or **heather.swenddal@rmit.edu.vn**.

You may also contact any of the following people:

**Research contact person**

Name	Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma
Position	Head of School of Business & Management
Telephone	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>
Email	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>

For matters relating to research at the site at which you are participating, the details of the local site complaints person are:

**Complaints contact person**

Name	<i>Information will be customised for each site.</i>
Position	<i>Information will be customised for each site.</i>
Telephone	<i>Information will be customised for each site.</i>
Email	<i>Information will be customised for each site.</i>

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about being a research participant in general, then you may contact:

**Reviewing HREC approving this research and HREC Executive Officer details**

Reviewing HREC name	RMIT University Human Research Ethics Committee
HREC Executive Officer	Dr. Peter Burke
Telephone	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>
Email	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>

**Local HREC Office contact**

Name	Associate Professor Nguyen Thanh Thuy
Position	Manager, Research Office
Telephone	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>
Email	<b>IMAGE REDACTED</b>

**Consent Form - Adult providing own consent**

PROJECT TITLE                      A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation  
in International Branch Campus Lecturers

SHORT TITLE                         Institutional Representation in IBC Lecturers

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR         Heather Swenddal, PhD student at RMIT Vietnam

ASSOCIATE INVESTIGATORS       Associate Professor Mathews Nkhoma, Head of School of  
Business & Management, RMIT Vietnam. Primary PhD  
supervisor.

   Dr. Sarah Gumbley, Visiting Professor, RMIT Vietnam.  
Secondary PhD supervisor

RESEARCH LOCATION                *(information will be customised for each site)*

**Declaration by Participant**

I have read the Participant Information Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand.

I understand the purposes, procedures and risks of the research described in the project.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the project without affecting my future care.

I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this document to keep.

Name of Participant (please print) _____ Signature _____ Date _____
--

**Declaration by Researcher<sup>†</sup>**

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project, its procedures and risks and I believe that the participant has understood that explanation.

Name of Researcher <sup>†</sup> (please print) _____ Signature _____ Date _____
--

<sup>†</sup> An appropriately qualified member of the research team must provide the explanation of, and information concerning, the research project.

Note: All parties signing the consent section must date their own signature.

### Appendix 6: De-Identified List of Participants

H = Participant from Host Country

R = Participant Locally-Hired from IBC Region (Third Country-Asia)

I = Participant Locally-Hired from International Country outside of Region (Third Country-Not Asia)

P = Participant from Parent-Campus Country

PSEUDONYM	GENDER	AGE	NATIONALITY	IBC REGION	YEARS AT IBC	YEARS IN ED <sup>1</sup>
H1	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Singapore	9+	9+
H2	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	0-2	9+
H3	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H4	M	60-69	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	6-8
H5	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	3-5	3-5
H6	F	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	3-5	6-8
H7	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H8	M	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	3-5	3-5
H9	F	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	9+
H10	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H11	M	20-29	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	0-2	6-8
H12	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Singapore	3-5	3-5
H13	F	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	9+
H14	M	50-59	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H15	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	9+
H16	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	9+
H17	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H18	M	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
H19	F	40-49	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	6-8	9+
H20	F	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+

<sup>1</sup> Years working in educational fields as a teacher or administrator.

H21	M	30-39	HOST COUNTRY	Malaysia	9+	9+
R1	F	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--ASIA	Singapore	6-8	9+
R2	M	60-69	THIRD COUNTRY--ASIA	Singapore	6-8	9+
R3	M	50-59	THIRD COUNTRY--ASIA	Singapore	3-5	9+
R4	F	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--ASIA	Singapore	0-2	0-2
R5	F	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--ASIA	Singapore	6-8	9+
I1	F	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Singapore	3-5	3-5
I2	F	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Singapore	3-5	6-8
I3	F	40-49	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Malaysia	6-8	6-8
I4	F	50-59	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Singapore	0-2	9+
I5	M	40-49	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Singapore	3-5	3-5
I6	M	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Malaysia	0-2	3-5
I7	M	30-39	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Malaysia	0-2	6-8
I8	M	40-49	THIRD COUNTRY--NOT ASIA	Singapore	0-2	6-8
P1	F	40-49	PARENT COUNTRY	Singapore	0-2	0-2
P2	M	50-59	PARENT COUNTRY	Singapore	0-2	9+



## Appendix 7: Interview Guide

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

PhD Research: "A Grounded Theory Approach to Institutional Representation in International Branch Campus Lecturers"  
Heather Swenddal, RMIT University Vietnam  
Last updated May 25, 2018

#### **RESEARCH OVERVIEW:**

The international branch campus (IBC) context poses special challenges for higher-education management. IBCs are typically marketing-driven institutions, dependent on student enrolments for viability (Lipka, 2012). IBC students expect a campus experience reflective of the overall university brand, and lecturers play an important role in delivering on these expectations (Hughes, 2012). Yet retaining academic staff and cultivating them as institutional supporters can be difficult in these international environments, with cultural differences, resource limitations and other contextual issues potentially negatively affecting employee morale (Cai & Hall, 2016). A recent survey of onshore and IBC academic staff found that organisational commitment is lower for IBC staff than their onshore colleagues, and turnover intention is higher (Wilkins et al, 2018). To enhance IBC lecturer retention and likelihood of institutional support, more information is needed about their unique situations.

Literature on IBC lecturers' perspectives about their professional situations is limited. Most studies of IBC staffing explore this topic from the perspective of management (Healey, 2016; Salt & Wood, 2014). Minimal research has examined lecturers' perspectives about working in the IBC context (e.g., Cai & Hall, 2016); what does exist on this topic primarily focuses on cultural adjustment and logistical issues involved with working in remote settings. Deeper questions of professional identity and identification in this population have not yet been adequately explored.

**This research uses constructivist grounded theory methodology to explore IBC lecturers' perspectives on their careers, identities and current professional contexts, with particular focus on how they orient to their roles as representatives of their institutions.**

Constructivist grounded theory is a qualitative research paradigm that resists overly-prescribed research expectations and plans, instead prioritizing the emergent findings that can be produced through careful, open-minded exploration of participants' worlds (Charmaz, 2014).

Data for this research is being generated through 25-50 one-hour semi-structured interviews of lecturers currently employed at three or more Asia-based international branch campuses. These data is being anonymized at both the institutional and individual level, and studied across cases for insights related to three research questions:

1. How do IBC lecturers self-identify in relation to their institutions, the academic profession and other groups and influences?
2. How do IBC lecturers perceive their roles and responsibilities in their institutions, particularly in regards to how they represent the university to students?
3. What factors impact IBC lecturers' likelihood of positively representing their university to students?

As a grounded theory study, this research has the intended outcome of developing a theory about IBC lecturers' professional identities and orientations toward institutional representation—representing new knowledge for the discipline of higher-education management studies as well as practical insights for IBC leaders.

#### **ABOUT THIS GUIDE:**

This interview guide outlines the plan for the interviews that are being conducted as part of this research. Key questions asked in each session are included, along with possible follow-up questions and sensitizing topics to guide in-situ probing.

This guide is not, however, comprehensive in representing the full range of discussion topics possible in these interviews. Constructivist grounded theory positions the researcher as a contributor to the data and eventual findings, and recognizes as valuable the impromptu questions and tangential explorations that arise during these interactions (Charmaz, 2014). The questions listed below therefore serve as a guide that I loosely follow, adjusting extemporaneously to the situation of each interview with an overarching focus on ensuring the continued comfort and well-being of each research participant.

Page 2 below includes the script use to initiate and conclude the interviews, and Pages 3-4 include questions ask during the interview itself. Pages 3-4 form a double-sided note-taking page during the interview; this is kept securely as interview data, in accordance with procedures noted on the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form.

**INTRODUCTION SCRIPT**

*Thank you for agreeing to meet me today. Did you look over the Participant Information Sheet I sent you? Do you have any questions?*

*The purpose of this form is to explain the goals of my research and tell you about what you can expect as a participant. I'll go over this again now so we can ensure this is clear for you.*

**ABOUT ME:**

- *I am a PhD student at RMIT University in Vietnam, an international branch campus of RMIT University in Australia.*
- *I am also an employee of RMIT Vietnam: have worked as instructor, department manager, and in the vice president's office.*
- *Through all of those experiences I've become interested in the perspectives of lecturers at institutions like [IBC name].*

**ABOUT MY PHD:**

- *My PhD explores the experiences of lecturers in the international branch-campus context, looking particularly at their professional identities and how they see their roles as representatives of their universities.*
- *This is an interview study. I am interviewing 25-50 IBC lecturers in Southeast Asia about their perspectives.*
- *My methodology is constructivist grounded theory, which means that I'm not trying to prove or disprove anything--I'm approaching this with a very open mind, trying to understand the perspectives of participants like you.*

**ABOUT THE INTERVIEW:**

- *This interview is "semi-structured," so I have a few questions here that I'd like to ask, but what I really want is to have a conversation with you about how you see yourself in connection to [IBC name].*
- *I will be recording the interview today via this tape recorder, and the microphone on my computer as a back-up. These recordings will be transcribed and de-identified, anything that I publish or present from this interview will be in the form of a written transcript, not this recording.*
- *In my thesis and other papers, I will not refer directly to [IBC name]—instead I'll say "an international branch campus in [country name]." Your actual name is noted in my research notes and recordings, but I will use a pseudonym everywhere else and limit mention of any unique characteristics that could reveal your identity.*
  - *Of course, the fact that you are participating in this interview may be known to some people here at [IBC]. However, in all of my communication I will take every possible measure to keep your identity confidential.*

*Before we proceed, do you have any questions for me? (Answer and elaborate as needed.)*

*Have you signed the form / are you comfortable signing this form for us to proceed? (Only progress when PICF is signed and filed.)*

*Okay, great. We've scheduled an hour for this session, so we'll finish at [finish time].*

*Are you ready for me to start recording? (Note: if any participant expresses the desire not to be recorded, I will not record and will simply take notes. This will only be used as a back-up strategy, given its reduced efficacy for data precision.)*

**-- CONDUCT INTERVIEW --****CLOSING SCRIPT**

*So that brings us to the end. I want to thank you for generously spending this time with me today. This is valuable for my research.*

*Would be okay for me to get back in touch with you if I need to clarify something you've said today, or if I have a follow-up question? There's a possibility I might be able to come back to [IBC] for some follow-up interviews later this year. If it's okay with you, I may get in touch with you and see if we can arrange another session. Would this be okay? (Note participant's preference on note page.)*

*Thank you again, and have a great day/evening!*

PARTICIPANT: \_\_\_\_\_ PSEUDONYM: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**BACKGROUND QUESTIONS:**

*Okay, I'd like to start with a few quick questions for demographic information.*

1. *Can I ask your nationality?* \_\_\_\_\_
2. *Can I ask your age range? 20s, 30s, 40s, etc.?* \_\_\_\_\_
3. *How long have you been working at [IBC]?* \_\_\_\_\_
4. *Your job title is [position title], correct? (can anonymise if obscure)* \_\_\_\_\_

**INITIAL OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:**

*Now we're going to move into the main interview, where I'll ask you to reflect on your experiences and opinions related to your role and profession.*

*With all of these questions today, I'm going to listen and take notes. I've been talking a lot until now, but now I really want to hear from you. So if I'm quiet—that's good, it means I'm really keen to hear more about what you're saying. I will only interrupt if I need to clarify my understanding of something you say, or if I get excited and want to dig deeper!*

*Do you have any questions about this process before we begin?*

- 1. Let's start by talking about your teaching experience across your career. This is a general question, and you can answer it however you like. I'd like you to tell me the story of your experiences working in the field of education, starting at the beginning.**

PROBE FOR: years and nature of past experience within and beyond HE, professional identity, agency.

- *So when did you start teaching? What did you do before your teaching career?*
- *Have you worked in other IBC contexts? How long in international ed? Other int'l roles?*
- *How did your X experience compare to your Y experience?*
- *Why did you leave your prior position?*
- *Of all of these institutions, which has been your favorite one to work at, and why?*

- 2. Could you tell me about your current role at [IBC]?**

PROBE FOR: official and self-imposed responsibilities, institutional identification and commitment, overall experience at IBC, professional identity, agency, future plans.

- *Could you describe your official responsibilities as you understand them?*
- *Can you talk about any other responsibilities you may be bringing to your role?*
- *How do you feel about your overall experience working in this and other IBC contexts?*
- *Do you see yourself working in international higher education long term?*

**INTERMEDIATE QUESTIONS:****1. I'd like to understand your impression of [PU]. How salient would you say it is in life here at [IBC]?**

PROBE FOR: familiarity with PU, perception of PU's relevance in IBC setting

- *Were you familiar with [PU] before you started this job? Was brand a factor in you coming here?*
- *What do you think students / lecturers think about [PU]? Is brand salient for them?*
- *Have you ever been to [PU]? (If so): What was your impression of it?*
- *What kinds of communication do you get from [PU]? Are you aware of its values? Its strategic goals?*

**2. When you think about your professional identity--your sense of yourself in your profession--do you feel like PU is part of that identity? And if so, do you identify more with PU local or PU global?**

PROBE FOR: professional identity, identification with PU, distinction between professional and institutional identity.

- *... so is it academic first, then PU local, then PU global?*
- *Has your professional identity changed since you started this job?*

**3. When you speak to students, their parents or other people about [IBC], to what extent—if any—do you feel like you need to represent [IBC] to them? To be a mouthpiece or representative for the institution?**

PROBE FOR: perceived obligations, orientation toward representation, professional identity, institutional identity.

- *Do you feel like students see you as an extension of [IBC] / the face of [IBC]?*
- *Can you think of a time you referenced the institution to students--maybe in explaining expectations, for example?*
- *[If a leader]: Do you think lecturers feel they need to be representatives of [IBC] to students?*

**4. Thinking about the last question--about representing [IBC name] to students and others--do you think that university lecturers should think of themselves as university representatives? Could you talk through your thoughts on this subject?**

PROBE FOR: affective stance toward representation, professional identity, other identity influences.

- *When you were in situation X, how did you feel about it? Were you happy to do it or would you have preferred not to?*
- *Has your perspective on this changed during your career?*

**CLOSING QUESTIONS:**

*Okay, so I can see our time is coming to a close soon. I just have two more questions for you, and then we'll wrap up.*

**1. Given your experiences working at an IBC, what advice would you give to a lecturer who is considering taking a job at one?**

PROBE FOR: identity as member of IBC lecturer category, perceived differences between general academia and IBC context.

- *Do you feel like there are specific challenges involved in working at an international branch campus?*
- *What do you think is different about working at an IBC versus working at the home campus?*
- *What characteristics—professional, personal—would a lecturer need to have to be successful at a place like [IBC]?*

**2. Looking back on our conversation, is there something that you want to elaborate on, or an additional idea you want to share?****3. Is there anything you want to ask me?**

### Appendix 8: List of Initial Codes

Accepting parent campus leadership
Adjusting after joining IBC
Adjusting to Australian or international culture
Advocating for IBC to PC
Altering self-introduction in different contexts
Anticipating teaching at IBC
Appreciating Australia
Appreciating community at IBC
Appreciating students' feedback on teaching
Asking how to best ensure alignment with PC
Asserting a global AusInt identity
Asserting a local IBC identity
Assimilating with PC
Balancing academic and administrative responsibilities
Balancing consistency and contextualization
Being a reluctant poster girl
Being a young manager
Brokering connections between IBC and parent
Catering to international students' needs
Choosing IBC employer
Citing limitations of campus built environment
Clashing with AusCity counterparts
Co-constructing the IBC experience—roles of lecturers and students
Coming to Malaysia for a better life
Commenting on students' parents' involvement with their children's education
Comparing different countries' educational approaches
Comparing different types of individuals at parent campus
Comparing IBC and PC resources and approaches
Comparing IBC to local universities
Comparing IBC with other Australian IBCs
Comparing students in different contexts

Complaining about current salary/conditions
Conjecturing about local employers' needs
Conjecturing about students' reasons for attending IBC
Connecting to PC through own PhD
Considering career options
Contrasting academia and industry
Contrasting oversight of locally-owned vs. PC-owned courses
Contrasting PC vs. industry associations with IBC
Contrasting recruitment self with non-recruitment self
Criticizing focus on theory vs. practice
Criticizing foreigners who don't support IBC
Criticizing local academic culture
Criticizing PC location
Deciding it's 'time to move on'
Deciding to enter academia
Deciding to join IBC
Defining 'bright shiny things'
Delivering prescribed lesson flexibly—meeting students' needs
Describing business model of IBC
Describing early informal teaching experiences
Describing IBC engagement with university vision or goals
Describing international makeup of students
Describing marketing activities
Describing mechanisms for engagement with parent campus
Describing one-way communication from AusCity
Describing own PhD experience
Describing process for working with parent campus coordinators
Describing process of subject coordination
Desiring mentorship
Desiring mobility to Australia
Desiring more autonomy from parent campus
Desiring more communication with parent campus
Developing global citizens

Developing interest in academia through industry work
Developing new programs
Disappointment with low student engagement
Disliking marking
Doing things 'for the company'
Doubting accuracy of student feedback
Doubting sincerity of PC visitors
Embracing 'otherness' in students' eyes
Emphasizing importance of English as a lingua franca
Encouraging IBC staff engagement w/int'l academia
Encouraging student mobility
Engaging in brand-supportive behaviors
Engaging in community activities
Engaging with government and industry
Enjoying expatriate life
Enjoying helping people
Enjoying opportunity to lead curricular decisions
Enjoying participating in marketing events
Enjoying teaching familiar topics
Equating Australian student experience with international staff presence
Establishing social boundaries with students
Exceeding employers' expectations
Experiencing a heavy teaching load
Experiencing limitations of tech-mediated communication
Experiencing low engagement with parent campus
Explaining service procedures
Exposing students to industry
Expressing concerns about reduced standards and educational quality
Expressing concerns about student workload
Feeling condescended to by parent campus
Feeling connected with UK
Feeling discriminated against by students
Feeling free to decide how to participate in marketing activities

Feeling frustrated with low student engagement
Feeling ignored by parent campus
Feeling insecure about research expectations
Feeling job insecure due to student evaluations
Feeling kept out of global decision making
Feeling like "two separate entities"
Feeling like an academic
Feeling negative about parent campus relationship
Feeling obligated to represent employer
Feeling othered in hometown
Feeling positive about IBC working experience
Feeling positive about parent campus relationship
Feeling pressure to lower standards
Feeling pride in university brand
Feeling proprietary about knowledge
Feeling responsible for student success
Feeling satisfied with uni support for personal situation
Feeling superior to PC
Feeling that communication with PC is two-way
Feeling that IBC student experience is not on par with PC
Feeling that research is overvalued
Feeling that research is undervalued by university leaders
Furthering IBC research agenda
Gaining competence in representing program or university
Gaining familiarity with PC
Getting into management
Giving back to community
Giving back to community through educational role
Helping students connect with Australia
Highlighting role of individual coordinator in parent campus relationship
Identifying locally; encouraging global view
Identifying with university
Imagining possible changes to IBC



Judging colleagues who don't support brand
Justifying spoonfeeding
Lacking adequate research time
Lacking resources or access for research
Lamenting lack of transparency and leadership at IBC
Living and working in US
Living away from home region
Loving teaching
Maintaining relationships with colleagues at other IBCs
Meeting students' needs
Missing industry work
Not intending to be an academic
Noticing ethnic differences among students
Noticing generational differences
Noting adverse career impact of working at IBC
Noting benefits of local course coordination
Noting challenges in delivery adaptation to local context
Noting contextual differences in IBC vs PC
NVIVO: "we follow them, we cannot influence discussion"
NVIVO: "A key selling point"
NVIVO: "A western education—that's what they've come for"
NVIVO: "How can you remain consistent, yet be different"
NVIVO: "I don't think they're as mollycoddled over there than they are here"
NVIVO: "I feel like I'm burnt out"
NVIVO: "I just try to do my best to enhance the reputation of my family"
NVIVO: "I think that perhaps students are sold something that perhaps is not 100 percent of the reality"
NVIVO: "I'm a late academic"
NVIVO: "I'm selling at that point"
NVIVO: "If I was working for a university I thought was junk, then I wouldn't be doing marketing"
NVIVO: "It feels like a commuter school"
NVIVO: "It is done at arm's length"
NVIVO: "It was basically into the deep end"
NVIVO: "It's all about kind of window dressing I suppose"

NVIVO: "It's very easy to lump staff that you haven't met under the umbrella of [AusInt Australia]"
NVIVO: "My area, my profession is more important than where I just teach."
NVIVO: "One is inside you, the passion, everything. The other one is just a dress you wear."
NVIVO: "Our programs are identical"
NVIVO: "Selling the clinical psychology program"
NVIVO: "So how do we represent something that we do not know about?"
NVIVO: "Someone who actually gets it"
NVIVO: "stop being so insular"
NVIVO: "There's really no down time"
NVIVO: "they can prescribe things to you"
NVIVO: "They come for little junkets"
NVIVO: "They come for the holiday"
NVIVO: "They like to put a white face on this"
NVIVO: "They think that maybe we're all in mud huts or something in Asia"
NVIVO: "They will try maybe they will at least say that we are giving them a hard time to, you know what I mean, to crush their
NVIVO: "Things that we do. Little things that we do. Things that we don't call me, show us that... I am not part of you."
NVIVO: "We are human beings—we're not machines talking to each other"
NVIVO: "We are told"
NVIVO: "We just connect to them for paperwork only"
NVIVO: "We want to maintain that Australian identity"
NVIVO: "what I'm always fearful is that education may lose its way somewhere—it may become too commercialized"
NVIVO: "Whether it's right or wrong, student want to feel like they're getting the Australian experience."
NVIVO: "You decide where your own lines are"
NVIVO: "You forget we exist"
NVIVO: "You have to put out the fly paper and see what sticks"
NVIVO: "You see it's a problem for me that I need to get my staff to know more about AusInt. To be proud of AusInt."
NVIVO: "You're in recruitment mode"
Participating in local academia
Participating in recruitment events
Perceiving low IBC brand prestige in region
Perceiving low student identification with Australia or PC
Perceiving market appeal of Australian uni brand
Preferring teaching postgraduate levels

Prioritizing academic over institutional identity
Providing an international experience
Pursuing a PhD later in life
Pursuing an industry career
Questioning appropriacy of parent campus oversight
Questioning idea that a lecturer would prefer not to represent uni
Questioning relevance of PC strategic messaging to Ss
Questioning strategic direction of university
Questioning university messaging to students
Rationalizing discriminatory marketing practices
Recognizing need for alignment with parent campus
Recognizing need for IBC marketing activities
Recognizing own otherness in context
Recognizing resource challenges impacting comms w/PC
Redefining AusInt identity
Referencing commercialization of Higher Ed
Reflecting on being a 'bright shiny thing'
Reflecting on identity
Reflecting on lecturer participation in marketing events
Reflecting on length of teaching experience
Reflecting on PC staff's awareness of IBC
Reflecting on spoonfeeding
Reflecting on the local versus global institutional identity
Reflecting on university politics
Rejecting safe career choices
Representing global university to students
Representing university to stakeholders
Resisting endorsing university
Resisting PC oversight
Resisting speaking on behalf of university
Resisting unsustainable IBC growth
Retaining industry identity
Seeing international or brand elements in student experience

Seeing no distinction between local and global
Seeing PC individuals as faceless
Seeing students as clients
Semiotic reinforcements of representation
Sensing entitlement from students
Setting expectations with students
Shared history with IBC
Sharing impressions of graduate employability
Sharing personal experiences with students
Stressing values-based approach to recruitment participation
Striving for regular, informal communication with parent campus
Supporting accreditation process
Supporting marketing to ensure program viability
Traveling to parent campus
Trying to motivate students
Tying day-to-day work to identification
Tying effective representation to brand awareness
Tying student identification to Australia with mobility plans
Using contemporary teaching approaches
Using different representational styles for different stakeholders
Using family metaphors to describe uni relationships
Valuing Australian connections
Valuing international experience
Valuing professional development experiences
Valuing university status vs. institute (former)
Viewing self through Australian eyes
Worrying about low student numbers
Worrying about overselling IBC to potential students

### Appendix 9: List of Focused Codes

Altering self-representation for different audiences (including aesthetics)
Avoiding behaving as an university representative to students
Desiring greater IBC autonomy from parent campus
Desiring greater IBC engagement with parent campus
Desiring mobility (short- or long-term) to Australia campus
Distinguishing IBC from other higher-education providers in region
Engaging with local industry and community on behalf of IBC
Exerting agency to align marketing behaviors with values
Feeling accepted/engaged/respected by parent campus counterparts
Feeling conflicted about participation in marketing activities
Feeling neutral about representing university to students
Feeling rejected/ignored/disrespected by parent campus counterparts
Feeling stigmatized as part of a private (vs. public) university
Gaining personal prestige through association with university
Lowering enrollment and assessment standards for local students
Perceiving Australian testamur is attractive to students
Prioritizing local IBC vs. global institutional identity
Prioritizing professional identity over institutional identity
Reluctantly participating in marketing activities
Resisting spoonfeeding in teaching
Seeing no distinction between local and global institution
Tailoring teaching to local Ss' needs (including spoonfeeding)
Taking pride in IBC and contributing to its success

Valuing global institution and community
Willingly participating in marketing activities
Willingly representing AusInt to students (local and global)
Worrying that student experience falls short of promotion/ expectations