

**Distributed System Leadership: Student Understanding and Enactment of Mission and
Values across United World Colleges**

by

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A thesis submitted to

The Education University of Hong Kong

in partial fulfilment of the requirement for

the Degree of Doctor of Education

April 2022



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Statement of Originality

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Abstract

This study investigates how United World College (UWC) leadership affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. UWC is an international school group of 18 schools and colleges. The study takes a system leadership perspective to examine the influence of different system constituents.

The study is conducted within international schools and identifies four interrelated factors affecting this environment. These include globalisation, internationalisation, informatisation, and cross-centralisation. There is a lack of research on the leadership of international school systems.

This study adopted a qualitative methodology. This methodology allowed the researcher to construct meaning from different perspectives that students and the constituent leaders hold about the shape and purpose of the UWC mission and values and the role of leadership in developing students' understanding of them.

Data collection and analysis was informed by grounded theory methods. The study employed focus group interviews to collect student data and semi-structured interviews to collect data from adult leaders. In addition, a mixture of face-to-face and remote interviews were used, mainly for UWC external leaders. Finally, observational data were collected during visits to UWC campuses, and relevant documents were identified and collected.

The findings identified that distributed system leadership affected student understanding and enactment of the UWC mission and values. Within the UWC colleges, three primary actors directly influence students' understanding and enactment of the UWC mission: principals, other adult leaders, and students (peer to peer). Influence flowed mainly through articulating and role modelling UWC mission and values. Adult leaders, particularly school principals,

also indirectly influence student understanding and enactment. They do this by creating structures and an environment to facilitate student understanding and enactment of mission and values.

External to the UWC colleges, three primary actors influence students' understanding and enactment of the UWC mission and values: UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office. National committees mainly influence student understanding and enactment through the student selection process, enabling students to develop an initial understanding of UWC. Alumni influence students by inspiring them to enact the UWC mission and values. The UWC International Office influences students principally through developing system-wide structures to support enactment.

By putting the student at the centre of the system, the study identified the different constituents and actors that influenced students within and outside the UWC colleges. The study, therefore, confirms how distributed system leadership can influence students with different constituents and actors, each playing an impactful role. This finding has implications for researchers of an educational system in how they frame their research on systems developing conceptual models with the student at the centre of the system.

This research has implications for researchers and practitioners, focusing on non-academic student outcomes. Principals directly influenced non-academic student outcomes through role modelling and articulating these outcomes. Students were also important influencers of non-academic student outcomes through peer-to-peer role modelling and articulating of the UWC mission and values.

Acknowledgements

This thesis marks an important milestone in my teaching and educational leadership journey. Many people have inspired, cajoled, supported, and encouraged me on this journey. These people are all embodied in the production of this study, and I am eternally grateful for this. Notably, students that I have engaged with either as a teacher or leader, you are a constant source of motivation.

Teaching was a career I was attracted to from an early age. My dear Great Aunt Jenny (qualified as a teacher in 1918) and Auntie Valerie (primary school teacher in the 1960s and 1970s) encouraged me on this journey in different ways. My primary school teacher, Mrs Smith, was a teacher ahead of her time. I loved Monday mornings when we would individually draw up our timetable within her framework. We were taking ownership of learning at aged eleven. My history teacher, Mr Taylor and his clever use of Banda worksheets at secondary school inspired me. I went on to study as one of my A-Levels, History, supported on my journey by a great teacher Frank Botham.

I was fortunate to gain a place at the University of Bristol to study Economic and Social History and had the constant encouragement of Dr Rodney Lowe as my personal tutor to follow my passion for teaching. I faced a real challenge to secure my first teaching position, having seven interviews and seven rejections because I looked too young!

My first teaching position was at Desborough School, Maidenhead, England, teaching Economics rather than the planned History teaching. Little would I know at the time, this was to open many more opportunities than if I had focused on History. My mentors were two fabulous teachers, Tony Lehain (Head of Department) and Olive Bendall (geography teacher), who gave me so many words of wisdom. I moved to East Norfolk Sixth Form

College, Great Yarmouth, England. I was grateful for the support of the Head, John Adnitt and of two mentors Peter Ayre and Rachel Farrow. They buoyed me on my journey into teaching Business Studies and vocational programmes.

The next leg of my journey (1979) was at The City Technology College, Kingshurst, Birmingham, England, an experimental school with a massive injection of funds from industry. The college had a truly visionary Head, Valerie Bragg, and I started to see the role that leadership played in shaping a school. This state school was an adopter of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), unheard of in the early 80s, and vocational courses (something that had been the perdue of Further Education Colleges). Two outstanding educators supported me in this school as I held leadership positions, Ann Jones (Head of Sixth Form) and Jean Turner (Business Studies teacher).

Due to the experimental nature of The City Technology College, Kingshurst, there were many high-profile visitors. One was David West, Senior Her Majesty Inspector for Post 16 Education, who had visited the college and invited me as a practitioner on vocational education in a schools' environment to accompany him on a visit to Hong Kong. This was my introduction to the English Schools Foundation (ESF), visiting the five secondary schools of this educational system and meeting the positively engaging Pat Brain (Secondary School Advisor) and Chief Executive Jennifer Wisker.

This was the start of my journey in education in Hong Kong as Head of Post 16 at West Island School, encouraged by an outstanding Head Brian Driver. Barbara Cooper was an important mentor on my educational journey in Hong Kong. I was trusted with a secondment as Post 16 advisor by Graham Ranger and Chris Durbin, who instructed me on system leadership, moving a system based on UK Advanced Levels to IBDP. On this journey, I met the inspirational principal, Ed Wickins of King George V School (KGV), who employed me

as Vice Principal to lead the school on its transition to IBDP, where I worked with the most outstanding senior leadership team that encouraged and mentored me, notably Colleen Melvin, Richard Bradford and Judie Hill.

How I obtained my position as Principal of Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong (LPCUWC) is not entirely clear to me. I thank the board for believing in me and enabling me to proceed on the most incredible journey. The Chairman, Antony Tong, and College Supervisor, Ruth Lau, have been nothing but supportive. Keith Clarke, Chief Executive of UWC International, provided the most extraordinary backing in those early days. I am working with the most extraordinary students, staff and alumni who inspire me in many ways. UWC Heads I have connected with have been a constant source of support.

For this research, I would like to thank the UWC Heads: Larry, Laurence and Pelham, who opened up their campuses for me to visit and encouraged me every step of the way. Thank you to the students for their engaging focus group discussions and the paid staff and volunteers I interviewed for freely giving their time.

My supervisors at The Education University of Hong Kong are the most brilliant educational instructors. Their encouragement nearly 15 years ago to embark on a Masters in Educational leadership gave me the confidence to complete this EdD. Dr Darren Bryant and Professor Allan Walker, the words “thank you” are insufficient to express my appreciation. My academic journey has not ended yet. Derek Blackman, thank you for being the most trusted proof-reader with a discerning eye and critical comments on the text.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge three very special people. First Mum, for constantly being on my side, always encouraging and never doubting my educational journey. When I had so many job rejections in those early days, your constant support enabled me to secure

that first all-important teaching position. Second, Selina, my sister. You have always believed in my passion for teaching and have cheered me on in the different educational settings I have been in. You have truly been that supporter from behind. Third, a special person Patrick, who has been nothing but a bedrock and champion for my endeavours. Your support on this journey has been extraordinary.

In Peace

Arnett



List of Abbreviations

CAQDAS	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software.
CAS	Creativity Action Service
IB	International Baccalaureate
IBDP	International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organisation
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
ISC	International School Consultancy
LPCUWC	Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RBC	UWC Robert Bosch College
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
UWC	United World College



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Chapter 1 - Statement of the Problem

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

(Nelson Mandela – former patron of UWC International)

United World Colleges (UWC) is an international educational group of schools that shares a common mission statement:

“UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future” (UWC, n.d., “What is UWC?” section).

The UWC system consists of several constituents. Besides its 18 schools and colleges, it is comprised of over 150 UWC national committees that select sixteen-year-old students to attend UWC colleges. A small UWC international office manages the operations of the UWC system. The UWC national committee network allows for the selection of a nationally diverse student community to attend UWC schools and colleges, resulting in UWC schools and colleges having students of between 80 to 100 different nationalities.

The purpose of the current study is to examine the role that the leadership of UWC plays in students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values. It takes a system perspective of leadership, examining how the different constituents or actors of the UWC system affect student outcomes. The research examines a high-performing educational system that measures performance in a distinctive manner based not solely on student performance expressed in standardised test scores. It examines the leadership of a system with a different set of student outcomes, much more focussed on values and the political, social and economic challenges of the twenty-first century. These outcomes relate specifically to and flow from the mission and values of UWC.

This chapter provides an overview of the research; it has seven sections. The first section discusses the study's general, contextual, and personal rationale. The second section introduces the research problem, objectives, and questions; the third section details the conceptual framework and how it scaffolds the literature review and methodology. The fourth section explains the importance of the study. The fifth section offers UWC background information, and the sixth section outlines the contextual underpinnings of the study. The final section describes the structure of this thesis.

Rationale of the study

This section outlines the rationale of the present study. First, it discusses the general research rationale, examining the leadership of a complex international educational system and how leadership impacts non-academic student outcomes. Second, it describes the context of the study, particularly its importance within the international school landscape. Third, it considers the personal rationale for conducting the study, particularly the motivation as principal of a UWC college to investigate the UWC system.

General rationale

This study of the leadership of UWC is a study of leadership in and of an educational system. Besides UWC schools and colleges, the UWC national committee network and the UWC International Office form the UWC system. The focus on the educational system's leadership is to examine how it impacts students' non-academic outcomes, specifically students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Governments and researchers in comparative education are interested in high-performing educational systems, whether at the district, regional, or national level. Considerable research has focussed on the relationship between leadership and high-performing systems. The

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) publication (2008) reviewed several case studies detailing successful system leadership. These case studies focus on school leaders' accountability for student performance, particularly in standardised, national or district tests. Despite such work, the literature in this area is rather sparse. It is often based on relatively weak "outlier research designs, where researchers locate a high-performing district and investigate the role that leadership plays in a system that is already identified as being high performing" (Leithwood & McCullough, 2016, p. 26). There is growing government interest worldwide on the part governments play in helping school leaders adopt systems perspectives.

The current research focuses on the leadership of and within a system and how it influences non-academic student outcomes. An increasing amount of literature is being produced on the role leadership plays in impacting student outcomes (Barber et al., 2015; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood & Riehl, 2004). However, most of these studies focus on student achievement based on standardised tests scores. For example, a meta-analysis by Robinson et al. (2008) found 27 studies published between 1978 and 2006 that identified associations between leadership and student outcomes. Of these, 22 studies examined only the impact of leadership on academic outcomes, four studies included only social and attitudinal outcomes, and only one study included both types of outcomes. The current research examines a high-status educational system where high performance is not based solely on standardised academic test scores.

This research is an investigation of an educational system that has a significant voluntary sector component. A distinctive feature of the UWC system is the 150 UWC national committees, essentially staffed by volunteers, mostly alumni. Previous research on volunteer organisations in educational settings has focussed chiefly on Parent Teacher Associations

(PTA) and alumni associations. Therefore, the leadership role of the UWC national committees adds a unique aspect to the analysis of leadership in an educational setting. The study may also hold relevance for other non-government systems, including Oxfam, Save the Children or United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, many of which have volunteer organisations as part of their system network.

Contextual rationale

The current study focuses on leadership in UWC. Hayden (2006) positions UWC as a significant part of the rapidly expanding international school landscape (also see: Hill, 2015). The number of students educated in international schools has grown exponentially. According to the International School Consultancy (ISC), the number of schools considered to be international schools rose from 1,700 in April 2000 to 3,876 in July 2006 (Brummitt, 2007). International schools have grown from 7,665 schools in July 2011 to 12,373 in July 2021, now educating 5.68 million students (ISC, 2021).

One of the key developments within the international school landscape has been the growth of international school *systems*. Hodgson and Chuck (2015) quote ISC Research figures claiming over 264 school groups (operating two or more schools) in 2014. UWC is one such system. There is, however, a shortage of literature on the leadership of international school systems, including UWC. This mirrors a similar lack of leadership research in international schools more generally (Blandford and Shaw, 2001; Hayden, 2006; Lee et al., 2012; Morrison, 2018). Hallinger and Leithwood (1998) warn that the field of educational administration runs the danger of being parochial and insular and would benefit from a cross-cultural international approach. This study will offer insights into leadership in an international school system.

Studying a system within the international school landscape is a valuable reference point for other schools in different contexts. International schools, including UWC, attract culturally diverse student populations. Hill (2007) has argued that intercultural understanding is a common objective of international schools and of many multicultural schools. With the current study focussing on the leadership of a system with a diverse student population, the findings may also be relevant for other schools with the same characteristics, though not within the international school landscape.

Personal rationale

The desire to undertake this research is a personal one. It represents my interest in educational leadership and UWC. I am currently the principal of Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong (LPCUWC). I was appointed to the position in 2011, and it is my first and only principalship. I was elected chair of the UWC Heads committee from 2014 to 2017 and was also a member of the UWC International Board. Currently, I am a member of the Nominating and Governance Committee of the UWC International Board. Before becoming principal at LPCUWC, I worked in leadership positions for 13 years in two other international schools. I, therefore, have experience with both UWC and other international schools in Hong Kong.

I have an immense interest in leadership within educational establishments and organisations. I completed The International Executive Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Change with the Education University of Hong Kong, which allowed me to examine some of the leadership challenges I faced through an academic lens. I am particularly interested in leadership structures within schools and have implemented radically different leadership systems in two schools where I have worked.

Since I was appointed principal of LPCUWC I have been fascinated by how students appeared so focussed on UWC's mission. In informal discussions with students, I have observed that they can articulate their understanding of the mission and have a desire to enact it. My general interest in leadership led me to explore the ways it influenced students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values and how leaders facilitated this.

The research problem, objectives, and research questions

The research problem

Empirical research on system leadership has tended to focus on the role of school leaders and how they extend their leadership beyond their schools. While identifying a range of stakeholders or constituents, both within and outside UWC colleges themselves, who impact students, this study firmly puts the student at the centre of the system. As such, the study takes a system leadership perspective and examines how the different constituents influence students' non-academic outcomes. The investigation examines the leadership practices that directly and indirectly affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The study is located within the international school context. The previous section noted the exponential growth of such schools over the last twenty years and the growth in international school systems. UWC is an example of an international school system, though unlike many of its counterparts, it is a not-for-profit system.

A key element of the student composition of UWC schools and colleges is their diversity in student nationalities (most schools have over 80 different nationalities) and their socioeconomic backgrounds. Such diversity is intentional and achieved through the extensive

needs-based scholarships which allow students to access education in a fee-paying international school.

Objectives

The main objectives of the research are to:

1. Identify the role that leadership plays in students' understanding of UWC's mission and values.
2. Identify the role that leadership plays in students' enactment of UWC's mission and values.
3. To consider the influence that the diverse nature of the student body has on student understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The research questions

The major research question is: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

From this major research question, a series of six sub-questions will be answered:

1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?
2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?
3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?
4. How does the UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values?

5. How does the UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?
6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

The conceptual framework and its use within the current study

This sub-section outlines the conceptual framework for this study, showing how this guided the literature review undertaken. It also considers how the conceptual framework influenced the methodological approach for this study.

The conceptual framework

Miles and Huberman (1994) define a conceptual framework as a visual or written product that “explains either graphically or in narrative form the main things to be studied – the key factors, concepts or variables – and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18).

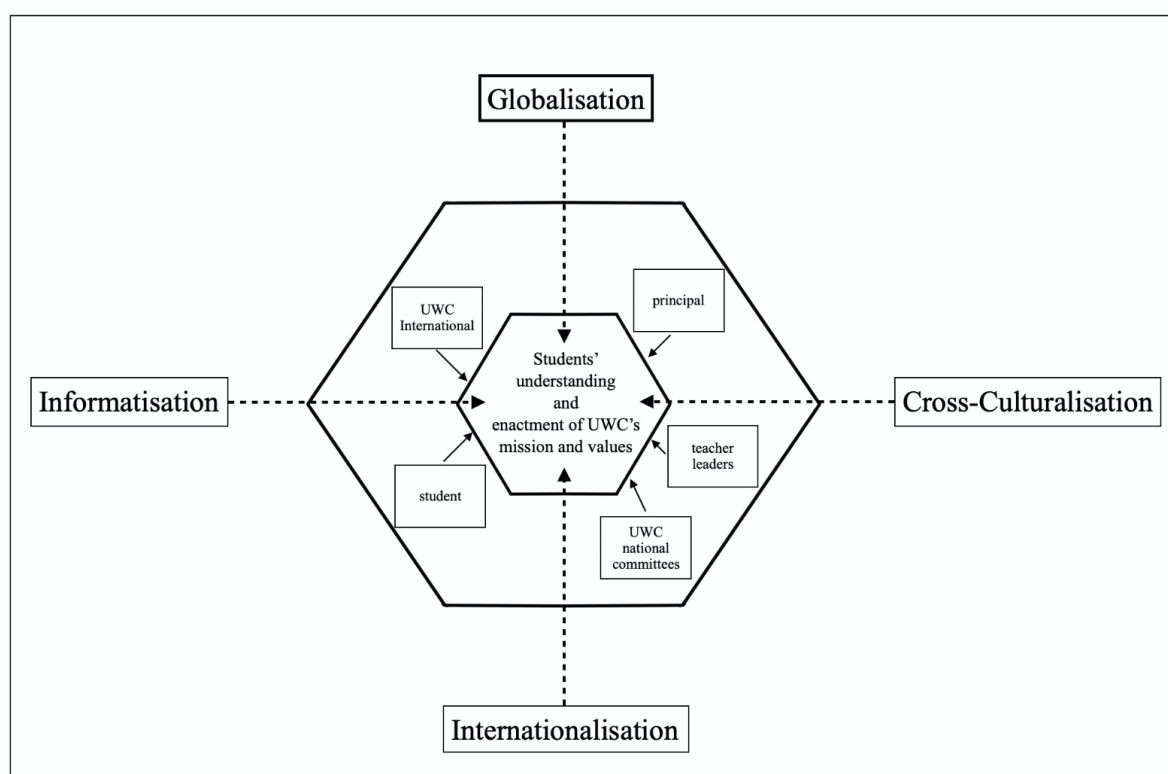
Conceptual frameworks are descriptive rather than predictive. They are less amenable to hypothesis testing, prediction, or explanation than theories (Ilott et al., 2013). In this research, the conceptual framework developed is based on the rationale of Ravitch and Carl (2017), who see a conceptual framework “as a way of linking all the elements of the research process: research interests and goals, identity and personality, context and setting (macro and micro), formal and informal theory and methods” (p. 6).

Specifically for this study, it was important to develop a conceptual framework for three main reasons. First, UWC operates within an international environment, so it is important to understand the contextual forces at work. Second, UWC is a system, so it is essential to identify elements that potentially influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's

mission. Third, as the system is complex, a diagrammatic exposition of the framework will help readers who are not aware of UWC have a clearer picture of the UWC system.

The conceptual framework is illustrated below.

Figure 1 - *Conceptual framework on how leadership affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values*



This framework consists of three elements:

1. The inner ring – at the heart is the student and their understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The inner ring also represents the students' diverse community within a UWC school or college.

2. The middle ring – this is the UWC system. Within the system different constituents are identified who have an impact on how students understand and enact UWC’s mission and values, namely:
 - *Principals* – impacting students indirectly (Hallinger & Heck, 1998).
 - *Teacher leaders* – impacting students specifically through teaching and learning (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011).
 - *Students* – impacting other students as identified by Mitra (2007) and Lizzio et al. (2011), who identify the role that students play within a distributed leadership.
 - *UWC national committees* – these committees represent voluntary organisations within the UWC system. No literature was found on the role of voluntary organisations within a distributed leadership system. UWC national committees by number (over 150) represent a significant constituent and are included in the conceptual model.
 - *UWC International* – this represents both the central office of UWC International and the governance of UWC International. The importance of governance within international schools is identified by Sheppard (2011). The role of a central coordinating body within an educational system is identified by Crawford et al. (2020).
3. The surrounding box – this represents the forces that operate in the international school environment, namely globalisation, internationalisation, informatisation, and cultural globalisation.

The solid arrows on the diagram indicate a process by which the constituents impart UWC’s mission and values to students. These are the direct and indirect processes that influence

students' outcomes. The broken arrows illustrate the influence that the international school environment has on the system.

The conceptual framework is placed within the context of the international school environment. These contextual underpinnings are explored later in this chapter. In understanding the leadership of the UWC system, the conceptual model takes a system leadership perspective by considering how different system constituents are affecting students.

How the conceptual framework influenced the literature review

The conceptual model framed the nature of the literature review that was conducted with two main foci; first, with attention to the literature on international schools and the nature of UWC; and second, centring on the leadership of a system and examining the different constituents and how they impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Literature on international schools has tended to focus on the concept of what is an international school. Therefore, the literature review examined where within the international school landscape UWC could be placed and the examination of international school systems. As the student outcomes are based on student understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, an exploration of the role of mission statements for organisations, particularly in international schools, was undertaken.

The literature review on leadership focused on the interrelationship between distributed and system leadership. The concepts of distributed leadership and system leadership were considered and applied to the current study. The focus of the literature review was to develop an understanding of how the different constituents impact students. The foundations of this

literature review are identified in the text associated with the diagrammatical model (e.g. for teacher leaders (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011)).

How the conceptual framework influenced the methodological approach

The current study examines the role that leadership plays in student understanding of UWC's mission and values. The conceptual framework guided the methodological approach to be adopted. Students being at the centre of the conceptual framework meant that the study needed to include their perceptions of the meaning of UWC's mission and values and what enactment of the UWC mission meant to them. At the same time, the conceptual framework identifies different constituents or stakeholders that affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The findings from these stakeholders will lead to understanding how the UWC system shapes student understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These stakeholders include principals, teacher leaders, students, UWC national committees, and UWC International.

A qualitative method using a grounded theory approach was adopted. Three UWC colleges were visited to undertake focus group discussions with students and semi-structured interviews with principals and teacher leaders. The visits provided an opportunity for observational data to be collected. Purposeful remote semi-structured interviews of external constituents, namely representatives from the UWC national committees and UWC International, were also completed. A document study was also undertaken to substantiate the information provided in the focus group discussions or semi-structured interviews.

The focus group student discussions and semi-structured interviews were transcribed. This data was coded using MAXQDA software. Findings were constructed based on the sub-research questions, and five assertions were developed from these findings. This resulted in

an answer in narrative and diagrammatic form to the research question: “How does the leadership of UWC affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values?”

Importance of the study

This research is important for three main reasons. First, the research examines the leadership of a system within a particular context, namely an *international school system*. Second, the study is important because it studies the leadership of an educational system by taking a *system leadership* perspective. Third, the research is important for its focus on the relationship between leadership and *non-academic student outcomes*, namely the understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

International school systems

Kofman and Senge (1993) state that the “defining characteristic of a system is that it cannot be understood as a function of its isolated components...the system doesn’t depend on what each part is doing but on how each part is interacting with the rest” (p. 27). UWC is a system made up of several interrelated components. The UWC schools and colleges, the UWC national committees, and the UWC International Office are the different components of the system bound together by a shared mission and values statement. For example, the selection of students by the UWC national committees impacts the colleges directly, as the UWC national committee selections determine the nationality and diversity of students entering an individual UWC school or college. Many UWC schools and colleges provide scholarships to the UWC national committees to fund the students to attend UWC. These interdependencies determine the systematic nature of UWC as a whole.

As noted, there has been exponential growth in the number of international schools. There has also been considerable development of the international school systems. This study defines an *international school system* as a collection of schools formed into or by a system that shares a set of values, a mission statement, and a governance structure. The values underpinning the system and the mission statement bind the system together.

This study identifies three types of international school systems. First, there are *Transnational Educational Corporations* (TECs) (Kim, 2019). The biggest TECs include Nord Anglia, Cognita, and Global Education Management Systems (GEMS) Education. These TECs are for-profit school systems. Second, *branded* schools, typically English private schools, termed “satellite colleges” (Bunnell, 2008), were established in other countries. Examples include Harrow and Dulwich College. These branded schools are also typically for-profit. Third, there are *not-for-profit international school systems*. An example is Agha Khan Education Services. UWC is a not-for-profit international school system.

There is a lack of literature on the leadership of international school systems. Indeed, there is a paucity of literature on the administration of international schools more generally (Blandford & Shaw, 2004; Gardner-McTaggart, 2018; Hayden, 2006; Lee et al., 2012). Existing empirical studies on UWC have tended to focus on individual UWC schools and colleges (Alić, et al., 2018; Rawlings, 1999; Tsumagari, 2010) though Branson (2003) undertook an evaluation of the UWC schools and colleges and the impact of a UWC education on students.

System leadership

The literature on system leadership focuses primarily on how principals or other leaders of schools extend their leadership role beyond their immediate school (Fullan, 2004;

Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009). Those occupying a system leader role see the multiple system components and the interrelationships between different parts of a system.

The review of system leaders and system leadership by Harris et al. (2021) states that:

...in terms of precise definitions, the international evidence indicates that “system leaders” and “system leadership” are not synonymous but as they are related. This definitional overlap means that the available international literature on system leaders and system leadership is highly variable in focus, content, and quality. (p. 7)

Harris et al. (2021) also explain that there is a “difference between a system leader as a role or designation, and system leadership as a process or phenomenon” (p. 2). However, they are inevitably interrelated and interdependent. The research suggests, therefore, that there is no common conceptual understanding of system leadership.

In this study, *system leadership* is taken as the density of leadership across a system and how this interacts to influence the operation and outcomes of the system. The leadership of the entities of UWC (i.e., the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, and UWC International) collectively affects the operation and outcomes of the UWC system. This research examines how the leadership of these entities collectively affects student understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

Leadership and non-academic student outcomes

This research adds to the research base on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes by examining how leadership impacts non-academic student outcomes. Studies that examine the relationship between leadership and student outcomes primarily focus on academic outcomes. Student academic outcomes, in these studies, are typically measured on standardised test scores (Coelli & Green, 2012; Day et al., 2008; Sebastian et al., 2017). Van

der Wal and Waslander (2007) identify interest in educational research and schools in “affective, non-cognitive, or non-traditional educational outcomes” (p. 409). Despite their importance, research on non-academic student outcomes is complex. They are given less emphasis in the curriculum than traditional academic outcomes; they are hard to measure and primarily stress learning outside the classroom (Reynolds et al., 2014). Indeed, there is no clear definition or concept of non-academic outcomes, with terms such as “non-traditional outcomes” or “non-cognitive learning attributes” used interchangeably.

Robinson et al.’s (2008) meta-analysis of 27 studies identified only four studies that examined the relationship between leadership and non-academic student outcomes. These non-academic outcomes included students’ attitudes to school and engagement with and participation in schools. A study by Oreopoulos et al. (2020) on improving non-academic student outcomes, using online and text-message coaching at a Canadian university, identified non-academic outcomes as including life satisfaction, engagement, and the extent to which students feel like they belong and are supported by their institution.

This study defines *non-academic student outcomes* as students' understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values. This study examines the role that the leadership of the UWC system plays in influencing, either directly or indirectly, these non-academic outcomes. The study will examine what students and leaders understand by the UWC mission and values and how they feel they enact them.

Background of UWC

There are a small number of schools internationally that focus on students’ potential to build a better world. Prominent among these are UWC’s institutions, which all share the same mission and values statement:

UWC Mission

UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

UWC Values

- International and intercultural understanding
- Celebration of difference
- Personal responsibility and integrity
- Mutual responsibility and respect
- Compassion and service
- Respect for the environment
- A sense of idealism
- Personal challenge
- Action and personal example

(UWC., n.d., “UWC educational model and principles” section)

This is, therefore, a collection of schools that emphasise peace, tolerance, and intercultural understanding (Flavin, 1996). This is intended to encourage students to make a positive difference in the world. Measurement of success is not primarily dependent on examination results or students’ university destinations but on the impact that these students have on the world.

The original UWC, Atlantic College in South Wales, was set up in 1962 by the “spiritual father” of UWC, German educationalist Kurt Hahn (Sutcliffe, 1985). Hahn was the founder of Schule Schloss Salem, Germany, and in Britain, he founded or was instrumental in

founding Gordonstoun School, the Outward Bound movement, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (Peterson, 2003). Kurt Hahn's educational philosophy, with its emphasis on experiential learning and an existentialist appeal to the moral development of the person (Röhrs & Tunstall-Behrens, 1970) was to underpin the educational philosophy of all of Hahn's projects.

The three schools that Hahn established were a practical response to developing a peaceful way forward in a world ravaged by political, racial, and economic divisions. Hahn wanted to change young people's attitudes to national and racial prejudices and the causes of war. (Peterson, 2003). Hahn's vision of education was based on a strong commitment to service, emphasising experiential learning and "character building" (Price & Röhrs, 1970). Integral to the life of Atlantic College, in its early days, were activity afternoons, which included beach, inshore and cliff rescue, and other community services (Corbett, 1970). Six years after its founding, the college had 270 students from 35 countries (Flavin, 1996).

The formation of Atlantic College came while a group of educationalists were developing an international curriculum (Peterson, 2003). As a result, the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), which offers a broad curriculum, was born. The presence of the Extended Essay and Creativity Action Service (CAS) in IBDP is evidence of the enduring legacy of Kurt Hahn's educational philosophy (Thompson et al., 2003). Today all 18 UWC schools and colleges run IBDP.

From those early days in the 1960s, UWC has grown to 18 schools and colleges, in countries which include Costa Rica, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Eswatini. The colleges and schools vary in size and age range of students. The Atlantic College model, which originally had 200 to 350 students aged 16 to 19, has evolved to include schools with 800 students aged three to 19 (UWC Maastricht) and over 5,000 students (UWC South East Asia, Singapore). All UWC

schools and colleges have a residential section for housing students. For those UWC colleges for students aged 16 to 19, all students reside on campus.

Another component of the UWC system beyond the constituent schools and colleges are the UWC national committees. These committees operate in over 150 countries/territories and select the students to enter the UWC schools and colleges at age 16. This enables the schools and colleges to have student representatives from 80 to more than 100 countries/territories on their campuses. These committees are enthusiastically run by UWC graduates (mostly volunteers).

All UWC schools and colleges sign a memorandum of understanding with the UWC International Board. This board consists of a range of stakeholders from within the UWC system, including principals, chairs of UWC schools and college boards, UWC national committee representatives, and alumni. A small UWC International office offers support to both the UWC schools and colleges and the UWC national committees and has a fundraising and communication function. All constituents of UWC have clear branding protocols that they need to follow.

The research undertaken on UWC has been surprisingly limited. Chapter two will explore the research that has been undertaken.

Contextual underpinnings

The conceptual framework identifies four external contextual features that impact the leadership practices of UWC. These contextual underpinnings form the environment that international schools operate in. They are globalisation, internationalisation, informatisation and cross-culturalisation. Globalisation and internationalisation are common themes that emerge in the backdrop of the international school's context (Bates, 2011; Bunnell, 2014;

Cambridge & Thompson 2004), cultural globalisation emerges from the work of Hofstede et al. (2010), while informatisation is largely based on the work of Mei (2018). Though these four features are examined separately, the elements are interdependent and should not be seen as distinct entities.

Globalisation

Dimmock and Walker (2000) see globalisation as “the tendency for similar policies and practices to spread across political, cultural and geographical boundaries” (p. 304).

“Globalisation” describes a process of values-free homogenisation, as the world is increasingly dominated by transnational and transcontinental brands, products, and ideas. The rapid growth in multinational corporations is having a huge impact on the global economy and society. Multinational companies transcend nation-states; corporations with a gross domestic product larger than small nation-states and populations are globally mobile, moving from one country or region to another.

Within national settings, the corporatisation of education has been a major subject of concern and research (Lubienski, 2005; Saltman, 2005). The *global education industry* comprises a broad range of education and education-related activities. It involves many institutions, from top secondary schools and universities to private tuition firms and test preparation companies, and from government agencies to intermediaries who specialise in placing international students in schools (Kim, 2019).

The forces of globalisation have a huge impact on the international school landscape. Initially, international schools were principally for expatriate populations (Hayden, 2011), who represented the early stages of the globalisation process. Subsequently, globalisation has brought significant growth in the middle-class’s demand for education (Bates, 2011).

Education is a global commodity in many parts of the world, with parents seeking education outside their national borders. Through globalisation, there are choices in the education landscape that have never been seen before. As Gould (1999) points out, UWC makes education a force for uniting people, nations, and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

Parents also choose international schools for their children to help them develop multiple or alternative identities, have access to global employment structures and job opportunities in a global economy, and benefit from education as the cultural capital investment of a global elite. This notion is further developed by Wright and Lee (2014), who examined the elite IDBP schools in China and demonstrated how globalisation impacts the demand for an English education to access universities overseas.

These trends have an impact on the leadership and management of a school. For example, international schoolteachers are particularly globalised and able to choose from a variety of schools to work at, much like a consumer may choose a product (Gardner McTaggart, 2017). Kent (2017) analyses the importance of marketing international schools due to increased competition in the international school market. These are some examples of how school leaders in international schools need to consider their school's position in a global context.

Internationalisation

In contrast to globalisation as a description of the world as it is, internationalism emerged from ideas about the world “as we would want it to be” (Cambridge & Thompson, 2001, p. 9), and there is an idealistic edge to it. With the word “nation” central, internationalism is rooted in relations between different countries and the desire to reinforce peace. If globalisation implies sameness, internationalisation is much more about capitalising on

difference and diversity. Internationalisation celebrates cultural diversity and promotes an internationally-minded outlook (Cambridge and Thompson, 2004).

Within the international school landscape, some schools are founded on determinedly, multilaterally, internationalist principles. UWC is one such example of this (Gould, 1999; Hayden, 2006; Peterson, 2003). The mission of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) is clearly internationalist:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right. (International Baccalaureate Organisation, n.d., “Mission” section)

Internationalisation has an impact on the leadership practices in a school. Hattingh (2016) undertook a literature review on the approaches to internationalising an educational institution. One area of focus was the role of leadership in the internationalisation of a school, which included administering the legal requirements for enrolling international students, generating and implementing relevant policies, guiding the school culture, providing services for cultural knowledge/cross-cultural competency, organising and managing staff collaboration, and providing staff with professional development for internationalisation.

Informatisation

An important element of the external environment that international schools operate in is the digital revolution that organisations, teachers, and students are mastering. Wang (1994) identifies two elements to informatisation: first, the process by which informational technologies, such as the internet or other communication means, transform economic, political, social, and cultural development; and second, the unprecedented growth in the speed, quantity, and popularity of information production and distribution.

Mei (2018) identifies three stages of informatisation: informatisation 1.0, which started with the adoption of personal computers in the 1980s; informatisation 2.0, which arose with the use of the internet in the mid-1990s; informatisation 3.0, which is currently emerging and represents the increasing use of “big data” and the diversity of data types and exponential growth in the scale of data accumulated from heterogeneous data sources.

Within schools, this informatisation has led to new technologies being utilised by students and teachers, such as one-to-one laptop initiatives putting a range of computing devices into every student’s hand (Nagel, 2010; Richardson et al., 2013). Students can now connect directly with experts and peers around the globe as part of their learning (Greenhow & Burton, 2011; Ito et al., 2013). For teachers, computerised data systems can analyse and identify specific student needs (Wayman et al., 2010). Cho et al. (2017) identify how there is an expansion in the wealth of knowledge that educators can leverage in their work, including using social media to share lesson plans or to exchange ideas about effective education and leadership. There is recognition that, though research on the impact of technology on learning in schools is growing, more is needed, particularly on the impact on the operation of educational organisations.

This thesis is being finalised during the backdrop of COVID-19. The development of technology, particularly video-conferencing technology, has been the backbone of much of the remote teaching that has taken place. It has allowed students to be taught in a country other than where their school is located.

There appears to be a lack of literature on leadership and technology integration and information management. Orlikowski and Barley (2001) note a long-standing divide between the research on organisations and the research about information technology. Cho et al. (2017) broadly articulate two different perspectives of organisational leadership, namely the rational system and open system approaches. Rational system models treat work (and the use of technology) as something that can be predetermined, predicted, and controlled, while open system models highlight workers' sensemaking processes in enacting change and adapting to technologies. It is clear educational leaders will increasingly need to have a clearer understanding of these different models. There is little doubt that informatisation is affecting leaders in the international school landscape.

Cultural globalisation

Globalisation as a contextual underpinning to the international school environment was examined earlier. A specific aspect of globalisation, namely cultural globalisation, is worthy of specific examination. As defined by Giddens (1990), cultural globalisation involves the increasing “reflexivity” of modern life: the systemic integration of a myriad of small individual actions into the workings of the social institutions that appear to autonomously govern our lives. Within the international school context, this is an important feature.

Culture is an incredibly difficult concept to define and is clearly very closely linked to society. On the one hand, society can be seen as simply the system of interrelationships

connecting individuals. On the other hand, culture is the “glue” that binds people together through a shared and common understanding of an accepted way of life that is distinguishable from other groups (Giddens, 1989). One will see that universals exist across cultures, such as language, family systems, and religious rituals, though what is notable is how cultures are so diverse. These unique patterns of behaviour can be seen as alien to other people of other cultural backgrounds (Dimmock & Walker, 2005).

In examining culture, Hofstede et al. (2010) differentiates between “organisational culture” and “national culture”. Within the environment of international schools, it is the national culture that is of relevance. However, when examining an individual school or system, the interrelationship of the two cannot be ignored. National culture, according to Hofstede, is “the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede Insights Organisational Culture Consulting, n.d., “National Culture” section). He identifies six cultural dimensions: Power Distance Index, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance Index, Long Term Orientation versus Short Term Normative Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint. When considering the location of UWC schools and colleges and the composition of the student and staff population within these UWC schools and colleges, these dimensions are important factors.

There are several areas where cultural globalisation leadership in international schools. Hayden (2006) examines the school experience of “third culture kids” (Useem & Downie, 1976), namely students that have grown up in foreign countries who feel that they are not integral to those countries. She identifies the challenges of transition, culture shock, and language issues (typically students that are non-native English speakers) for students attending international schools. Fail (2011) is cautionary about the Hofstede et al. (2010)

model, identifying that this model can lead to the stereotyping of students or parents. Allan (2003) identifies how cultural dissonance leads to intercultural learning. Not only does a student learn from a new culture but the teacher also needs to be open to new perspectives. Walker (2004) further explains that teachers in the international school arena are in danger of not realising that the judgements they make of their students are, in fact, a product of their own cultural background. This applies to leaders as well.

These four contextual elements are further explored in chapter two, linking these forces to the geopolitical and socioeconomic environment that UWCs operate in. It is hoped that this section explains the complex backdrop that international schools operate in. Coupled with the deep desire that UWC has regarding impacting the world, UWC also needs an understanding of the geopolitical and socioeconomic forces at work in the world today to ensure that its educational model remains relevant to the current needs of the world.

Structure of the study

The study consists of seven chapters.

Chapter one has introduced the broad parameters of the study, clearly identifying the overriding research question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values? The study's rationale has been summarised, considering the general, contextual, and personal motivations. The research problem, objectives, and research questions have been identified. The conceptual framework was introduced to frame the research for the literature review and the methodological approach to the study. The importance of the study was detailed, and the chapter concluded by outlining background information on UWC and the international environment UWC operates in.

Chapter two explores the international school landscape. First, the concept of the international school landscape and the categories of schools within this landscape are examined. Second, an investigation of the diversity of international schools within this landscape takes place, focussing on the type of organisation, the nature of the student body, and the curriculum offered. Third, as UWC is a system, the growth of international school systems is considered. As the current study is about the mission and values of an organisation, this chapter includes an analysis of the use of mission statements within international schools. This chapter concludes by examining the research that has been undertaken on UWC.

Chapter three explores the key concepts of leadership within the UWC context. Initially, an understanding of the notion of leadership is developed. As the conceptual model takes a system leadership perspective, an outline of system leadership and distributed leadership is given. Specifically, the roles of principals, teachers, students, and voluntary organisations (namely UWC national committees) are examined from a system leadership perspective. As UWC is part of the international school landscape, a review of the literature on international school leadership occurs. Finally, as the research is about the relationship between leadership and student outcomes, literature on the role leadership plays in impacting student outcomes is explored.

Chapter four outlines the methodological approach to the study based on the conceptual model developed. The chapter examines the relationship between the researcher and the subject of investigation. An examination of the theoretical paradigms and research perspectives follows, justifying the qualitative approach taken. The chapter then outlines the qualitative approach chosen, namely grounded theory. The role that sampling plays and the data collection methods utilised are then examined. Next, the chapter describes how the data

analysis was performed, the coding methodology used, and how MAXQDA software was employed. Finally, the method employed to develop the findings and articulate these to five assertions to answer the research question is outlined.

Chapter five presents the major research findings. The research findings are presented using the six sub-research questions. The findings are based on the four data collection methods: focus group discussions with students, semi-structured interviews with identified adult leaders, observational data from the visits to three UWC campuses, and documentary evidence collected.

Chapter six reports five assertions based on the findings. Each of these assertions is discussed using relevant literature. The chapter concludes by summarising the assertions into a model to explain the research question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

Chapter seven, the concluding chapter, summarises the research process and provides a summary explanation to answer the research question. The major contributions of the research are outlined, and the implications for a range of stakeholders are summarised. Then, possible areas for future research are identified, and the chapter concludes by discussing the study's limitations.

Conclusion

This chapter has stated the problem being investigated and identified the research question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values? The chapter has outlined the conceptual framework that shapes the inquiry to answer the research question. This conceptual framework not only was the basis for the methodological approach taken for the inquiry but also for the literature review. The

conceptual framework shows that this inquiry is based within the international school environment. Therefore, the next chapter explores UWC within this international school environment and examines precisely where within the international school landscape UWC should be placed.



Chapter 2 - UWC within the landscape of international schools

Chapter one introduced the purpose, rationale, significance, and conceptual underpinnings and framework of the study. It also posed the major research question and subsidiary questions driving the study. The major research question asked: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values? This chapter identifies that UWC operates firmly within the international school landscape. This chapter will explore where within this landscape UWC lies. The challenge of examining this landscape is to identify a suitable lens for guiding understanding. As Sylvester (2002) explains, one of the greatest problems of researching international schools is "that of limiting the term within a realistic field of vision" (p. 92).

The number of international schools has grown exponentially. Using the ISC (2015) definition, the number of schools considered to be international schools rose from 1,700 in April 2000 to 3,876 in July 2006 (Brummitt, 2007), to 6,717 in January 2012 (Brummitt & Keeling, 2013) and 7,017 in 2014 (International Consultants for Education and Fairs [ICEF Monitor], 2014). In August 2021, approximately 5.5 million pupils aged 3–18 were being taught at over 12,000 international schools globally (ISC Research, 2021, "Data" section). Such rapid growth, both in terms of gross numbers and types of international schools, highlights the importance of clarifying the concept of international schools.

This chapter will first explore the concept of international schools. Second, the chapter will examine international schools by category or type and how UWC fits this categorisation. Third, the chapter will discuss the diversity inherent in international schools and how this applies to UWC. In doing so, it focuses on three key contexts: the type of organisation, the nature of the student body, and the curriculum offered. Fourth, the chapter outlines the growth of international school systems and where UWC fits into this dynamic context. Fifth,

in line with the purpose of the study, the use of mission statements within the international school landscape is reviewed. This will include an account of how the UWC mission and values were developed. Finally, the chapter will review research undertaken about UWC.

The concept of international schools

The terminology used by academics within the research of international schools is anything but straightforward. Indeed, the remark by Sylvester (2003) that international schools “as a potential field of research...suffers primarily from a lack of definition” (p. 6) is still very much relevant today. Two terms that are commonly associated with this research are *international education* and *international schools*. Recently (Bunnell, 2014) has coined the phrase *international schooling* to describe the international school arena.

International education is a concept used often but lacks a clear definition (Bunnell, 2014). Simandiraki (2006) has commented, “international education is a field collectively understood by the academics and practitioners involved in it, but is still difficult to define universally” (p. 35). Marshall (2006) identified different uses for the term international education. International education is used on the one hand in the field of development education, whilst at the same time being used in the framework of comparative education. She also identifies how the term international education can incorporate global education, namely the integration into national educational systems that go beyond individual nations or territories. As Ellwood (2007) notes, “numerous researchers have struggled to define the meaning of a concept [international education] which has both an umbrella quality and an ability to morph into other areas” (p. 5).

The concept of international schooling is explored by Bunnell (2014) in *Changing Landscape of International Schooling*. The book reviews much of the literature on international schools and seeks to clarify the concept of international schools. He explains that this term was used by several academics researching international schools (Bates, 2011; MacKenzie et al., 2003; Wylie, 2008). Bunnell (2014) argues that it distinguishes the focus from other dimensions of international education. It allows one to focus on schools and the process of education within schools. In other words, it refers to the “field of international schools” (p. 39).

The other term commonly used is international schools. Much of the earlier literature in the area used this term extensively, for example, Leach (1969) *International Schools and their Role in the Field of International Education*; Matthews, (1988) *The ethos of International Schools*; and Hayden and Thompson (2008) *International Schools: Growth and Influence*. One issue with using this term is that it suggests that there exists a group of schools that can be clearly classified as international schools. As will be discussed later in this chapter, given the diversity of international schools, such wide use of the term may no longer capture the essence of the sector.

The preferred term throughout this research is international school. By using this term, this study understands that a range of schools can be identified as international schools.

Therefore, the term *international school landscape* is used to recognise the range of schools within the international school field. The following section explores this landscape, notably where within this landscape UWC is placed.

The international school landscape

In exploring the international school landscape, the focus of the literature has been on categorising this landscape. The earliest categorisation of the landscape appears in *The Year*

Book of Education 1964 (Knight & Leach, 1964). They categorised international schools into: Common Market (now European Union) schools; those sponsored by the French and German governments within their own countries for the children of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and United Nations agency employees; International Schools Association (ISA) member schools with government support; ISA member schools without government support; schools eligible for ISA membership; “overseas” schools; and personally owned profit-making schools with an international character. Different categorisations developed later, with Sanderson (1981) arguing that there were seven types of international schools, whilst Pönisch (1987) argued that there were 11 types.

Terwilliger (1972), rather than attempting to categorise an international school landscape, cited four main prerequisites for a school to be identified as an international school: an enrolment of a significant number of students who are not citizens of the country where the school is located; a Board of Directors which should be made up of foreigners and nationals in approximately the same proportions of the student body; a staffing policy whereby teachers are appointed “who have themselves experienced a period of cultural adaptation” (p. 360); “a curriculum which should be a distillation of the best content and the most effective instructional practices of each of the national systems” (p. 361).

A different approach to the categorisation of international schools was developed by Cambridge and Thompson (2004). They established a framework that conceptualised a continuum of international schools from ideologically committed to internationalism to those international schools that were established because of market-driven globalisation. Hayden and Thompson (2013) developed this into the following categories:

Type A: “traditional”, market-driven for the children of expatriates and predominantly not-for-profit.

Type B: “ideological”, mission-driven to promote international understanding and peace such as UWC and Aga Khan Academies.

Type C: “non-traditional”, market-driven for the local elite, predominantly for profit.
(para. 5)

More recently, Hill (2015, 2016) reviewed the categorisation of international schools. He developed a conceptual framework based on a national – international school continuum with the two extremities representing “ideal” or “pure” types. He identifies a series of scales to classify schools along this continuum that included the degree to which the purpose of the school was for the education of international-mindedness for the children of families living abroad; the degree that it operates an international education programme or the degree that there is a preponderance of students with overseas nationality.

The ISC has mapped the growth of international schools since 1994. ISC defines international schools either:

schools that deliver a curriculum to any combination of pre-school, primary or secondary students, wholly or partly in English outside an English-speaking country;
or

schools that offer an English-medium curriculum other than the country’s national curriculum and are international in their orientation, if based in a country where English is one of the official languages. (ISC Research, n.d., Market experts for 25+ years, para. 2)

The data utilised in the introduction to this chapter on the exponential growth of international schools comes from the ISC data. This means that the growth of international schools is

based on this data. The definition, with a focus on the use of English within the international schools, is a limitation to the definition and potentially an underestimate in the growth of international schools.

The different categories of international schools outlined above do not fully describe the international school landscape. First, individual typologies identified may encompass an even broader grouping of schools. Bunnell (2014) notes that Leach's (1969) typology of an international school serving or being composed of students from several nationalities could easily apply to a school in inner-city London or New York. Second, as typologies are developed, descriptors used may not create the clarity hoped for. For example, Hill (2016) utilises several descriptors to examine the nature of the student body. As Hill admits in considering the nature of the student body, the definition of what constitutes a host country national is not straightforward when one considers expatriates, migrants, or third culture students. As Caffyn (2010) notes: "International Schools are intrinsically complex and unique; often isolated and diverse entities that have numerous boundaries" (para. 5).

The above review demonstrates the difficulties of categorising the international school landscape. It would be difficult to argue that UWC does not fit within this landscape. Hayden and Thompson (2013) specifically reference UWC in their Type B: "ideological, mission-driven to promote international understanding and peace." (para. 5). In considering where UWC can be placed within the international school landscape, three key features warrant further exploration. These features are the type of organisation, the nature of the student population, and the curriculum offered. The next three sub-sections will explore the literature in these areas and identify how UWC relates to these features.

Types of organisations

Within the international school landscape there are either not-for-profit or for-profit educational organisations. James and Sheppard (2014) distinguished between privately owned and community owned schools. Privately owned schools may be owned (as a business) by a single owner or a group of shareholder owners. Community owned schools are owned by a trust or foundation. James and Sheppard (2014) recognised that these different styles of ownership could be run as either for or not-for-profit. Hodgson and Chuck (2015) noted that the ownership of privately owned schools tends to fall into one of three categories: an individual owner; a group of shareholders, or a company.

The early development of international schools focussed on a not-for-profit model. As Hodgson and Chuck (2015) explain, the driving force was for internationally mobile families to enable children “to move from one country to another without disrupting their education” (p. 29). Usually, these schools would be set up under charitable or not-for-profit status and be owned by the school’s parents and staff. A later development of the not-for-profit model was the establishment by a major employer or group of employers, often in remote areas of the world, to recruit employees and their families from abroad. For example, Mercedes-Benz International School in Pune, India, was set up by a special educational trust funded by Mercedes-Benz.

A major development in the international school landscape in the past 15 years has been the growth in for-profit schools. MacDonald (2009) commented that “for-profit schools are seemingly becoming more common, especially in regions such as Asia” (p. 83). In 2001, 766,000 students were taught in “for-profit” international schools, yet by 2010, the figure had more than tripled to 2.4 million students (Macdonald, 2016). As Bunnell (2014) comments, it is interesting to consider that all the schools added to the ISC Research database in 2014 were

reportedly for-profit. A major feature of the growth of for-profit schools has been the growth in international school groups, whose development is explored later in this chapter.

Globalisation has undoubtedly contributed to the corporatization of education (Kovacs, 2011; Lubienski, 2005; Saltman, 2005). Education is not simply focused on teaching and learning; this corporatisation demonstrates that it is an economic activity. This growth in edu-businesses is at the heart of the for-profit schools in the international school landscape. These edu-businesses make a range of deals with governments in order to get licenses, gain access to land and, in some cases, obtain subsidies. Many ‘satellite colleges’ have developed with a network of ‘middlemen’ facilitating entry into precarious markets such as China (Bunnell et al., 2020). Other for-profit international schools are even advising governments (Kim, 2019). “Education is a business that internationalizes without seeming to threaten anyone” (Kim, 2019, p. 6).

This growth of for-profit schools has several implications. Stitzlein (2013) openly questioned the degree to which the needs of for-profit schooling are compatible with the social goals of education. As these for-profit schools are not part of the state sector, there are challenges regulating their operation. In some jurisdictions, there are clear quality controls for such schools. For example, international schools in China must be accredited by the national Chinese accrediting body, the National Centre for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (James & Sheppard, 2014). On 1 September 2021 new regulations in China were introduced to further regulate the private school sector which meant that foreign funded enterprises established in China or social organisations with a foreign entity as their ultimate controller are prohibited from founding, participating in the foundation, or actually controlling any privately-run school providing compulsory education in China (Farrer & Co, n.d., “A new regulatory landscape for international schools in China” section).

At the same time, organisations such as the Council of International Schools provide accreditation for international schools.

However, the distinction between for-profit and not-for-profit is not always clear. Bunnell (2014) explains how many “traditional” community-led international schools do make a profit. He gives the example of Copenhagen International School, which is subsidised by the Danish government and is allowed to make a small profit. Indeed, James and Sheppard (2014) noted that respondents (Headteachers) to a questionnaire on the categorisation of their school between for and not-for-profit frequently commented that the distinction was not clear and that the profit motive could vary over time.

Where does UWC fit within the spectrum of types of organisations in the international school landscape? All UWC schools and colleges are unequivocally not-for-profit entities. At the same time, UWC schools and colleges need to break even. With the growth of for-profit international schools, the fact that UWC schools and colleges are not-for-profit entities means that they are becoming unique within the international school landscape. A distinctive feature of UWC is the complex funding sources, which include, depending on an individual UWC school or college’s school fees; funding from school/college endowment funds; funding from UWC national committees; fundraised income and government funding. For example, at Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong, the college has an endowment fund that supports scholarships for overseas and local students; fundraises annually every year; receives government funds for Hong Kong students; and receives fee income from parents.

Types of students

Recognising the lack of homogeneity within the international school landscape, it is not surprising that the types of students who partake in international schooling are also equally diverse.

As outlined earlier, international schools traditionally catered to children of globally mobile families (Walker, 2015). Essentially these were expatriate children; their parents were away from their country of origin during their child's schooling and needed to obtain education in an international setting. Gordon and Jones (1990) identified:

three main types of international moves: the 'one-off' usually fairly short move; the frequent, shortish type of move commonly associated with diplomatic life and business transfers and the lengthier open-ended or indefinite move such as international civil servants. (p. 31)

For many expatriates, school fees were paid by the employer (Hayden, 2006).

The range of nationalities in the student body has always been seen as an important and, some argue, an essential element of international schools. Hayden and Thompson (2000) assert: "diversity is not only an inherent feature of international schools, but is also a crucial aspect of the process of international education" (p. 5). Other authors have also stressed this aspect of international schools. Sylvester (1998) has argued that a minimum of 30–40 student nationalities is needed for a school to be genuinely international. At the same time, there is a challenge in identifying nationality. The data used to identify the number of student nationalities in a school are typically the students' passports. However, this can hide the cultural nature of the student population, and there is a challenge in classifying students who identify with more than one nationality/culture.

One significant change over the last 30 years has been the growth in the numbers of local students accessing international schools. Whereas in 1989, more than 80% of students in international schools across the globe were expatriates, in 2015, 80% were from the local population (International School Consultancy [ISC], 2016). Such parents who chose these schools are from: “the economic elite of the local country who believe that such an education will lead to higher education possibilities in North America or Europe” (Langford et al., 2002, p. 48). This is clearly a product of the globalisation of education.

Ng (2012) identified reasons for local parents selecting an international school in Hong Kong. These included English as the medium of instruction, access to overseas universities, and a more relaxed and positive approach to learning compared with the local educational system. Doherty (2013) showed that the perceived value of the IBDP as a qualification differentiates its students and creates a “point of difference” with local school programmes.

There is growing literature on the role of international schools in educating the global elite. For example, Lee et al. (2016) highlight the growth of international schools in China, arguing that they are an option only for the burgeoning middle class that can afford the \$US 30,000 tuition fee. Some studies are more critical, with echoes of colonialism citing “Englishness as currency” (Gardner-McTaggart 2018, p. 110). Wright and Lee (2019) examined IBDP alumni with upper-middle-class backgrounds at ‘world-class’ universities in Hong Kong noting how cosmopolitan sensibilities meant that the students may be well-positioned for careers and lifestyles of the Global Middle Class. At the same time IBDP alumni perceived a lack of belonging to their universities and a disconnection with the local society.

A recent study by Bunnell and Hatch (2021) on an ‘Elite Japanese International School’ demonstrated that it was attracting an emergent aspiring locally-based middle class who were seeking advantages and a new, distinct identity. The authors showed the tension of market-led change and trying to maintain its traditional internationalist focus.

At the same time there are restrictions in some jurisdictions on whether the local population can attend international schools. For example, Singaporean children are generally not permitted to enrol in international schools (Vidovich & Yap, 2008). In China compulsory education (Grade 1–9) in China is strictly regulated with all schools, including Chinese-attended international schools, required to teach the National Curriculum at this stage while foreign curricula are not allowed (Wu & Koh, 2022).

One group of students receiving international schooling is *third culture kids*. This term was developed by Useem and Downie (1976) to identify students who have grown up in a foreign country and are not an integral part of that country. As a result, it is suggested that they develop and create a third culture. Reeser and McCaig (1992) coined the phrase *global nomad*, which has been used widely since by others. Schaetti (1993) considered a global nomad to be someone who has spent a significant part of their developmental years living in one or more countries outside their passport country because of a parent’s occupation. Whatever definition is used, the globally mobile child is an important element of international schools.

UWC has several of the student characteristics outlined above. Using the reach of the UWC national committees and the attraction of residential facilities, the schools and colleges can readily attract students in the 16 to 19-year-old age group from overseas. UWC schools and colleges typically have representation of between 80-120 different nationalities on a single campus. Global nomads are also part of the student-make up. All UWC schools and colleges

also have students from the local population. However, unlike most international schools, UWC schools and colleges are not dependent on the local expatriate population for diversity. UWCs are not populated exclusively with students from an economically global elite. A significant number of students who attend UWC schools and colleges are on financially needs-based scholarships, resulting in students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds being able to access an international education.

Curriculum

The relationship between international schools and international education is relevant when examining the curricula that international schools adopt. An increasing number of schools worldwide, both in the independent and state sectors, offer international curricula. Therefore, it cannot be stated categorically that international schools are where international education (however it is defined) takes place. Schools that operate in the international school landscape may offer a curriculum that has no claims to be international, whilst international education may be experienced by a student not specifically in an international school (Hayden & Thompson, 1995).

Curricula taught in international schools falls into three broad categories. First, there are curricula exported from the national curricula of another country to the school in the host country (Thompson, 1998). An example of this would be English Advanced Level examinations. Second, there are curricula exported to the host country from a national system that is adapted for international usage. For example, International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), an English qualification General Certificate of Secondary Education, has been adapted for the international market. Individual schools may also adapt curricula to their context (e.g., English National Curriculum). Third, curricula may be developed that are designed with international students in mind. The most prominent of these

are the curricula of the International Baccalaureate (IB) that have developed in four overall programmes: The IB Primary Years Programme; The IB Middle Years Programme; The IBDP; and The IB Career Related Programme. Together these form a “continuum of international education” (International Baccalaureate Organisation, n.d., “Programmes” section).

There has been significant growth in the number of schools following IB curricula. As of October 2021, over 7,400 programmes were offered worldwide across over 5,400 schools in 159 countries. Between 2016 and 2020, the number of IB programmes offered worldwide had grown by 33.3% (International Baccalaureate Organisation, n.d., “Facts and figures” section). The diversity of schools offering the IB curricula mirrors the diversity of the types of schools in the international school landscape and includes schools that are not within the international school landscape. Lee et al. (2022) demonstrate how IB programmes have permeated into local education systems in Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea.

There has been a steady growth in the research base on the IB curricula, much of which is funded by the IBO. For example, a study supported by the IBO examined the relationship between student participation across IBO’s continuum of programmes and student learning: it was concluded that a continuous experience across IB programmes does not contribute to improved cognitive attributes compared to non-continuum students (Bryant et al., 2016). Another IBO supported study (Duncan & Paran, 2017) found that the schools they investigated were overwhelmingly in favour of using literature in language teaching, stressing the general contribution of literature in education as well as the linguistic benefits. Hayden et al. (2020) carried out a longitudinal study to examine the long-term impact of the CAS programme. They suggest that through programme’s experiential nature a series of signals have been transmitted from the CAS programme into adulthood.

Studies not commissioned by IBO have also been conducted. Walker (2010) was critical of the close association with western values and lack of a truly international perspective. May et al. (2013) examined 45 public high schools that offered the IB in Florida, United States of America (USA) concluding that though the IBDP is being offered in more diverse schools, it is experiencing less success in enrolling Black, Hispanic, and low-income students in the programme. The research base on the leadership of IB schools will be explored in the next chapter.

All UWC schools and colleges offer the IBDP. Where there are younger students' other non-IB curricula may be followed, such as IGCSE. As explained in chapter one, UWC has a long and cherished history with the IBDP. UWC Atlantic College worked with Ecolint (International School of Geneva) and the United Nations International School in New York to develop the IBDP. This is very well documented in Peterson (2003) and Hill (2006).

This section has explored three aspects of the international school landscape: ownership, types of students, and curricula. These features were used to identify where in the international school landscape UWC is placed. In terms of ownership, UWC is undoubtedly in the not-for-profit sector. This is in sharp contrast to the recent development of international schools, which are predominately for-profit.

Concerning students, UWC has a diverse makeup of student nationalities. Compared to many other international schools, this includes students outside the expatriate population where the international school exists. Due to the UWC national committees' reach and residential facilities, UWC schools and colleges can attract students beyond their national boundaries. Another notable difference in the student population is the diversity based on socioeconomic status. Finally, the curriculum offered to the 16-19-year-old age group is the IBDP, popular within international schools, though not exclusively provided by them.

International school systems

One of the developments within the international school landscape has been the growth of international school systems. As explained in chapter 1, this study defines an *international school system* as a collection of schools formed into or by a system that shares a set of values, a mission statement and governance structure. Hodgson and Chuck (2015) quote ISC Research figures stating there were over 264 school groups (operating two or more schools) in 2014. International school systems can be classified into three types: transnational educational corporations, which operate for profit; branded schools, typically from British private schools; and not-for-profit international school systems.

A dominant player in the international school system landscape has been the growth of *transnational educational corporations* (TECs) (Kim, 2019). The biggest TECs include Nord Anglia, Cognita, and GEMS Education. Dubai based GEMS operates 95 schools in four continents. Nord Anglia runs 69 schools in 29 countries educating 67,000 students (Nord Anglia), whilst Cognita operates 78 schools in 10 countries educating over 50,000 students. Nord Anglia does more acquiring than establishing of new schools, whilst GEMS is the most financially independent run by Sunny Varkey as a family business (Kim, 2019). Each of these schools has annual revenues between USD 300 million and 500 million (Kim 2016).

Branding has been an important element of the TECs. For example, most GEMS schools keep the GEMS name. The logo is prominently displayed at the schools and in the brochures. Though GEMS have schools at different price levels, GEMS sells its product under a single global brand (Kim, 2019).

The second type of international system is a variation of the TECs, namely branded schools. These are typically English private schools, termed “satellite colleges” (Bunnell, 2008),

established in other countries. The development of the independent school brand abroad was led by British independent school Harrow which opened a campus in Bangkok in 1998, and Dulwich College, which opened in Shanghai in 2003. These schools identified a gap in the market amongst the wealthiest expatriate and local parents. They wanted the academic provision, extensive higher education opportunities, and brand prestige that a western independent school could provide while being accessible in their neighbourhood so that their child could live close to home. Harrow School operates Harrow International Schools in Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong, and Shanghai. Dulwich College operates six schools in China, one each in South Korea and Singapore, and has two campuses in Myanmar. Malvern, Marlborough College, and Westminster from the United Kingdom (UK), have all expanded overseas, whilst Branksome Hall from Canada now has a school in Jeju, South Korea. The number of satellites has grown from 37 in 2014 to 73 in 2019 (Bunnell et al., 2020).

Due to these branches of school brands, education has been called a UK export. Wellington College then-Head Anthony Seldon claimed at a conference that “education is one of the (the UK’s) strongest exports” (Kim 2019). With echoes of colonialism, these school brands emphasise “Englishness as currency” (Gardner-McTaggart, 2018, p. 110). The paradox is that many of these well-known schools with charitable status in the UK have lent their names to commercial operations abroad. Indeed, many of these overseas operations were not funded alone but with the backing of local entrepreneurs (Machin, 2014).

The third group of international school systems are not-for-profit international school systems. Agha Khan Education Services operates over 200 schools in 13 countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan, educating 85,000 students. A key part of this education system is the Agha Khan Academies, consisting of 18 residential schools in 14 countries in Africa, South and Central Asia, and the Middle East. Another international school system that is not-

for-profit is the English Schools Foundation. However, this international school system operates only within Hong Kong with nine primary and five secondary schools that are not-for-profit. At the same time, it operates two K-12 schools and five kindergartens which are part of the Hong Kong government's private school scheme.

This review demonstrates that further consideration is warranted on the concept of an international school system. This is a growing sector within the international school landscape. For this study, an international school system is identified as a collection of schools formed into or by a system that shares a common mission statement, curriculum model, and governance structure. The mission statement is the element that binds the system together. This is further explored in the next chapter in the section on system leadership.

There are eighteen schools and colleges that constitute the UWC system. There are two significant differences that the UWC system exhibits compared to the other international school systems that are emerging. First, UWC is categorically a not-for-profit international school system. Second, the UWC system includes a constituent that is not a school. UWC national committees select the students aged 16-19 to attend the eighteen UWC schools and colleges and are an integral feature of the UWC system. UWC alumni volunteers essentially run the UWC national committees. UWC International coordinates between the different UWC stakeholders.

The role of mission statements in international schools

As the research question focuses on students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, the literature on the role of mission statements within international schools will be explored.

Mission statements have traditionally been defined as written declarations that communicate the purpose of an organisation (Bart & Hupfer, 2004; Macedo et al., 2016). Most schools have a vision and/or mission statement (Council of International Schools, 2006). School mission statements “arise from a set of values that answer fundamental questions about the purpose of education and how educational programs should be carried out” (Boerema, 2006, p. 182).

Mission statements have several different interrelated roles. They play an important role in identifying areas for planning, informing budgeting decisions, and directing action (Allen et al., 2018). They typically define the physical, social, and political contexts that govern an institution and articulate a shared purpose (Abelman, 2014). Shared mission statements assist effective organisational planning (Bryson, 2004; Gurley et al., 2014; Reynolds & Teddlie, 2002). They also provide a framework for action, promote collaboration, and incorporate goals for the future (Jones & Crochet, 2007).

At the same time, mission statements are subject to criticism. Some statements have been described as “rhetorical pyrotechnics” that read well but have little structural or operational consequence (Morphew & Hartley, 2006, p. 456). Indeed, the authors argue, in accordance with sociological institutional theory, that mission statements can easily become part of a normative expression of the legitimisation of an institution. They argue that an organisational mission statement “succeeds when everyone inside and outside the organisation agrees that it is” what it claims to be (p. 458).

Another criticism of school mission statements is that they are unrealistic and vague (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Rozycki, 2004). Manley (2010) suggested that to be useful the statements need to be well-written, transparent, and void of fad statements that may make their achievability unclear. On the other hand, Gioia et al. (2012) suggest that the vagueness

of a mission statement can help achieve organisational goals, noting that it “enables a sense of alignment between local and larger organisational goals that eases the political path to successful change” (p. 3).

There has been limited analysis of mission statements in international schools. Codrington (2004) states that such statements in international schools tend to be explicitly student-focused, and in general, are oriented towards globally enhancing goals such as peace, justice, international understanding, service towards others and environmental sustainability. Hayden (2012) surveyed 67 international school mission statements that identified that while they showed a “dominant predilection toward cognitive and academic development, they also contained a significant number of cosmopolitan characteristics and an orientation toward the development of attitudes and emotional development that aid in intercultural understanding and cosmopolitan ways of being” (p. 5). Bunnell (2014) noted that Hayden’s (2012) findings demonstrate a change in the purpose of international schools away from global peace and citizenship towards a pragmatic dimension of students accessing higher education institutions at a globalized level. The critical discourse analysis of mission statements of 46 Association of American Schools in South America carried out by Bittencourt and Willetts (2018) further supports the analysis by Bunnell (2014). They identified the potential tensions between ideological “internationalism” and “market-driven” multinationalism.

Many international schools undertake the IB curriculum. To be able to deliver this curriculum, a school needs to demonstrate a commitment to the IBO mission statement (International Baccalaureate Organisation, n.d., “Mission” section). Lineham (2013) examined the extent to which the IBDP is effective at delivering the IB mission statement. In his study of an independent fee-paying school in Switzerland, he concluded that the values of the students in question were moving towards those expressed in the IB mission statement.

The findings of Hacking et al. (2018), in an IBO supported study, support Lineham's (2013) findings. They concluded that the students were intentionally thinking about and actively working on conceptualising and developing international mindedness in all the schools they investigated. At the same time, Lai et al. (2014) examined the enactment of international mindedness in IBDP in the Hong Kong context. They concluded there were several internal and external challenges for teachers delivering international mindedness, specifically in the Chinese curriculum.

As this study is focussed on the UWC mission and values, it is important to note how the mission has evolved. The earliest found statement pertaining to the UWC mission was the UWC Guidelines (1983) containing *The Philosophy of United World Colleges* (see Appendix A). This was an internal document that was not used for promotional purposes (Branson, 2003).

The notion of a mission statement first arose in the early 1990s, when Bentley (then UWC Director General) and others saw the need “for a tool not only to be able to unite an international movement of colleges and presented a corporate image to the outside world, but which provided a broader summary of UWC’s *raison d’être*” (Branson, 2003, p. 20). From 1991 the following mission statement was adopted:

Through international education, shared experience and community service, United World Colleges enable young people to become responsible citizens, politically and environmentally aware committed to the ideals of peace, justice, understanding and cooperation, and to the implementation of these ideals through action and personal example. (Branson, 2003, p. 160)

Relevant to this research are the findings of Branson (2003) *An Evaluation of United World Colleges*. She noted that:

although interviewees recalled encountering the UWC mission and the descriptions of the movement's aim in college handbooks or similar material, the majority of teachers, students and graduates were relatively unfamiliar with their wording and reported that they were only rarely referred to explicitly in the course of college life.

(p. 21)

The 1991 mission was reviewed in 2005 at a UWC Council Meeting in Singapore. As a result of this review, the current mission statement and values have been used by UWC to this day. The current mission and values statement was detailed in chapter one.

As the research question focuses on students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, this review of mission statements is important. The section demonstrates the different roles of mission statements. There is a limited amount of literature on mission statements within international schools. What does transpire is that the international schools are being more pragmatic about their missions as they are increasingly part of a market-driven multinationalism. In contrast, the history of the development of the UWC mission statement clearly demonstrates that the UWC's focus on internationalism is an inherent feature of UWC. This makes it an increasingly distinct feature within the international school landscape and international school systems.

UWC – What do we know?

As already noted, there is a range of literature on the history of UWC and its relationship with Kurt Hahn (Flavin, 1996; Röhrs & Tunstall-Behrens, 1970; Sutcliffe, 1985, 2012) and the role that Atlantic College played in the development of the IBDP (Peterson, 2003).

Within the literature on the categorisation of international schools, UWC is frequently referenced. Hayden and Thompson (2000) identify UWC as building a population within their schools based on deliberate cultural diversity. Cambridge (2002) clearly sees UWC as an internationalist organisation with a focus on peace and intercultural understanding with an experiential philosophy on education. Bunnell (2014) notes that compared to the growth of the pragmatic for-profit schools, UWC, with its more idealistic approach, is in danger of being perceived as outdated and is increasingly being marginalised. This, he feels, undermines the idea that the landscape of international schools should be seen as rich and diversified.

Specific studies on UWC have come in various forms. UWC International commissioned *An Evaluation of United World Colleges* (Branson, 2003). This evaluation “was designed to systematically explore the relationships between the movement’s aims; the contents, structures and processes of college experiences; and learning outcomes” (p. 2). Conclusions included the value of the shared mission to guide development, tensions within the movement, a distinctive form of international education, and that the education at the UWC colleges went beyond the academic. Notably, Branson identified that all the interviewed graduates perceived that their UWC experiences had an enduring impact on their lives.

Rawlings (1999) carried out an in-depth case study of UWC Atlantic College, concluding that the value-based curricular and pedagogical interventions at UWC hold potential for developing globally oriented, participatory student communities. Van Oord and Den Brok (2004) investigated students’ and teachers’ perceptions of preferred teacher–student interpersonal behaviour in two United World Colleges. The results of their study suggest small differences in the profile of preferred teaching between teachers and students.

Wilkinson (2002) concluded that there was a change in the attitudes of UWC students

between the time of their arrival and their graduation. Tsumagari (2010), a UWC graduate, evaluated her own experiences through an interpretative phenomenological analysis of an auto-ethnography. Her findings demonstrated that UWC had nurtured international togetherness personally and across the globe. Wilkinson and Hayden (2010) as part of their study in analysing the changing attitudes of students who studied the IBDP, gathered qualitative data in the form of case studies of 12 students from UWC Mahindra College, India. They concluded that changes in student attitudes may well have been influenced not only by participation in the IBDP but also by living and studying for two years in a UWC environment.

Wilkinson (1998) examined the opening of two UWC colleges, Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong and Mahindra UWC in India, both of which he was the founding principal. He reflected on the importance of recruiting staff drawn from the country from which the college is placed, stating: “This is not a token gesture; it is fundamental to the concept of crossing frontiers and is the only answer to those who see international education as equivalent to the education of a multinational and first world dominated elite” (p. 231). He also emphasised that international education cannot be separated from a values-based education.

Two studies on UWC Mostar, in Bosnia-Herzegovina are significant. Hayden and Thompson (2010) examined the impact of how UWC Mostar impacted the three groups of students within Bosnia-Herzegovina (i.e. Serbs [Orthodox], Croats [Catholic] and Bosniaks [Moslem]) and the UWC Mostar students from overseas. They identified that bringing together students to UWC Mostar from the three Bosnia-Herzegovina communities as well as from the rest of the world appears to have facilitated the integration of these communities. Many examples were found through friendships formed, preconceptions and stereotypes based on ignorance abandoned, and prejudices broken down. A further study conducted by

Hayden and Thompson (Alić et al., 2018) compared the impact of the UWC Mostar with a local school. Specifically, they analysed the impact of UWC Mostar on the local community and identified that this occurred at three levels: impact on the community through CAS; impact and social contact of the UWC management and educational philosophy on the local community; and the impact on the level of peer interaction in school and extracurricular activities.

In a recent study on UWC, Flesh et al. (2021) compared Israeli youth studying at UWC versus their peers studying at local secondary schools. They identify how complex relations with one's nation's political conflicts promote locally oriented identities even for students who were educated at UWC schools and colleges.

At the time of writing UWC is awaiting a report from Harvard Project Zero focussing on the impact of UWC education. The study investigated which parts of the educational experience impacted students; how might students and alumni change as a result of their educational experiences and how might students and alumni impact the world and how do they define their impact?

This section examined the literature on UWC. The literature focuses on the history of UWC, how UWC fits into the categorisation of international schools, and specific studies on a few UWC schools and colleges. This study has a system focus, namely how the system's leadership influences students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Therefore, this study will add significantly to the literature base on the UWC system.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the concept of international schools and examined international schools by category or type. It recognised that there is a diversity of schools within the international

school landscape. In considering where within the international school landscape UWC can be placed, three key features were used: the type of organisation, the nature of the student body, and the curriculum offered. The chapter then outlined the growth of international school systems identifying that UWC is a not-for-profit international school system. As this study focuses on students' understanding of UWC's mission and values, an exploration of international school's mission statements was undertaken. Finally, the chapter concluded with the examination of empirical research on UWC.

Building on the positioning of UWC within the international school landscape, the next chapter develops a conceptual understanding of leadership within UWC. This conceptual understanding is based on a system leadership perspective. The different constituents of the UWC system identified within the conceptual framework are investigated and how they influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Chapter 3 - Leadership in the UWC context

This chapter examines the leadership within UWC. Chapter one introduced the study's purpose and rationale and the conceptual framework guiding the research. The conceptual framework showed that UWC's leadership operates within the wider context of the international school environment. The conceptual framework provides a basis upon which to explore the literature on leadership, particularly in terms of a system leadership perspective. The conceptual framework also identifies the different constituents of the UWC system: principals, teacher leaders, students, and voluntary organisations (UWC national committees are voluntary organisations) impacting students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The first section of this chapter discusses briefly how different scholars understand leadership. It is not intended to be a comprehensive review of leadership nor school leadership literature but, rather, a short pre-cursor to a discussion of system leadership, particularly distributed leadership, which takes centre stage in this study. Comprehensive reviews of leadership can be found in Bass (1990), Fullan (2020), Hargreaves and Fink (2012), Leithwood et al. (2008), and Spillane (2006, 2017). The second section reviews, again briefly, system leadership. The discussion focuses on understanding the meaning of system leadership and its applicability to UWC. More comprehensive reviews of system leadership can be found in Pont et al. (2008), Higham et al. (2009) and Harris et al. (2021). The third section reviews relevant literature on distributed leadership. The discussion in this section focuses on the concept of distributed leadership and how this pertains to the UWC system. More specifically, the literature on the distributed leadership role of principals, teacher leaders, students, and voluntary organisations is examined. Given the nature and purpose of UWC, the fourth section reviews the literature on international school leadership,

and the fifth section discusses the role of governance within the international school landscape. Such schools are often not subject to the same degree of governmental control as their state counterparts. The final section examines the relationship between leadership and student outcomes as it pertains to this study, namely students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Conceptually, it is surprising that despite the copious amount of research on leadership, there appears to be no clearly agreed definition of leadership. Rost (1991), for example, argues that one of the main obstacles to progress in this field is the lack of attention to precise meaning, with over 60% of authors "not defin[ing] leadership in their works" (Rost, 1991, p. 6).

MacBeath (2004) recognises significant ambiguity in the use and interpretation of the word, having identified 25 different definitions of leadership. Leithwood (2003) concludes in his six studies of teacher leadership that "the meaning of leadership remains murky, and its present status is highly dependent on a set of possibly fleeting, modern, Western values" (p. 114).

Spillane (2006) emphasises the importance of defining leadership. His current working definition of leadership refers to:

activities tied to the core work of an organisation that are designed to influence the motivation, knowledge, affect or practice of organisational members or that are understood by organisational members as intended to influence their motivation, knowledge, affect or practice. (pp. 11–12)

Leadership is about doing something – having a purpose or an aspiration. Exercising leadership always takes place in a particular context, requiring collective human agency. "It is these three fundamentals, *purpose*, *context*, and *human agency*, that are brought together

when matters of systems, schools, and community leadership are addressed” (Johnson & Dempster, 2016, p. 2).

In considering the conceptual underpinnings of leadership, the focus in the late 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century was to develop different leadership typologies. These typologies included “instructional leadership” (Heck & Hallinger, 1999), “transformational leadership” (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005), and “servant leadership” (Greenleaf, 2002). This focus on typologies was linked to the work on school improvement and school effectiveness (Sugure, 2004). The studies also tended to focus on the role of the principal/headteacher of the school and led academics to develop checklists of what was required of leadership in schools.

At the same time, the concept of distributed leadership came to the fore. The works of Spillane et al. (2001) and Harris (2008) were seminal in this regard, focusing on the practice of leadership. Alongside the interest in distributed leadership came the conceptualisation of system leadership (Fullan, 2004). With politicians in the UK, the USA, and Canada examining the leadership characteristics that made some districts perform significantly better in school improvement and student outcomes, interest in system leadership became more prevalent. The next two sections give an overview of system leadership and then an in-depth examination of distributed leadership as it pertains to UWC.

System leadership

The concept of system leadership was developed in the mid-1990s when increasing attention was being given by both researchers and policymakers to “moving reform to scale” (Elmore, 1995; Fullan, 2000). In 2008, the OECD explained the importance of system leadership. They noted that in many countries school leaders now had more autonomy, but this was coupled

with greater accountability. They argued that school leaders must prepare students to participate successfully in the new global economy and society as well as take increasing responsibility for helping to develop other schools, their local communities, and other public services. This meant that school leaders had to become system leaders (Pont et al., 2008).

Therefore, a new style of school leadership was emerging with a focus on collaboration and developing relationships with other schools and partners outside their immediate school (Hopkins, 2007). For example, Hill (2006) identified that nearly all schools in England were involved in some form of networking. One manifestation of a system leader in the first decade of the 20th century was the growth of executive heads in England who led two or more schools as a federation (Higham et al., 2009). Despite this surge of support and endorsement, interest in the idea of system leaders/ship seemed to fade after 2010 (Harris et al., 2021). This may be explained by other models of leadership gaining greater empirical traction (Gumus et al., 2018), or perhaps, like so many other leadership ideas, the idea of system leaders/ship went out of fashion (Harris et al., 2021).

An increasingly accepted definition of system leadership is “the practices of those who extend their arenas of leadership from within a school or organisation to interschool or wider networks” (Boylan, 2016, p. 59). Boylan (2016) identifies three distinct meanings of system leadership: *interschool leadership*, leadership that is exercised beyond a single school; *leadership identity*, which is a leadership practice that has a systemic orientation related to systems thinking (Fullan, 2004); and the *system leadership paradigm*, where school leaders advocate for other school leaders to have a system leadership perspective.

Much of the work on system leadership has focused on the role of the principal of a school. The principal extends their leadership role beyond their immediate school with a sense of moral purpose (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009). This is supported by

Boylan (2016), who recognises that if principals are to lead beyond their schools and engage in system-wide collaborations, then the motivation for undertaking this will be based on ethical decisions. In examining system leadership, Boylan also recognises that one needs to go beyond the principal and account for why and how the other leaders within schools will extend their activity beyond their school walls.

Senge et al. (2015) helpfully discuss the importance of collective leadership as a key quality for a system leader. They explain that there are three key capabilities of a system leader: the ability to see the larger system, a talent for fostering reflection and system wide conversations; and the vision to shift the collective focus from reactive problem solving to co-creating the future. This is a recognition that the concept of a system leader applies not only to educational systems but also to any leader of a system (e.g. health system) that transcends a district, authority, state, territory, nation, or transnational basis. At the same time, Harris et al. (2021) note that “the idea of ‘the system’ can mean many things – a country – an education system; a district; a local authority; a municipality; a group of schools in a network” (p. 2).

Until recently, there has been less research on the role of leaders who are employed specifically as system leaders, such as district educational leaders. Crawford et al. (2020) examined the role of director of education of a local education authority in England. They recognised that their role as a system leader was larger and more complex than that of an individual school principal. As governments, districts, and educational systems have focused on distributing leadership in schools, it is understandable that research on the specific role of leaders with sole responsibility for a system has diminished. This study will help to address this balance.

This section briefly reviewed the concept of system leadership. It identified that literature on system leadership has tended to focus on the role of the principal and how principals extend their leadership beyond their schools. In this study, system leadership is taken as the density of leadership across a system and how this interacts to influence the operation and outcomes of the system.

As identified in the previous chapter, UWC is an international school system. The conceptual model, outlined in chapter one, identified five constituents of the UWC system: principals, teacher leaders, students, UWC national committees, and the UWC International Office. These different constituents or stakeholders are worthy of investigation to examine how they impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Distributed leadership

This section examines the concept of distributed leadership and its applicability to UWC. It commences by exploring the notion of distributed leadership and the relationship between distributed leadership and system leadership. The literature on four constituents of the UWC system, identified in the conceptual model, is then explored. The four constituents examined are principals, teachers, students, and voluntary organisations. A review of voluntary organisations is undertaken because, within the UWC system, UWC national committees are run mainly by unpaid alumni.

The concept of distributed leadership appears to have first been used by C.A. Gibb (1954), though two other writers (Benne & Sheats, 1948) examined the complexity of leadership functions, noting that leadership was not necessarily focused on a single leader:

Groups may operate with various degrees of diffusion of “leadership” functions among group members or of concentration of such functions in one member or a few members. Ideally, of

course, the concept of leadership emphasized here is that of a multilaterally shared responsibility. Groups may operate with various degrees of diffusion of “leadership” functions among group members or of concentration of such functions in one member or a few members. (p. 41)

The foundational authors of the concept of distributed leadership are Spillane (2004, 2006), Gronn (2002, 2008), and Harris (2008). Distributed leadership is more than shared leadership (Spillane 2006). Spillane and Diamond (2007) suggest that “a distributed perspective on leadership involves two aspects – the leader plus aspect and the practice aspect” (p. 7). The leader-plus aspect acknowledges and takes into account the work of all the individuals who have a hand in leadership and management practice rather than just those in formally designated leadership roles. The practice aspect “is a product of the interactions of school *leaders, followers, and aspects of their situation*” (p. 7).

A distributed leadership lens brings the focus on leadership practice away from formal authority figures or institutionalised roles. Rather, leadership operates within a network of players with shared and complementary knowledge and expertise. As a result, the perspective does not focus solely on the individual principal or teacher but on the collective group action (Gronn, 2002). In other words, the unit of analysis is not the individual but the social interaction within the organisation as a whole. Related to the notion of concerted action, emphasis is placed on interdependency, dispersed responsibilities, and reciprocity rather than control and compliance (Spillane, 2004). Consequently, a distributed leadership perspective enables organisations to build on the strengths and skills of various members.

Gronn (2008) argues that distributed leadership should not be viewed as a polarised alternative to focused leadership but should provide a framework to analyse the diverse structures of leadership in schools. This idea is further developed by Mayrowetz (2008), who

sees distributed leadership as a theoretical lens highlighting the “rich theoretical construct” (p. 425) of the foundational authors. This theoretical lens, Mayrowetz argues, changes how leadership is studied. He argues that researchers need to de-centre, but not ignore, the role of administrators to investigate leadership at the school level rather than an individual level and focus on interactions among educators and their contextual factors.

The more recent studies of distributed leadership have moved from the conceptualisation of such leadership to its effects on school outcomes. These have included staff’s commitment to the organisation (Hulpia et al., 2012; Malloy et al., 2017), affiliation to the organisation, trust, job satisfaction and retention (Angelle, 2010), and academic optimism (Chang, 2011; Mascall et al., 2008). Some research (Heck & Hallinger, 2009; Marks & Printy, 2003) suggests that distributed leadership is associated with a higher level of teachers’ knowledge and pedagogical skills (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008) and student achievement. However, Robinson (2008) found the correlation between distributed leadership and student achievement to be inconsistent.

There is a lack of literature on the relationship between distributed leadership and system leadership. Most of the literature on distributed leadership considers distribution within the school, often taking the leadership exercised within formal school leadership roles as a starting point (Boylan, 2016). Distribution here evokes a sense of responsibility being passed out or shared across the organisation by those in central leadership roles; in other words, it is essentially the delegation of authority. Boylan (2018) argues that teacher leaders may also exercise system leadership, particularly if informed by moral purposes. He sees the role of teacher leaders as including the initiation and facilitation of professional learning opportunities beyond their own schools.

Principals and distributed leadership

Recent studies claim that principal leadership might be the single most important factor leading to school improvement (Day et al., 2008). It is also acknowledged that principal leadership impacts student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Pont et al., 2008). When principals share leadership responsibilities and have genuine motivation for teacher growth and school improvement, teachers tend to collaborate and take on leadership roles. Much of the literature on distributed leadership puts the principal at the heart of the analysis (Harris, 2012; Murphy et al., 2009).

In looking at principal leadership's impact on school improvement, three leadership effect models have been identified: direct, indirect (mediated), and moderated (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Pitner, 1988). The direct effects model assumes that principalship is the direct driver for school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012). The critics of this model argue that it says very little about the operation of principal leadership in a school and note that scholars adopting this model cannot produce sound evidence (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Wu et al., 2020).

The mediated effect model identifies how principals indirectly shape various school organisational features and processes that subsequently influence student learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998). A growing number of studies support this model for explaining the effects of principalship (Kythreotis et al. 2010; Leithwood et al., 2010; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012). Many school processes have been considered mediators between principal leadership and student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2010; Shen et al., 2016).

The moderated effect model is based on contingency theory (Hallinger, 2003), and its main argument is that principals' influences takes shape in a more contextualised way (Pitner,

1988). In other words, the contextual characteristics of the school influence the relationship (direct or indirect) between principal leadership and student achievement. Principals could become more effective if they matched their leadership practices to the demands of the situation. For example, Sebastian et al. (2017) identified that even though the school learning climate was a significant mediator between principal leadership and student achievement, leadership practices that improved student performance in high schools differed from those in elementary schools.

Wu et al. (2020) studied the mediating effect on principal leadership with student achievement in science. They focused on three teacher-related mediators: (a) teachers' job satisfaction (Dutta & Sahney, 2016; Griffith, 2004; Shen et al., 2016), which was based on the extent of teachers' willingness to work at school every day and positive feelings about students' success with schoolwork; (b) teacher self-efficacy during teaching (Gannouni & Ramboarison-Lalao, 2018), identified as the "personal capability and confidence to successfully teach, organise and perform their science course, such as designing experiments and activities, and facilitating discussions" (pp. 1020–1021); and (c) teacher collaboration (Dumay et al., 2013; Goddard et al., 2015; Goddard et al., 2010), which refers to the joint interaction and cooperation among teachers in activities centred on teaching and learning. Wu et al. (2020) found:

teachers' rating of principal leadership had a direct and positive relationship with student science achievement; teachers' job satisfaction and collaboration were positively associated with principal leadership but did not mediate the relationship between principal leadership and student science achievement; and principal leadership's direct effect on science achievement was moderated by school size. (p. 1017)

This case study illustrates the complexity of the mediated effects of principal leadership on student outcomes and how direct, mediated, and moderated effects all have a role to play.

One of the factors that has led to the distribution of leadership is the increasing level of demand that is placed on a school principal, particularly in terms of the pace of educational change. This has included initiatives such as school-based management, increased accountability measures, and curricular reforms (Bryant, 2019; Day et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2019). At the same time, research shows that principals have a key role in bringing distributed leadership to life in schools (Heller & Firestone, 1994; Leithwood et al., 2007). A Canadian study by Bush and Glover (2012) showed that the effectiveness of distributed leadership strongly depended on the principal's commitment and positive support of colleagues.

Research shows that principals retain considerable formal power, and distributed leadership will not be evident if they do not support it (Printy & Liu, 2021). Harris (2005) notes that “distribution can work successfully only if formal leaders allow it to take root” (p. 167). Relationships between principals and their staff need to be cordial, and formal leaders must not feel that their leadership is threatened (Harris, 2005; Law et al., 2010). Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) found that collegial leadership behaviours on the part of the principal were strongly related to trust in the principal. Mascal et al. (2008) found that trust in leaders was positively correlated with the planful alignment of distributed leadership. At the same time, distributed leadership can blur power relationships, which may create instances where informal leaders are exploited by principals (Law et al., 2010).

Teachers and distributed leadership

There is growing evidence about the role teachers play in distributed leadership. This subsection examines their roles both in formal leadership positions and informal situations.

Compared to principal leadership, teachers' roles in formal leadership positions within distributed leadership is a relatively unresearched area (Cranston, 2006; Dinham, 2016). Part of the challenge is defining who middle leaders are. For example, in his study of leaders in Australia and New Zealand, Cranston (2006) included deputy principals as middle leaders. Others have conceptualised deputies as part of the senior leadership group (Brooks & Cavanagh, 2009; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). Another challenge in defining middle leaders is that there are a range of expectations on middle leaders within different school situations (Flückiger et al., 2015; Koh et al., 2011; Odhiambo, 2014).

Different models or frameworks have been developed to examine teacher or middle leadership. Taking a network perspective, Lin et al. (2018) have identified four roles of teacher leadership. First, there is the brokering role, which refers to teachers who link other teachers with opportunities for professional learning. This role is considered a central responsibility for teacher leaders (Day & Harris, 2002). Second, there is the mediating role, which refers to teachers who serve as vital sources of expertise and information. Third, there is the participative role, which refers to teachers who actively participate in schoolwide initiatives or development with a sense of ownership. Finally, there is the forging role, which refers to teachers who formulate mutual learning opportunities based on close relationships with other individual teachers (Harris, 2003).

De Nobile (2018) developed the *Middle leadership in schools model* following a literature review of research on middle leadership from the 1990s. He identifies a middle leader's six

roles: student focussed; administrative; organisational; supervisory; staff development and strategic role. This model (De Nobile, 2018 p. 399) is not “meant to be the definitive representation of how middle leadership operates in all schools. Rather, it is offered as a model that could be operationalised to guide further research into the way middle leaders operate.”

Drysdale and Gurr (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Gurr, 2015; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013) have developed a framework for analysing school leadership and, specifically, the role that middle leaders play within this framework. They identify three levels or dimensions of leadership:

- Level 1 (L1), Teaching and Learning (instruction)
- Level 2 (L2), School Capacity (organisation)
- Level 3 (L3), External Contextual (system).

They note that middle leaders are highly involved in interventions at L1, partially at L2, but have little to no involvement at L3. Bryant’s (2019) examination of middle leaders in Hong Kong schools supports these findings. His findings also identify that during educational reform, middle leaders undertake more leadership at Level 3.

There is little research on the informal leadership role of teachers in distributed leadership. Spillane and Diamond (2007) stated that “in efforts to understand the practice of leading and managing schools, we must pay close attention to the interactions, not simply the actions” of individuals (p. 6). Danielson (2007) described teacher leaders who might not occupy formal promotion positions but influence the work of other teachers, especially those new to the profession. Gronn (2002) identified that when teachers collaborate and share their efforts, the outcome is greater than the aggregate of their efforts as individuals. Undoubtedly the micropolitics in schools deserves attention, as distributed leadership focuses on interactions

between leaders and followers. This is highlighted by Flessa (2009), who examined the divergence of literature on school micropolitics and distributed leadership.

Students and distributed leadership

There is an increasing amount of research on student leadership within the school setting, though students' roles in distributed leadership is an under-researched area. Dawkins (2008) argues that schools must develop confident and creative young people who are energetic and informed citizens with a strong sense of ethical understanding and personal and social capability. Indeed, the concept of student leadership has been described as intrinsic to student engagement (Andrews, 2007; Chesterton & Duignan, 2004).

Research on student leadership has focused on three main areas: first, student voice, where students are involved in decision-making structures within schools; second, student leadership of students by students, including organising and operating student clubs or performing the duties of a school prefect; and third, student leadership, where students take action, notably outside of school.

Research has demonstrated student voice initiatives can positively impact students and schools (Lyons et al., 2020). Mitra's (2018) literature review of student voice identified developmental and academic benefits for individual students and organisational improvements to school climate. Student voice is used primarily to improve student educational outcomes, with a focus on the learning environment (Quaglia & Fox, 2018). It can also improve relationships between students and teachers (Yonezawa & Jones, 2007). Furthermore, organisational decision-making that involves diverse stakeholder participation improves organisational outcomes (Kusy & McBain, 2000), with some schools involving students in school governance. At the same time, Hill (2020) recognises the challenges

related to student voice if it is to have an impact on school improvement. Pearce and Wood (2019) also identify that student voice as a construct is complex, contested, and different across contexts.

For leadership of students by students, there is an appreciation of the value of leadership training and development for student leaders (Buscall et al., 1994; Chapman & Aspin, 2001). Various commentators (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Hart, 1992) have stressed the value of an adult mentor working with elected student leaders. Hay and Dempster (2004) note it is important that schools provide positive student leadership opportunities and experiences for all students. Providing opportunities to be authentic leaders in school can improve students' positive self-regard, feelings of competence and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

In examining student leadership with a focus on making positive change, the importance of support from adults and mechanisms in the school is paramount (Fielding, 2011; Mitra, 2006; Wong et al., 2010). Civic education research has several developed typologies for examining youth socio-political development, measuring citizenship by the degree to which young people act within traditional systems or are critical of those structures (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Specifically, Mitra and Kirshner's (2012) student voice typology features a continuum from youth leadership, defined as "boosting individual competencies" (p. 50), to social activism (i.e. societal critique).

In a recent study Wright et al. (2021) examined student leadership in Round Square schools. Inspired by educationalist Kurt Hahn (founder of UWC), Round Square schools share a commitment to character education and experiential learning to build skills such as leadership. The study demonstrated how student leadership is built in Round Square schools, identifying that student leadership can be built through diverse activities in and outside the classroom that provide opportunities to experience student leadership responsibilities.

However, students' roles in distributed leadership within a school have not been a major focus of research. Mitra (2007) was one of the first researchers to identify the relationship between student leadership and distributed leadership.

Increasing *student voice* in schools broadens the notion of distributed leadership to include considering young people themselves as capable and valuable members of a school community who can help to initiate and implement education change. (p. 237)

Lizzio et al. (2011) argue that the leadership role that students play is an integral part of an authentic distributed conception of school leadership. Lavery and Hine (2012) argue that principals play a dynamic role as catalysts for developing student leadership. They decide what human and financial resources will be allocated to student leadership and indicate to the school community the value of student leadership in their leadership practices.

Voluntary groups and distributed leadership

Within the UWC system, UWC national committees select students aged 16 to 19 years to attend UWC schools and colleges. The UWC national committees consist mainly of volunteers primarily drawn from alumni. This section provides a review of voluntary groups and how they may relate to distributed leadership. This section will also look briefly at the research on volunteerism, focusing on why people volunteer. An analysis of the research on the role that alumni play in educational organisations follows. Finally, a review of the role of one voluntary educational group, namely Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), is outlined.

Volunteerism.

There has been a growth in the literature of research on volunteer work, particularly concerning the reasons why people volunteer (Wilson, 2012). Snyder and Omoto (2008) define volunteer work as consisting of:

freely chosen and deliberate helping activities that extend over time, are engaged in without expectation of reward or other compensation and often through formal organisations, and that are performed on behalf of causes or individuals who desire assistance. (p. 3)

Musick and Wilson (2007) have developed a *volunteer process model*. The model has three stages beginning with the antecedents of volunteering, followed by the experiences of volunteering, and concluding with the consequences of volunteering for the volunteer. They explain that this is not a theoretical model but simply a logical way for the writers to order their research material.

The research on the motivations for volunteering is particularly relevant to this study, especially regarding the subjective dispositions inherent in volunteering. These include personality traits, motives, attitudes, norms, and values (Wilson, 2012). The personality trait most often associated with volunteering is extraversion, followed by agreeableness (Bekkers, 2005; Omoto et al., 2010). Psychologists have used motivational theories to explain volunteering. Mannino et al. (2011) created the *Volunteer Function Inventory*, identifying a finite set of motivations behind volunteers' work. They adopt a functionalist viewpoint of volunteering, emphasising that reasons, purposes, needs, goals, plans, and motivations impel actions.

Economists predominately assume that people are motivated by self-interest and obtaining rewards. Although one may think of volunteer work as altruistic, it is undeniable that in many

cases, people volunteer for an activity only if it is in their interest to do so (Wilson, 2012). In a comparison between households with multiple children in several different schools and households with multiple children in the same school, Gee (2011) found that having children in the same school (i.e. having more at stake) raised the propensity to volunteer for the school by 13%.

Alumni.

In the literature on alumni's impacts on education institutions, most of the research focuses on alumni in higher education institutions and their financial giving (Faria et al., 2019; Gaier, 2001; Hanson, 2000; Hashemi et al., 2009). Some previous studies have investigated the effects of the student experience on alumni donation behaviour (Clotfelter, 2003; Monks, 2003). However, little research has linked this experience to the non-financial aspects of alumni support, such as recommending and providing access to professional networks (Newman & Petrosko, 2011).

There is a developing literature base on the growth of alumni institutional networks.

University programmes and professional organisations like Teach For America have invested heavily in understanding how to build robust alumni networks (Benavides, 2016).

CarringtonCrisp, an education market research and consultancy firm for business schools and universities, regularly produces reports on alumni matters. A recent report found that 85% of alumni have positive feelings towards their business school, but only 40% definitely or mostly agree that they are engaged with it (CarringtonCrisp, 2020).

There is a lack of research on alumni networks in schools. A master's study by Ng (2008) on alumni school associations in Hong Kong found that they are basically established as social and fraternal groups for alumni. The involvement of alumni is usually project-related and

short term. No research was found examining the roles that alumni play in distributed leadership.

Parent Teacher Associations.

PTAs are parent-led organisations that communicate collectively with school leaders and that are avenues for parents to contribute time, resources, and talent to their children's schools (Murray et al., 2019). They are voluntary organisations that include parents, teachers, and staff and that are found in various countries such as Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Fisher, 2018).

From one perspective, PTAs are institutions that help facilitate the unequal distribution of educational opportunities both within and across schools (Reeves, 2018). PTAs are usually effective fundraisers, and many PTAs in affluent communities raise hundreds of thousands of dollars annually (Brown et al., 2017; Nelson & Gazley, 2014). These funds can be used to support academic and extra-curricular programmes and/or support specialist equipment and facilities and instructional staff (Murray et al., 2019).

There is also an alternative view of PTAs. Putnam (2001) argues that they and similar voluntary associations serve as essential building blocks of democratic governance. He sees PTAs as sources of social capital, a resource that is available and beneficial to rich and poor alike. PTAs create social spaces where diverse school constituents can work together to solve self-identified communal challenges (Noguera, 2001). PTAs help build trust among parents, students, and educators, coordinating their efforts to create effective learning opportunities for all students (Bryk, 2010; Lee et al., 1993). By facilitating communication among parents and educators, PTAs may draw attention to struggling students and create resources to help these students thrive (Coleman, 1988; Murray et al., 2019).

This section examined how distributed leadership applies to a system. The current study takes a system leadership perspective. The conceptual model identified five constituents or stakeholders that influence students: principals, teacher leaders, students, and UWC national committees and UWC International. Literature was examined on the leadership role of principals, teacher leaders, students, and voluntary organisations (representing UWC national committees).

Leadership in international schools

Researchers recognise that context is a critical feature that requires consideration when investigating educational leadership (Bossert et al., 1982; Goldring et al., 2008). A key context of this research is the international school landscape. The international environment, identified in chapter one, namely globalisation, internationalisation, informatisation, and cultural globalisation, is the context within which international school leadership operates. This section focuses on the literature on leadership in international schools, how this applies to UWC, and the conceptual model developed.

While educational leadership is an established field of investigation, there is limited research on leadership in international schools (Blandford & Shaw, 2001; Gardner-McTaggart, 2018; Hayden, 2006; Lee et al., 2012). Some of the earliest work in this field was by Blandford and Shaw (2001), who offered a list of unique challenges facing leaders in international schools. These challenges included the following:

- high and diverse parental expectations
- high rates of staff turnover and student mobility
- politics surrounding the position of the school head
- unclear or inappropriate involvement of board members in school business

- compliance and congruence with in-country education laws and policies
- ephemeral and itinerant membership of the board of governors
- mixed-culture nature of the staff, students, and board
- balancing local and global curriculum standards and expectations
- competitive pressures for student intake.

Whereas many of these challenges can also be found in state or local schools (e.g. high rates of staff turnover in poor inner-city urban schools), in international schools, they appear embedded within additional layers of complexity (Walker & Lee, 2018). Keller (2015) captures this complexity as a duality, with international school leaders facing spatial dualities (e.g. local citizens vs. expatriates, on-campus residents vs. off-campus staff, upper campus vs. lower campus) and temporal dualities (e.g. school history vs. pressures to change, graduating seniors vs. entering kindergarteners, traditional education vs. innovative education). Fisher (2021) identified that leaders in international schools do adapt their actions, most often using different communication styles but also methods of building collaboration and trust, and decision-making structures. In Bunnell's (2021) literature review *"Leadership of 'messy, tense international schools': The potential scope for a fresh, positive lens of inquiry"*, the complexity of leadership in international schools was reemphasised.

One challenge for school leaders in international schools is high staff turnover (Blandford & Shaw, 2001). Gardner-McTaggart (2018) noted that transience affects staff more heavily in the international context than in the national context. This confirms Hayden and Thompson's study (1998) on teacher demographics in international schools, where 40% of teachers had served in at least five previous schools. Hardman's (2004) research data showed that only 11% of teachers had previously only worked at one school, with 89% having worked at two or more. Glover et al. (1998) connect "itchy feet" (a desire to leave the school for another

after a relatively short period) and high staff turnover, noting the serious impact that this has on student learning.

Another challenge identified by Blandford & Shaw (2001) is the politics surrounding the position of the head. International school leaders have an average tenure of only 3.7 years (Benson, 2011). Within the literature on international schools, there is evidence from teachers that there is a “dark side” (Burke, 2006) to leadership, which links to the “destructive leadership” behaviour that Einarsen et al. (2007) identify. Caffyn (2010) argues that the unique context of international schools may contribute to significant micro-political conflicts. Simkins (2005) notes the danger to leaders who ignore or fail to address the complexities and ambiguities of a school’s organisational life.

Gardner-McTaggart’s (2018) recent literature review on leadership in international schools led to the conclusion that “there is an orientation towards collegial models of management, and distributed leadership models: albeit as a normative trend, with transformational approaches often valued by school principals” (p. 153). An interpretive study (Hunter Lewis, 2015) of educational leaders in a Chinese international school focused on leaders’ intercultural sensitivity and emotional intelligence. It concluded that distributed leadership is recommended for pursuing empathetic leadership methods with the goal of educating global citizens. At the same time, the study noted that transformational leadership was seen to engage and motivate educators to work with students to become socially responsible global citizens.

UWC schools and colleges offer the IBDP. The research base on the leadership of IB schools is a growing one. A recent study on leadership in IB schools (Walker & Lee, 2018) discusses how school leaders address challenges when implementing IB programmes. They examined five IB schools that offer multiple IB programmes in Asia, identifying curriculum

disconnection points and the challenges of weaving these points together. These disconnections were: instrumental, intellectual, cultural, professional, and communicative. They argue that the leadership strategies adopted are two aspects of distributed leadership: distributed instructional leadership and teacher leadership. Calnin et al. (2018) identifies at the heart of an IB school leader's challenge is to develop strong capabilities in cultural and contextual awareness.

Within the international school landscape, very little has been written about the role of middle leaders. Recently, Javadi et al. (2017) examined the middle leadership activities in four international schools in Malaysia. They concluded that though many previous studies on middle leadership and management were conducted in public schools, “their findings are largely consistent with the international literature, reinforcing this assumption that bearing ‘international’ in the names of schools does not necessarily mean a significant difference” (p. 495). They argue that there are significant similarities between the middle leadership activities undertaken in international schools and those in state schools.

This section reviewed the literature on leadership within international schools. It demonstrates that international schools' leadership is of increasing interest for academic inquiry. At the same time, no research was found on the leadership of international school systems. The international school environment is the backdrop for the conceptual model outlined in chapter one. The model demonstrates that UWC is an international school system. The conceptual model identifies different system constituents and considers how they impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Governance within international schools

This section reviews the literature on the governance of international schools. Many international schools do not have the same degree of accountability to governments as their state counterparts, whether at a local, state, or national level. Therefore, the governance of these schools is of prime importance (James & Sheppard, 2014). Powell (2003) summarises the main aspects of international school governance, including personnel, finance, planning, policy formation and adoption, and curriculum and instruction.

Littleford (2002, as cited in Hayden, 2006) categorises international school boards into four categories: first, self-perpetuating, where current board members select the new members; second, elected by an annual general meeting in an open manner; third, elected, with some degree of screening of candidates; and fourth, appointed by outsider groups (e.g. embassy officials or key supporting corporations). Board membership varies considerably across the international school landscape. Board members can include the founder/owner, parents, community members, teachers, principals, and business leaders (Blandford & Shaw, 2001). Blandford and Shaw (2001) note that the self-perpetuating board is the most stable and leads to the best long-term decisions. As with the challenge of categorising types of international schools, there are examples across the international school landscape that do not fit this categorisation. For example, a report produced by RSAcademics (2018) notes that in China, in many schools with an international head, there is a requirement for leadership to be shared with another leader who is a Chinese national. Schools may also have a branch secretary of the Chinese Communist Party to represent the interests of Chinese staff members who may double up as a co-principal.

Sheppard (2011) asserts that successful governance depends on the type of school and board structure. He explains that governance structures and practices have not been able to keep

pace with the increasing complexity of international schools. An important factor for the success of a well-governed school is the interrelationships between different board members and the leaders, notably the school principal. Hawley (1994) noted the longevity of international school principals' tenures and concluded principals tend to remain longer in international schools when the board members are largely "disinterested" because they do not have children enrolled in the school. He noted that the headship survival rate within international schools was 2.8 years. Another relevant study concluded that governance models within international schools that relied on high numbers of elected parents of students currently attending the school produced a much higher turnover of heads and chairs of boards than others (Fisher, 2011). Many studies on governance in international schools (Littleford, 1999; Tangye, 2005; Walker, 2004) identify how personal agendas negatively affect the school's long-term development. Indeed, Hawley (1994) indicated that heads preferred board members that took a long-term view of the school.

Within for-profit schools, Hodgson (2005) notes that Board decisions risk being overly influenced by the profit motive. James and Sheppard (2014) contend that the governance of for-profit schools is becoming more problematic. In many instances, the owners are prepared to delegate educational matters wholly to the principals while retaining oversight of only financial/resource matters. At the same time, the principals are being called to account for educational issues such as student enrolments, examination results, and periodic assessment by accrediting organisations because these issues ultimately affect the financial performance of the school.

This section explored the literature on governance within international schools. No literature was found on the governance of the international school systems, within which UWC can be classified. The UWC system consists of semi-autonomous schools with an overarching UWC

International Board. Each UWC school and college has its own board which manages personnel, finance, planning, policy formation and adoption, and curriculum and instruction. Each UWC school and college signs a memorandum of understanding with the UWC International Board. The UWC International Office is accountable to the UWC International Board. The UWC International Board oversees the strategic direction of the UWC system. Individual UWC college boards are not identified within the conceptual model of UWC system distributed leadership. However, UWC International Office, which is directly accountable to the UWC International Board, is identified as a constituent of the conceptual model.

Leadership and student outcomes

Comprehensive, large-scale systematic reviews (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008; Marzano et al., 2001) have found that leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning. There is a growing amount of literature on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes. This research suggests that leadership does significantly impact student outcomes, though indirectly. Hallinger and Heck's (1996) ground-breaking work reviewing 40 published articles between 1980–1995 reported a relatively small indirect effect, which nonetheless was statistically significant.

Principal leadership significantly affects student achievement, though the impact is often mediated by classroom teachers, school processes, and instructional climate (Leithwood et al., 2004). This effect is especially influential when school principals foster trust (Bryk et al., 2010) and cooperation among their staff (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012; Heck & Hallinger, 2009). For these reasons, the involvement of teachers and other stakeholders in the school's leadership and management is essential (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Spillane & Healey,

2010). Staff participation in decision making is positively related to staff satisfaction and commitment (Liu & Printy, 2017). The literature review on principal leadership earlier in this chapter identifies the direct, indirect (mediated), and moderated effects that principal leadership has on student outcomes.

The seminal meta-analysis by Robinson et al. (2008) examined the relationship between different types of leadership and student outcomes. They found 27 studies published between 1978 and 2006 that linked leadership and student outcomes. Sixteen studies examined leadership in elementary school situations, four in high schools, and seven included a mix of elementary, middle, and high schools. Fifteen of the 27 studies confined their analysis of school leadership to the principal only, whereas 12 took a broader, more distributed view of leadership.

Two meta-analyses were undertaken. One meta-analysis involved comparing the effects of transformational and instructional leadership on student outcomes. The results suggested that the impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes was notably greater than that of transformational leadership. The second meta-analysis concerned five identified leadership practices that impacted student outcomes. These leadership practices emerged from the first meta-analysis. Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development emerged as the leadership dimension most strongly associated with positive student outcomes.

There is a lack of literature on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes that is not based on standardised tests scores or measures of student engagement. Robinson et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis of twenty-seven studies (outlined earlier) referenced only four studies that examined the relationship between leadership and non-academic student outcomes. These non-academic outcomes included students' attitudes towards school and their engagement with and participation in school.

There is limited literature on the role that leadership plays in influencing student outcomes within the international school landscape. A study by Lee et al. (2012) of five IB schools in Asia identified that three broad instructional leadership practices – curriculum articulation, cross-program activities, and strategic staffing – positively impacted students. Lee et al. (2018) explored what leadership practices were associated with IB student achievement. They examined IBDP exam scores from teachers' survey responses about school leadership from 29 schools in Southeast Asia. They identified certain leadership practices (i.e. strategic resourcing, monitoring classroom teaching and curriculum, encouraging teacher learning and development) that are significantly associated with student academic outcomes. Grumdahl's (2010) study of IB schools in the United States supports the importance of strategic resourcing. The study stressed the importance of leaders identifying shared goals, visions, priorities, and high expectations for student achievement.

This section reviewed the literature on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes. The review revealed that the focus in the literature was on the relationship between leadership and academic student outcomes. The current study takes a different perspective on student outcomes. Student outcomes in this inquiry are non-academic, specifically students' understanding and enactment of a school's mission and values. Therefore, the conceptual model has student's understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values at the centre of the conceptual analysis.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored leadership within the context of UWC. The relevance of the concept of system leadership and distributed leadership was examined. The distinctive roles played by UWC principals, teachers, students, and voluntary organisations (such as UWC national committees), within this system were then briefly considered. As the study looks at

the international school environment, the role of governance has been explored. UWC International is the constituent in the conceptual model that represents the governance of UWC. The chapter then reviewed previous studies on leadership in international schools and concluded with a literature review on the relationship between school leadership and student outcomes.

The chapter highlighted two elements of the conceptual model. First, this study takes a system leadership perspective. It puts the student at the system's centre and identifies the different constituents and actors that influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Other studies on system leadership tend to focus on the extension of leadership beyond schools into the system. Second, this study focuses on the relationship between leadership and non-academic outcomes. This chapter highlights the paucity of literature in this area and the importance of this study.

The next chapter outlines the methodological approaches of the current study. The approach builds on the characteristics of the conceptual model outlined in this chapter. This conceptual understanding, coupled with the international school context that the inquiry is located in, leads to a methodological approach that provides an opportunity for rich data collection and ultimately to significant and valid findings and conclusions to the research question.

Chapter 4 - Research methodology

The previous two chapters considered UWC within the international school landscape and examined leadership within the UWC context. The literature review was shaped by the conceptual framework detailed in chapter one.

This chapter focuses on the methodological approach for this study, based on the conceptual model. The chapter has seven sections. The first section discusses the relationship between the researcher and the investigation. The second section discusses theoretical paradigms and research perspectives and also justifies why the study adopted a qualitative approach. The third section delves deeper into the qualitative method used: a grounded theory approach. The fourth section outlines the theoretical sampling strategy adopted, and the fifth section presents the data collection methods utilised for this study. The two main data collection methods were (a) focus group discussion with a sample of students and (b) semi-structured interviews with leaders, both within UWC colleges (in person) and external to UWC colleges (remote). This section also details the data collection through observation and access to documents. The chapter also explains the data analysis approach, namely the use of coding and MAXQDA software. Finally, the chapter concludes by explaining the process of developing findings and assertions to answer the research question.

The researcher and the subject of investigation

In undertaking research, the researcher's identity is an important element of a study (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Maxwell, 2013). The research process begins with the researcher reflecting on what they bring to the inquiry, whether this is their personal history, views of themselves or others, or ethical or political positions (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Miles et al. (2014) explain the importance of the researcher being as "explicit and self-aware as possible about personal

assumptions, values and biases and afflictive states – and how they may have come into play in the study” (p. 311). As stated in chapter one, I have been a UWC principal for over ten years and, undoubtedly, during this time, have developed ideas about what is occurring within UWC, particularly concerning the research question. As such, it was essential to ensure that the actual sequence of the data collection, processing, and analysis is carefully outlined. (Miles et al., 2014). It is imperative to demonstrate how the findings and assertions are grounded in the data collected.

Hellawell (2006) argues that all researchers need to come to terms with their position in the research process and engage with the diversity of expectations and perspectives. Particularly relevant is an understanding of where a researcher positions themselves within an “insider–outsider” continuum (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Hellawell, 2006; Mercer, 2007).

Researchers who consider themselves insiders are members of “specified groups and collectivities or occupants of specified social statuses; outsiders are the non-members” (Merton, 1972, p. 21). Outsiders are more removed from the subjects of investigation.

Savvides et al. (2014) argue that polarised debates are fundamentally flawed because they do not consider the multiple identities of individuals involved in the research process. Wickins and Crossley (2016) have developed the concept of the “alongsider” researcher. This recognises the fluidity in the insider–outsider continuum, which moves from detached theory to the bridge between theory and practice and even extends to the co-construction of conclusions. On the one hand, I am not a “pure outsider”. I understand the UWC movement, its mission and values, and some of the system-wide challenges that UWC faces. On the other hand, I am not a “pure insider”. I do not know, for example, the specific challenges facing a particular college, nor the internal workings of an individual college. Being fluid as a researcher is a strength for the methodical approach to this study. The researcher being aware

of this position is crucial to this study. This allows me to interpret information given by respondents as an insider, as well as understand key concepts or ideas discussed by students or leaders. This was particularly useful for the focus group discussions with students. At the same time, ensuring that I reviewed the data from an outsider point of view was central to ensuring the findings were grounded in the data – later sections in this chapter detail the lengths taken to ensure this.

Ethical Considerations

Researchers confront ethical dilemmas in undertaking research. Guillemin and Gillman (2004) distinguish between two different dimensions of ethics in research, namely procedural ethics and "ethics in practice".

Procedurally, the research undertaken in this study was undertaken according to the Education University of Hong Kong's Guidelines on Ethics in Research (May 2016). Consent was obtained by the principals of the three UWC colleges to allow access. This consent included being able to undertake a focus group interview with a group of students, semi-structured interviews with three to four adult leaders within the college, and observation of different activities on campus. All student focus group members and adult leaders who participated in semi-structured interviews were fully and accurately briefed and chose to partake voluntarily and without coercion.

The key to "ethics in practice" is reflexivity. Reflexivity allows researchers to be sensitive to potential burdens and harm to participants (Guillemin & Gillam, 2018). Ethical reflexivity includes how researchers recruit participants and interact with them, what researchers ask them and how data is analysed and interpreted (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Ethics in practice is thus tied to researchers' morals; the ongoing internal debate about whether something is right or wrong (Takeda, 2021)

Within this research, there were several ethical tensions that I was aware. For example, though principals' gave me permission to visit the campus and observe, I was conscious of how students and staff might perceive my observations. I was always careful to introduce myself to any students or staff on campus and explain why I was on campus.

Indeed, on all three UWC campuses visited, staff and students were very accepting and appeared genuinely interested in my research. In undertaking the focus group discussions, I was conscious of an adult researcher's power over student participants. In managing confidentiality in the thesis, specific job titles were removed, so individuals were not identified.

The research paradigm and the research perspective

This section first explores the concept of a research paradigm and how this applies to this study. Second, the research perspective is identified and justified. Third, the section justifies the qualitative approach taken for this study.

The research paradigm

Kuhn (1970) defines a paradigm as the underlying assumptions and intellectual structure upon which research and development in a field of inquiry are based. Patton (1990) sees a paradigm as an approach to breaking down the complexity of the real world. O'Donoghue (2018) identifies four paradigms or “big” theories: positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and postmodernist. Each paradigm is based on sharply different assumptions about epistemology and research purposes. He explains: “What differentiates one paradigm from another is that it offers a rationale for its choice, for the kinds of research questions it can address, for the varieties of research design it uses and for an introduction to its methods” (O'Donoghue, 2018, p. 10).

The interpretivist paradigm emphasises social interaction as the basis of knowledge (Habermas, 1972). Habermas argues that those engaged in research within the interpretivist paradigm are interested in understanding the meaning behind something. The researcher utilises the skills of a social scientist to try to understand how other people view the world they live in. The knowledge acquired in this discipline is socially constructed through mutual negotiation rather than objectively determined (Carson et al., 2001).

The research question – “How does the leadership of UWC affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values?” – requires an interpretivist approach. It is about constructing knowledge based on mutual negotiation with the subjects of this study, namely the leaders of UWC and the students. This study is not about carefully controlled observation conducted by a researcher independent of the subjects. It is about social interaction, the process of leadership and how this impacts students. This researcher’s role is to construct meaning from the different interpretations that students and the constituent leaders have of UWC’s mission and values and the role that leadership plays in developing students’ understanding of them.

Positivists tend to adopt a quantitative methodology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Silverman, 2015). Conversely, interpretivists tend to utilise qualitative methods. Interpretivists adopt more personal and flexible research methods (Carson et al., 2001), which are receptive to capturing meanings in human interaction (Black, 2006). They believe the researcher and the informants are interdependent and mutually interactive. An interpretivist usually has some prior insight into the research context while at the same time remaining open to new knowledge as the study is developed (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988).

The research perspective

Within the interpretivist research paradigm, there are three significant perspectives or traditions (Cohen et al., 2000): phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the world of subjective meanings, emphasising the subjects' own accounts of what has occurred.

O'Donoghue's (2018) explanation of symbolic interactionism is key to this study:

In summary, a researcher adopting a symbolic interactionist theoretical approach when conducting research within the interpretivist paradigm is concerned with revealing the perspectives behind empirical observations, the actions people take in the light of their perspectives, and the patterns which develop through the interaction of perspectives and actions over particular periods of time. In such an approach, the researcher is the primary data gathering instrument, using guiding questions aimed at understanding a phenomenon through semi-structured or open-ended interviews with the people involved and in their own surroundings.

Other important means of gathering data are through an examination of documents and other records, and on-site observations. (p. 20)

At the heart of symbolic interactionism are human subjects' perspectives. Perspectives are “frameworks through which people make sense of the world” (Woods, 1983, p. 7). Charon (2001) similarly explains that perspectives are made up of words that the observer uses to make sense of situations. He identifies that “the best definition of perspectives is a *conceptual framework*, which emphasises that perspectives are really interrelated set of words used to order physical reality” (p. 4).

The current study takes a symbolic interactionist perspective. It makes sense of the different perspectives that people have about concepts such as leadership and UWC's mission and values. It focuses on the accounts of students and leaders and their perceptions and beliefs about the role that leadership plays in the student's understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. It examines the subjects' views of leadership, what they understand by UWC's mission and values, and how they enact UWC's mission and values. This study examines people's actions in light of their convictions. It makes sense of the intended and unintended leadership practices outlined by the leaders interviewed.

A qualitative study

Creswell and Poth (2016) identify four characteristics of qualitative research:

- *Natural setting.* Qualitative researchers often collect data in the field.
- *Researcher as key instrument.* Qualitative researchers collect data through examining documents, observing, and interviewing participants.
- *Multiple methods.* Qualitative researchers gather multiple forms of data, e.g. interviews, observations, and documents.
- *Complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic.* Qualitative researchers build their patterns, categories, and themes from the “bottom up”.

The research question in this study, focusing on student outcomes (students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values), was best examined by interacting with students in a *natural setting*, i.e. on UWC campuses. This research question places the *researcher as the key instrument* at the centre of the research process, recognising their role in collecting and interpreting the data. The study utilised *multiple methods* to answer the research question, including focus group discussions with students, semi-structured

interviews with leaders, observation, and documentation of data. *Complex reasoning through inductive and deductive logic* was required to answer the research question. Key to this was the development of codes to analyse the data and subsequently a method to develop the coded data into findings and then ultimately into assertions to answer the research question. This study, therefore, meets the characteristics of a qualitative study.

The chosen methodology

The chosen methodology of inquiry is a qualitative one. Applying Creswell and Poth's (2016) five approaches to qualitative inquiry, this study utilises grounded theory methods or approaches. This section briefly defines grounded theory and justifies why it was used for this research study.

Grounded theory goes beyond describing what is happening to develop or generate a “unified theoretical explanation” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008 p. 107). The key feature of grounded theory is that the theory generated is grounded in data from participants who experience the process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore, grounded theory is a qualitative research approach in which the researcher generates a theory or general explanation of a process, an action or an interaction shaped by a large number of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) identified four key components of grounded theory: *constant comparison*, *theoretical sensitivity*, *theoretical sampling*, and *theoretical saturation*. A combination of these four components underpins data-driven theoretical development. The applicability of these four key components is discussed below.

Theoretical sensitivity is the ability of the researcher to go beyond the entities themselves and identify characteristics of these entities (Oktay, 2012). In this study, this involves developing theoretical constructs from the information gathered. Theories develop about the relationship

between leadership and students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. *Constant comparison* makes similarities and differences among cases apparent, and as a result, theories will emerge. An example of constant comparison in this study is examining the perceptions of leadership by adult leaders within the UWC context. One difference that emerged was that all UWC International Office leaders saw setting a clear direction as key aspect of leadership, while this was not as strong a theme among other adult leaders.

Theoretical sampling is driven by the developing theory so that as the study progresses, the sampling strategy changes. In a qualitative inquiry, "the goal of sampling is to represent the phenomenon of interest" (Morse & Clark, 2019, p. 145). Qualitative samples are usually selected by "convenience" or expertise. Inviting the most appropriate participants is crucial for obtaining excellent data in a grounded theory study (Morse & Clark, 2019). As the research question focuses on students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, the initial data collection point was necessarily students. Hence visits to UWC colleges were necessary. The theoretical sampling approach taken is outlined in the next section.

Theoretical saturation means "no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop the properties of the category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 61). In other words, the research continues until the researcher reaches a point of "saturation", where no new concepts emerge. Morse & Clark, (2019, p. 163) posit that "when the study is completed, your theory is comprehensive, defensible, rich in its explanatory power, insightful, useful and broad in scope." The theory that emerges should be applicable beyond the context first identified. In this context, theoretical saturation was achieved once there was a richness in the data on the UWC system so that the findings could be applied to other contexts. Theoretical saturation was not reached in the initial stage of semi-structured interviews with the adult

leaders of UWC colleges. Once semi-structured interviews had been undertaken with adult leaders external to UWC colleges, theoretical saturation was achieved. A new theory emerged explaining the relationship between leadership's role in students' understanding and enactment of mission and values in other system contexts.

The following two sections outline the theoretical sampling approach taken and identify the data collection methods utilised. Both are built on the grounded theory approach and the conceptual model developed. The choice of semi-structured interviews of leaders and focus groups of students reflected this. Both data collection methods allow the data to emerge from the study participants. Observation and document analysis were used to support the data flowing from the semi-structured interviews of leaders and focus group interviews of students. The table below summarises the relationship between the research paradigm, research perspective, research methodological approach, and the chosen data collection methods.

Table 1 - *The relationship between the research paradigm, research perspective, research methodological approach and the chosen data collection methods*

Research Paradigm	Research Perspective	Research Methodological Approach	Data Collection Methods
Interpretivist	Symbolic interactionism	Grounded Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group discussion with students within the college • Semi-structured interviews (on site) with leaders within the college • Semi-structured (remote) interviews with leaders who are members of the UWC system • Observation at three UWC colleges • Document study, particularly websites relevant to the study

Theoretical sampling

A grounded theory study uses theoretical sampling. The data collected should richly describe the phenomenon or experience identified. In theoretical sampling, the sampling occurs throughout the analytic process. This process is summarised by Morse & Clark (2019):

The sample must be deliberately selected, first by carefully selecting a convenience sample of appropriate participants, and second, by selecting appropriate participants based on certain characteristics. Data obtained from the original convenience sample may be re-examined for the data needed later in the study or from participants who have been selected for the information that is necessary. (p. 164)

Morse and Clark (2019) identify two different theoretical sampling arrangements – convenience and purposeful sampling. Convenience sampling is selecting participants by “convenience” or expertise. These are participants that are likely to have had experience (or be knowledgeable) with the topic of investigation, able to participate easily, and willing to

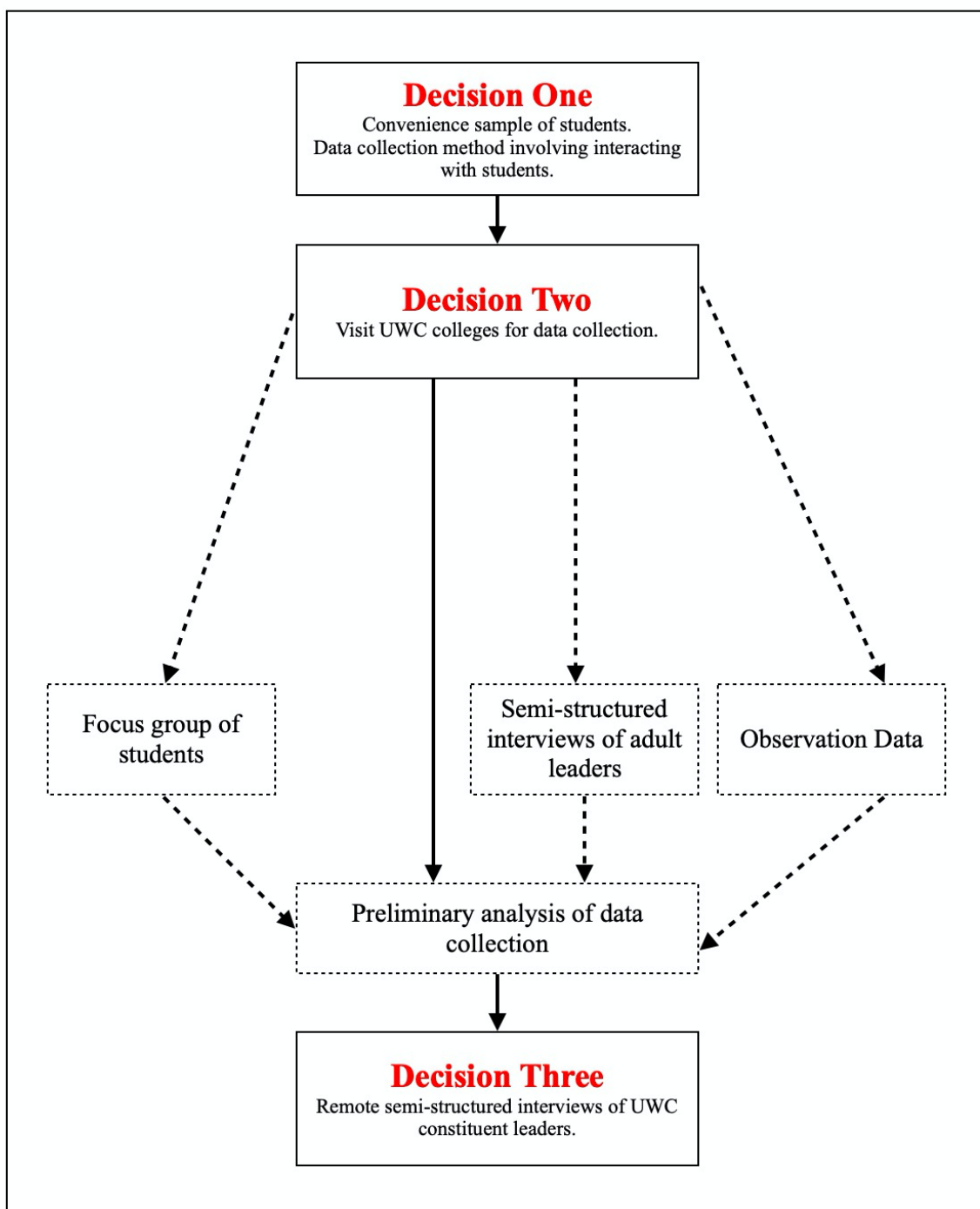
reflect and talk about their experience (Spradley, 1979). The second arrangement is purposeful sampling. This involves identifying and selecting individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a particular situation (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This study employed both convenience and purposeful sampling.

The theoretical sampling approach for this study followed the process outlined by Morse and Clark (2019). Since the conceptual model's centre is the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, this was identified as the first key data point, and a convenience sample of students was required. A decision was made that a convenience sample would be best obtained through a data collection method that allowed the researcher to interact with students. This would therefore necessitate physically meeting students at UWC colleges.

Once a choice had been made to physically meet students a decision had to be made on how many UWC colleges would be visited. It was determined that three UWC colleges comprises a solid sample. The visits would also provide an opportunity to collect other forms of data including information from leaders within the UWC colleges and to gather observation data.

The preliminary analysis of the data collected identified that the theoretical sample needed to be extended to leaders external to UWC colleges. For example, students identified UWC national committees as an influential constituent in developing their understanding of UWC's mission and values. Students also identified the role that alumni played in inspiring them. Leaders in the colleges referenced UWC International and its role in the UWC system. As a result, a purposeful sample of leaders to represent these constituents was necessary. This supported the system leadership model detailed in the conceptual model. Figure 2 diagrammatically illustrates the theoretical sampling approach taken for this study.

Figure 2 - Theoretical sampling approach



The remaining section explains the composition and rationale of the different samples. The sampling of students, UWC colleges, the leaders within the UWC colleges, and the leaders external to UWC colleges are explored in turn.

Sampling of students

As the study is about students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, meeting and talking directly to students was necessary. With the students being at the centre of the conceptual model, a sample was needed for each UWC campus visited. Recognising the sample was a convenience sample of students and not to make the sample too complex, the following parameters were given to the principal to select the students:

- A mixture of Year 1 and Year 2 students
- Minimum of six students to maximum of eight students
- At least one student from the host country
- Mix of gender (numbers of males or females was not specified in recognition of gender identity properties).

The parameters chosen were to ensure that there was a range of students from the student body of UWC colleges. It was essential to have students from both year groups to compare any differences in how students define and enact UWC's mission and values, recognising that they had different lengths of experience. As all the colleges had at least 20% enrolment from the host country, it was integral to gain insights from this group. Gender was considered, though with gender identity being an important topic at UWC schools and colleges, a decision was made not to reference gender specifically.

Appendix B details the student focus group members for each college and notes their identity by nationality.

Sampling of UWC colleges

Careful consideration was given to selecting the UWC schools and colleges to be a part of the study. The UWC movement is made up of 18 schools and colleges. These schools and

colleges vary in size from 200 students (UWC Robert Bosch in Germany) to over 5,000 students (UWC Southeast Asia in Singapore). The UWC schools and colleges also vary in terms of the age range of the student population. In some schools, the age range is 3–18 years old; in others, it is 11–19 years old; and in the more “traditional model” UWC colleges (based on the founding UWC Atlantic College), students are aged 16–19 years old. The “traditional model” UWC colleges have between 200 to 350 students in their student population and represent ten of the 18 UWC schools and colleges.

A purposeful sample of three UWC colleges was chosen. The UWC “traditional” model was identified as the focus for this study as these students represent the largest number of students selected from the UWC system. All the students reside on the UWC campuses, with a very high percentage of students being selected through the UWC national committee network. The study, therefore, chose three UWC colleges in three different geographical locations on two continents¹. The choice of different continents was to see if cultural contexts impacted how students understood and enacted UWC’s mission and values. One college was chosen that had been established within the last ten years to see if, as a newer college, this affected students’ definition and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

The UWC colleges chosen were:

- UWC Mahindra College – Opened in 1997, based in Asia, 240 students aged 16–19. Visited February 2017.
- UWC Robert Bosch – Opened in 2014, based in Europe, 200 students aged 16–19. Visited October 2017.

¹ Originally the third UWC college was going to be UWC Costa Rica. Unfortunately, a back injury prevented travel to Costa Rica. UWC Costa Rica was replaced by UWC Red Cross Norway, as this college was a college that fit the criteria and was convenient for this researcher to visit.

- UWC Red Cross Nordic – Opened in 1995, based in Europe, 205 students aged 16–19. Visited June 2018.

The three UWC colleges chosen admit significant numbers of students from the UWC national committees. They also have similar-sized student populations, meaning that if the difference in findings occurred within the colleges sampled, the size of the student population would not be a significant factor. All the UWC colleges selected could also be visited within the time frame for the study. A summary of the sample of UWC colleges is provided in Appendix C. As this researcher had known each of the principals for at least four years before any data collection, access to the three sites was gained with relative ease.

Sampling of the leaders within the UWC colleges

As this study is about leadership and its influence on students' definition and enactment of UWC's mission and values, staff were interviewed through semi-structured interviews. The principals from each UWC college selected between three and five staff members for this researcher to interview. The only criterion was for the principal to identify staff they perceived to have taken a leadership role within the college. The literature on middle leadership outlines the challenge of identifying middle leaders (Brooks & Cavanagh, 2009; Cranston, 2006; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). Therefore, it was decided that the principal of each UWC college visited would be in the best position to ascertain the middle leaders. Interestingly, two principals chose one non-teacher within their staff to be interviewed. This researcher requested an interview with each principal as the conceptual model identified the principal as one of the leaders of the UWC system. Appendix D details the staff interviews at UWC colleges.

Sampling of the leaders outside UWC colleges (remote)

As explained in the theoretical sampling approach (Figure 2), the decision to interview leaders outside of UWC colleges came after the initial analysis of the data collected from the students and leaders within UWC colleges. Students and leaders identified UWC national committees, alumni, and UWC International as constituents that impacted students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The conceptual model also identified leaders outside the school influencing students' understanding and enactment of the UWC's mission and values. Therefore, a purposeful sample needed to include representatives of UWC International and UWC national committees (UWC national committees include alumni volunteers). The following were chosen to be part of the study:

- Chief executive of the UWC International Office and two deputies
- Chair of the UWC International Board
- A representative of the UWC national committee in the countries where this researcher visited
- Two UWC International Board members who had a UWC national committee perspective and were alumni.

Appendix E details the adults interviewed external to UWC colleges. The appendix explains their constituent position with respect to UWC national committee, UWC International and alumni. All these interviews were conducted remotely via skype. No person approached refused to undertake an interview.

Data collection methods

This section outlines the different qualitative data collection methods used. Appendix F provides a summary detailing the research question and sub-questions, the reasons for their choice, the data collection method utilised, and some advanced coding themes that emerged.

The two major data collection methods used were focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Focus group discussions were used with students on campus. Semi-structured interviews were used for meetings with identified leaders on campus and remote conversations with UWC external leaders. As this researcher visited three UWC campuses, observational data were also collected. Documents, specifically information from the internet, was collected as appropriate. This section will explain and justify each of the proposed data collection methods.

Student focus group

Student focus groups were utilised at each of the three UWC colleges visited. Principals at each college were asked to choose between six and eight students with a mixture of Year 1 and Year 2 students. The sample rationale was explained in the previous section.

The defining feature of focus groups is the use of group interaction to produce qualitative data (Morgan & Hoffman, 2018). One essential part of this interaction is the sharing and comparing (Morgan, 2010, 2012) that occurs in group discussions. This sharing allows participants to explain how they feel similar to or different from each other. Participants can react to the contributions of others in the group, “which may lead to reflection, justification, or refinement of comments made during the discussion, providing a clearer and potentially deeper understanding of the issues discussed” (Hennink & Leavy, 2014, p. 31).

The group environment in which data are collected means that it is an efficient form of data collection. A focus group discussion can generate a large volume of data and a greater variety of perspectives than an in-depth interview of the same length (Hennink & Leavy, 2014). Fern (1982) found that a single focus group discussion can generate about 70% of the same information as a series of in-depth interviews with the same number of people. Size is a crucial consideration in decisions about group composition, with the typical size being from five to ten participants (Morgan & Hoffman, 2018). A comfortable, non-threatening environment is vital to provide participants with a “safe environment where they can share ideas, beliefs and attitudes in the company of people from the same socioeconomic, ethnic, and gender backgrounds” (Madriz, 2003, p. 364). This is particularly relevant in focus group discussions with students.

Focus group data collection is not without its challenges. One difficulty is the fluid nature of the discussions, which can lead to a less controlled environment for data collection. Another complication is managing the group dynamics, such as someone dominating the discussion, which might stifle the contributions of others. It requires a skilled and experienced moderator to facilitate the discussion and manage the group (Hennink & Leavy, 2014). In individual interviews, confidentiality and safe spaces are more easily controlled, but in focus groups, the researcher must be aware of asymmetry in the groups related to power dynamics, either within the focus group or between the moderator and the focus group (Morgan & Hoffman, 2018). Råheim et al. (2016) note the power-imbalance that can occur between the subject and the researcher, particularly relevant in focus group discussions.

The choice of the focus-group data collection for students was based on the advantages outlined above. An alternative data collection method was considered, namely, to ask the students to complete a qualitative questionnaire. As UWC principal, I had observed the low

student response rate to written questionnaires used by different visiting research teams. I recognised that visits to the UWC colleges were limited in time so individual interviews with students would not be possible. Focus groups therefore provided a good vehicle for collecting rich data from students in a time-sensitive manner. As UWC principal, I felt confident that students would not be inhibited to put their views and perspectives forward. I was aware that for many of the students English was not their first language and that paraphrasing or allowing students time to speak was going to be an important feature. At the same time, I recognised that I was not an experienced moderator, though used to hosting discussions with UWC students within LPCUWC.

The focus group discussion framework is detailed in Appendix G. The framework started with the students introducing themselves. Then a broad question was asked about their understanding of UWC's mission and values. This was designed as an accessible opening question for the students. Subsequent questions were more conceptually challenging, such as student understanding of leadership. This framework was piloted with a focus group of students at LPCUWC, and no changes were made to the questions or their order.

Semi-structured interviews with UWC leaders

In-person semi-structured interviews were used to garner information with the identified leaders within the UWC colleges visited. Semi-structured interviews also took place via Skype for those leaders chosen as part of the purposeful sample external to UWC colleges.

The semi-structured interview is a popular data collection method as it has proved to be both versatile and flexible (Kallio et al., 2016). It can be combined with both individual and group interview methods (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006), which proved to be useful for this study. One of the main advantages to the semi-structured interview method is its success in

enabling reciprocity between the interviewer and participant (Galletta, 2013), allowing the interviewer to improvise follow-up questions based on participants' responses (Polit & Beck, 2010; Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

For semi-structured interviews, the questions are determined before the interview (Mason, 2004; Rubin & Rubin, 2011). The question construction offers a focused structure for the discussion during the interviews but should not be followed strictly (Kallio et al., 2016). The idea of the semi-structured interview is to explore the research area by collecting similar types of information from each participant (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010) by providing participants with guidance on what to talk about (Gill et al., 2008). Ezzy (2010) describes good interviews as “not dominated by either the voice of the interviewer or the agendas of the interviewee. Rather, they feel like communion, where the tension between the research question and the experience of the interviewee is explored” (p. 164).

The interview guide for the semi-structured interviews is detailed in Appendix H. The interview guide used opening, central, and closing questions, ensuring that the questions were as open-ended as possible so that the data would be grounded in the participants. The interview guide was based on the focus-group discussion framework to ensure that students and adult leaders discussions covered similar themes. The semi-structured interview was piloted with two members of the UWC system via Skype that were not part of the study. No amendments to the structure of the interview guide were made, though the pilot helped this researcher consider the overall approach in asking questions. Beyond the guiding questions, interviewees had plenty of opportunities to introduce their ideas on the topics covered.

Thirteen leaders, including all the principals, were interviewed at three different UWC colleges. The schedule and information on the UWC schools and colleges are outlined in Appendix D.

Semi-structured interviews undertaken remotely

Nine semi-structured interviews took place remotely via Skype. Over the past 20 years, as the internet has become an integral part of everyday life for many people, easy access to web technologies has created new opportunities for researchers to use web tools in their research (Hamilton, 2014). The potential benefits of reaching participants where they are most comfortable, geographically or in a digital world, have been documented (Hamilton, 2014; Mason & Ide, 2014; Shapka et al., 2016). Though there are potential benefits to utilising this technology, little is known about participants' experience with internet technology (Hamilton, 2014; Opdenakker, 2006).

Skype provides some clear gains to both researchers and research participants, many of which are similar to telephone interviews (Holt, 2010). Skype can minimise geographic barriers (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014), transportation issues, and the challenges of busy schedules, while providing flexibility to conduct follow-up interviews if appropriate (Iacono et al., 2016; Padgett, 2016).

Building a connection with the research participant is essential for a qualitative researcher (Roulston, 2010). This is perhaps somewhat limiting through Skype interviews and can negatively impact the interviewer's ability to develop a sense of intimacy and trust, leading to interviews that are not as rich (Seitz, 2016). This researcher had previously met all but one of the Skype interview subjects in person. Of the other interviewees, this researcher had previously met over 80% in person once before.

In examining the quality of data collected from remote interviews, an analysis by Johnson et al. (2019) produced some interesting findings. They concluded that in-person interviews have clear advantages in producing conversation turns, word-dense transcripts, and field notes but

do not significantly differ from Skype interviews in terms of interview length, subjective interviewer ratings, and substantive coding. With the developments of Zoom and increasing connectivity, this approach to interviewing will become more predominant. Using distance technologies did not seriously lessen the richness of the data collected in the present study.

The remote interviews used the same semi-structured interview guide as the in-person interview with leaders from UWC colleges (Appendix H). Nine UWC system leaders were interviewed via Skype (see Appendix E).

Observation

As this researcher was visiting three UWC colleges, a journal was kept as part of the visit. This data would be utilised to develop, enhance, and cross-check data to help form theories on leadership that emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured leader interviews and the student focus groups. Maxwell (2013) explains that when a researcher is planning their research methods, they should include whatever informal data-gathering strategies are feasible, including “hanging out, casual conversations and incidental observations” (chapter 5, para. 5).

Observation is a complex data collection method. Wästerfors (2018) states that any observations must be contextually and reflexively situated. He explains that observations are focused on three key areas: first, observations used to identify details; second, observations used to identify sequences, in other words, how phenomena evolve or relate to each other over time; and third, observations used to identify the atmosphere, the mostly wordless or elusive qualities in settings and situations. In this study, observation was mostly used to observe details, such as locations of UWC mission and values statements, or to identify the atmosphere, such as the relationship between staff and students.

The role to adopt during observation and the extent to which participants are fully informed are somewhat interwoven (Mulhall, 2003). Typically, researchers have referred to a standard typology of research roles (Gold, 1958):

- the complete observer, who maintains some distance, does not interact and whose role is concealed
- the complete participant, who interacts within the social situation, but whose role is concealed
- the observer-as-participant, who undertakes intermittent observation alongside interviewing, but whose role is known
- the participant as observer, who undertakes prolonged observation, is involved in all the central activities of the organisation and whose role is known.

In this study, I was an observer-as-participant who undertook intermittent observations alongside the interviews and focus group meetings. I was given full access to the college by the principals and was allowed to take notes in a journal. Part of the observation involved a tour of the campus, identifying where UWC's mission and values statements are placed, and the use of noticeboards and displays to display examples of enactments of the mission and values. Photos were taken of notable uses of messaging in the schools. I also joined some activities on and off campus, though I did not observe any lessons. A reflection was noted in the journal at the end of each day. The observation provided an opportunity to see how, through messaging and activities, students understand and enact the UWC mission.

A sample of a daily reflection from the journal is detailed in Appendix I.

Document study

As with the observational data collection, the data collected from documents was used to develop or enhance the theories on leadership that emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured leader interviews and the student focus groups. Documents within this context include both printed and digital texts. Rapley and Rees (2018) identify three forms of data collection of documents. First, there are docile documents to enable the analysis of the documents as texts in their own right. This usually includes a detailed analysis of the language and meaning within a given document. Second, there are documents that are gathered alongside other forms of fieldwork to support analytic work. Finally, there is the observation of how documents are used, usually to inform more naturalistic or ethnographic work on documented use. This is essentially about how people engage with documents.

This study chose to utilise documents alongside the other forms of fieldwork to support the semi-structured leader interviews and the student focus groups. Before visiting the three UWC colleges, an overview of their respective websites was undertaken, particularly noting pages referencing UWC's mission and values. An examination of three UWC national committees' websites was carried out, noting the location of UWC's mission and values. The three websites chosen were for the UWC national committees of Germany, India, and Norway, the countries where the UWC colleges in this study are located. The UWC International Office website was also accessed, including the UWC educational model (UWC., n.d., "UWC educational model and principles" section) and the UWC Strategic Plan.

Analysis of the data coding

The transcripts of the semi-structured interviews and the focus group discussions were coded. Coding is a way of indexing or categorising text to establish a framework of thematic ideas (Gibbs, 2007).

This section explores the rationale for coding. It then explains the application of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software and how this was used in this study. Finally, the approach to coding for this study is explained, detailing the different stages of data coding.

Why coding?

Coding creates an inventory of the data collected (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2021). Linneberg and Korsgaard (2019) identified six reasons for coding.

First, it provides deep, comprehensive, and thoughtful insights into the data collected. It means that all the data that are collected are thoughtfully revisited. For this research, systematically using the different stages of coding and lexical searches meant that the data were thoroughly investigated.

Second, it makes the data easily accessible and retrievable, with the data being sorted into labelled segments. In this study, coding allowed the transcripts of the student focus group discussions and adult leaders semi-structured interviews to be labelled in segments and merged to develop themes across the data.

Third, it sorts and structures the collected data, with the essential codes as a skeleton upon which to build an analysis. In this inquiry, the advanced codes developed provided a framework for answering the research sub-questions. This process is detailed in the next section.

Fourth, coding ensures transparency, meaning that the conclusions are linked to the data and that the findings are credible and trustworthy. Showing the data to the reader forces the development of a chain of evidence depicting your arguments and showing how you have reached your conclusions (Pratt, 2009). For this research, it was necessary to give examples of the different stages of coding so that the reader could see the development of the data into advanced codes. This was particularly important in this study since this researcher had worked within UWC for over ten years. It was imperative to demonstrate the findings were grounded in the data.

Fifth, coding ensures validity by searching for contradictory evidence in the empirical material. This is the constant comparison element of theoretical sampling, which was outlined in the “The chosen methodology” section. For example, this allows for comparing the differences in how students and adult leaders perceive the enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the codes created give voice to the study participants' perspectives and beliefs. As a result, through the dynamic development of codes, one understands participants' views and actions from their perspectives (Charmaz, 2014). This was the ultimate purpose of the coding for this study, meaning the perspectives of students and adult leaders were the basis of the findings.

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) is an established tool for qualitative research used by researchers in a wide range of disciplines (Woods et al., 2016). Within the literature on the use of CAQDAS there is a range of opinions on the value of CAQDAS, particularly on how it affects the analytical behaviour of the researcher. Woods

and Wickham (2006) identify that CAQDAS can affect the analytical behaviour of the researcher by either dominating the analysis, complementing the analysis, or allowing new approaches to the analysis of the data.

Woods et al.'s (2016) meta-analysis of the use of CAQDAS found that in deciding whether to adopt CAQDAS, researchers consciously reflected upon their research goals, the value that CAQDAS could add to the research, and the trade-offs required to achieve that value. They also found that using CAQDAS fostered reflexive moments during data collection and analysis when researchers use program features to document and monitor their processes. For example, in using CAQDAS to support grounded theory, the ability to write memos within the program would assist the researcher in reflecting on the codes developed.

MAXQDA was the CAQDAS used. An examination of ten CAQDAS took place before MAXQDA was adopted. The analysis concluded that MAXQDA best supported the grounded theory approach to data analysis. MAXQDA allowed the use of reflexive memos extensively, a key component of coding in grounded theory (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019). This proved valuable as memos were used in overviewing the whole transcript and attached to individual codes. MAXQDA also provided the MAXMaps (a mind map of codes created), which were utilised during the intermediate and advanced stages of coding. An example is given in the next section.

The stages of coding

All recordings of the leader interviews and the student focus group discussions were transcribed. An external party produced the transcription. Once received, the transcriptions were checked for factual errors and amendments made where necessary. The transcripts were then uploaded to the MAXQDA software.

Three different stages of coding analysis occurred broadly based on the following schema: *initial*, *intermediate*, and *advanced* coding (Birks et al., 2006, as modified from Boychuk-Duchscher & Morgan, 2004; Heath & Cowley, 2004). At the same time, due to the recursive nature of grounded theory, as the coding developed, there was a need to alternate between the different phases of coding, recognizing that this is an iterative process (Birks & Mills, 2015).

An important element to coding is the use of memos. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) stress that memos are more than just a repository of analysis. When researchers write memos, they are doing analysis. Strauss (1987) states, “Even when a researcher is working alone on a project, he or she is engaged in continual internal-dialogue – for that is, after all, what thinking is” (p. 110). In this coding analysis, memos were used to reflect on the whole transcript and also written and attached to individual codes.

First, initial coding was undertaken. A decision was made to, first, analyse the data college by college and then move to the leaders external to the college. For each college, the data for the adult leaders were analysed first, followed by the data from the student focus group. Each transcript was read first, and a memo was generated to give an overview of the data (Appendix J). Initial codes were then generated, and where appropriate, memos were attached to specific codes. This allowed this researcher to see if any early concepts may emerge. In undertaking this coding, care was taken not to move too quickly to an “overview approach” (Glaser, 1978, p. 58). Appendix K details this first stage of coding when all the leaders and student focus groups for one college were undertaken.

After all the transcripts from one college had been coded, intermediate coding followed. Intermediate coding is equivalent to “Axial coding” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), namely a “set of procedures whereby a set of data is put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between [and within] categories” (p. 96). The key element at this

stage is the grouping of codes to form categories that ultimately will lead to the identification of explanatory, conceptual patterns in the data. The MAXMaps application in the MAXQDA software was beneficial here. An example is detailed in Appendix L. For the other two colleges, the process as outlined above was carried out, sometimes using the intermediate codes from the first college.

The final stage of *advanced* coding is when the process moves towards theoretical integration. Key to this is the theoretical saturation of the major categories (Birks & Mills, 2015). After the initial and intermediate coding process for the data in the three colleges, some preliminary advanced coding took place. Once this was completed, the analysis of the semi-structured interviews of the leaders external to UWC colleges took place utilizing initial, intermediate, and advanced codes. Overall, there were 1,090 pieces of data coded from the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Appendix M shows an example of an advanced code broken down into sub-categories.

Completing the process of coding resulted in the emergence of 18 advanced codes. These are detailed below with the associated key intermediate codes and themes from memos.

Table 2 - Advanced Codes

Advanced codes	Frequency	Key intermediate codes/themes from memos
	1,090	
Barriers to enacting UWC's mission	32	IBDP; burden of UWC mission; workload; minimal enactment by students
Diversity	50	nationality; socioeconomic; other dimensions of diversity; faculty; opportunities
Enactment	85	enact UWC mission in own personal way; to interact with non-mission aligned individuals; importance of role-models
Environment	64	strong teacher–student relationships; challenging students; experiential journey
Impact of UWC	63	consciousness; difficult to analyse impact; understanding difference
Leadership	150	definitions of leadership; lack of shared understanding of leadership in UWC; change in leadership at UWC; importance of Head
Leadership practices	78	role modelling; empowerment; trusting students
Local context	27	contextual leadership
Mission in other schools	21	mission not so clear in other schools; lack of diversity;
Peace	37	attraction for staff; less emphasis than sustainability
Role of UWC national committees	64	application; selection; deliberate diversity;
Structure	82	extracurricular activities; Project Week; room set up; space for students; role of Y2 students
Student leadership	95	student voice; student leadership; student led initiatives
Sustainability	39	commonly mentioned in mission; challenge of system approach to sustainability; emphasis on environment
System leadership	39	UWC International; paid v volunteer; complexity; trust
Understanding of mission	98	awareness of UWC mission; bringing people together; different meanings;
UWC alumni	79	inspiration; alumni as constituent leaders
Values	51	values based organisation; UWC mission and humanity; referenced specific values

The process of developing findings and assertions

Weaver-Hightower (2018) distinguishes between qualitative findings and qualitative assertions. He defines “findings as individual arguments that characterise distinct portions of the data. Assertions, by contrast, make arguments about the entirety of the data. In other words, particular data points lead to findings, while findings lead to assertions” (p. 131).

This section explains the two-stage process of developing the conclusions to the research question utilising the distinction between findings and assertions as outlined by Weaver-Hightower (2018). The first stage involved transferring the coded data to structured findings. This also included combining the coded data of the student focus groups and the adult leader semi-structured interviews with the observation and document data. The second stage of the process meant proceeding from the findings to developing assertions that answered the research question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values?

Coded data to findings

A decision was made to present the findings based on the six research sub-questions. This provided a structure to ensure that the research question was thoroughly answered. The final advanced codes developed from the data could be readily matched to the six research sub-questions. The observation and document data, where applicable, could also be combined with coded interview data. The table below illustrates how the research sub-questions relate

Table 3 – *Relationship between research sub-questions, advanced codes and other data*

Research sub-questions	Advanced codes	Observation or document data
1.What constitutes leadership in UWC?	Leadership System leadership Student leadership	
2.What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?	Values Understanding of mission Sustainability Peace	
3.How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?	Leadership System leadership Enactment	Observation data Document data
4.How does the UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values?	Role of UWC national committees Environment Leadership practices Structure Student leadership	Observation data
5.How does the UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?	Role of UWC national committees Barriers to enacting UWC mission Impact of UWC Environment Leadership practices Structure Enactment Student leadership UWC alumni	Observation data
6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?	Role of UWC national committees Diversity Environment	Observation data Document data

Note. The advanced codes are generated from the transcripts of the student focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

The data collection instruments for both the focus group student discussions (Appendix G) and the semi-structured interviews (Appendix H) did not neatly follow the research sub-questions. It became apparent from the advanced codes that emerged from the data that some of the advanced codes would be useful for informing answers to several research sub-

questions. It was necessary to drill down to intermediate codes within an advanced code when this occurred. For example, the *role of the UWC national committee* advanced code was primarily utilised to examine research sub-question four, the role that leadership played in students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. At the same time, due to the UWC national committees' role in selecting students based on diversity, this code was also utilised to examine research sub-question six regarding how the diverse nature of UWC's student body influences the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Therefore, the eight data pieces from the intermediate code *deliberate diversity* (highlighted in the table below) were utilised in research sub-question six (Does the diverse nature of the UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?).

Table 4 - Analysis of advanced code: role of UWC national committees

Codes	Frequency
<i>Role of UWC national committees</i>	20 ^a
Because when you apply, you see this mission concern on selection process	9
Elite students	3
Expectations from Admission to reality different	1
National Committee Living the mission	1
National Committees not important	1
Maybe some influence?	2
selection	15
Head not directly involved with the selection of students	1
deliberate diversity	8 ^b
understand people better	1
importance of a value-based intake	1

Note. This table shows the advanced code *role of national committees* and associated intermediate codes.

^a This represents the frequency of data that was associated with the advanced code *role of UWC national committees*. Subsequent examination of this code was needed in developing the findings.

^b This highlighted code was further examined to see whether this would be utilised in research sub-question six.

In developing the findings, sometimes, a lexical search of the MAXQDA database was undertaken. Lexical searching is useful not only for finding of key terms but also for examining the contexts to which they occur (Gibbs, 2018). Certain keywords were searched to ensure that the data were thoroughly analysed under the appropriate research sub-question. For example, for research sub-question six – Does the diverse nature of UWC’s student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values? – a lexical search was undertaken using the term *diversity*. This allowed a final review of all transcripts where the term diversity appeared and was relevant to research sub-question six so that it could be included.

The observation data were combined once all the transcripts of the student focus groups and leader semi-structured interviews had been coded. The observation journals and photos were carefully examined to see where they supported the advanced codes or added new information. Observation data were primarily used to provide examples of how leadership within UWC colleges articulated and enacted UWC’s mission and values. For example, an observation of a principal working with students helping a group of mentally challenged young adults was included in the findings. Atmosphere observations were also important, such as the relationship between student and teacher, which supported the *low power distance between staff and student* intermediate code that emerged from the coded data.

Documentary data were used as appropriate. For example, some documents were referenced by leaders as part of their semi-structured interviews. A leader who works at UWC International Office referred to the *UWC Strategic Plan*, so this document was accessed. Before semi-structured interviews with constituent leaders associated with UWC national committees, the relevant UWC national committee website was examined. Documentary data were used primarily to support evidence from the coded data and to provide details.

The final analysis stage was to develop a set of assertions to summarise the key findings succinctly. Five assertions were derived based on the data-driven findings used to answer the sub-research questions. Miles et al. (2014) define an assertion as follows: “To us, an *assertion* is a declarative statement of summative synthesis, supported by confirming evidence from the data” (p. 99). They further explain that assertions are a way of summarising and synthesising many individual observations. The assertions serve to pull the findings together to highlight the main outcomes of the research.

Conclusion

This chapter explained the methodological approach for this study. Central to the development of the methodological approach was the conceptual model outlined in chapter one. This model focuses on the UWC system, with different leadership constituents impacting students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

The chapter highlighted the relationship between this researcher and the investigation. It stressed the fluid insider-outsider relationship that this researcher has with the investigation, with the subject of the study being the leadership of UWC and this researcher being a principal of a UWC.

Consideration was given to the theoretical paradigms and research perspectives and justified the qualitative approach for this study. The qualitative approach allowed this researcher to construct meaning from the different perspectives that students and the constituent leaders had on the meaning of UWC’s mission and values and the role that leadership plays in developing students’ understanding of them.

A grounded theory approach was used to collect and analyse the data. It considered Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) four key components of grounded theory, namely *constant*

comparison, theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, and theoretical saturation, and how they applied to the current study. The *theoretical sampling* approach was described in detail using Morse and Clark's (2019) methodology. The convenience sample of students, the purposeful sample of UWC colleges visited, the purposeful sample of adult leaders at UWC colleges, and the purposeful sample of adult leaders external to the UWC colleges was specified.

Four data collection methods were outlined, which support the grounded theory approach. Focus group discussions were used with students on campus. Semi-structured interviews were used for meetings with adult leaders on campus and remote conversations with UWC external leaders. Observational data were also collected from the visits to UWC campuses. Documents, specifically information from the internet, were collected as appropriate.

Coding was used to analyse the data collected. The data were analysed using MAXQDA (a CAQDAS). The approach broadly followed the schema of *initial, intermediate, and advanced* coding (Birks, Chapman & Francis, 2006, as modified from Boychuk-Duchscher & Morgan, 2004; Heath & Cowley, 2004). Memos (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), an essential element of the reflexive nature of coding, were used to reflect on a whole transcript and written and attached to individual codes. The advanced codes created became the basis of the findings. The six sub-research questions are used for scaffolding the findings and are the basis of the next chapter.

Chapter 5 - The findings

This chapter presents the findings that emerged from the data described in chapter four. The overall research question and sub-research questions are listed below. Unexpected findings and data did emerge and have been included within the sub-questions.

How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

From this major research question a series of sub-questions was developed:

1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?
2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?
3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?
4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values?
5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?
6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?

This section presents participant data on leadership within and across the UWC. First, it examines what participants understand the UWC system to be and reports their understanding of who comprises the leadership of UWC. Second, it explores the concept of leadership from the participants' perspectives. Third, it discusses some of the tensions adult leaders identified in the UWC system. Fourth, it explores how leadership within UWC has evolved using adult leaders' perspectives. Fifth, it presents some other observations about leadership in UWC that emerged from the data.

Recognition of leadership of a system

An important observation from the adult leader interviews and student focus groups was the recognition that all were part of the larger UWC movement (system). Not one individual referenced only an individual UWC college. There was a clear recognition that, either as a student or a leader in a UWC college, they were part of something larger than their particular school.

For example, an adult leader at a college introduced himself at the beginning of his interview in the following way:

I came into the UWC movement about two and a half years back and I had no clue of what the UWC movement was all about...it took me about six months to actually understand what the movement was all about. (Rudra)

A student identified that “UWC is a movement, and a movement doesn’t just happen in one place” (Jermiah). Another student explained that “UWC is a movement, and the mission statement in itself is really ambitious” (Frazier).

From the interviews and the focus groups, it became clear that many recognised the role that different elements of the UWC system (i.e. principals, adult leaders, the UWC International Office, UWC national committees, and alumni) played in the leadership of the system. For example, within UWC colleges, besides the more obvious role that the principal and adult leaders played in the school's leadership, there was a recognition that students had an important role in leadership too. A principal (Isaac), for instance, referred to the importance of student initiative in extra-curricular activities. Adult leaders in UWC colleges also identified the importance of student leadership in running special focus days (Sebastian) or, for example, organising a sustainability initiative (Rudra). Therefore, the leadership role students play in developing an understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values is explored later in this chapter.

In considering the whole UWC system, besides the leadership role of UWC colleges and the UWC International Office, two other elements emerged from the data as having system leadership functions. These two elements were UWC national committees and alumni.

Both teachers and students identified UWC national committees as having leadership roles within the UWC system. For example, two teachers (Allan, Piotr) recognised how UWC national committees inducted students into the UWC movement. Another teacher (Dhruv) noted the role the admissions process, i.e., the admission essays and selection interviews, had in forming students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. Students also identified UWC national committees' role in orientation (Jermiah) and in the admissions process (Kyoko). The role that UWC national committees play is further explored later in this chapter.

Alumni were also seen to have an essential role in the system's leadership by teachers, students, and UWC national committees. Teachers gave examples of alumni giving talks to students at their respective colleges (Anthony) or volunteering for UWC national committees (Jeremy). Students gave examples of alumni giving talks as part of their UWC national committee induction (Jermiah). UWC national committees illustrated the role played by alumni as volunteers within the UWC national committees (Amber, Fen, Jill). The role that alumni play in the leadership of the UWC system is further explored later in this chapter.

The UWC movement members are a combination of full-time employees and many volunteers, an aspect that is significant to this educational system. This is possibly unique within an international educational system. It may have been best summarised as follows by a leader at the UWC International Office:

In many ways we are two organisations in one: a very professional organisation running schools and a volunteer organisation running the national committees. They have different needs...volunteers want to be understood as volunteers, [they] don't want to be overextended, [they] want to be valued for what they do. Professionals want to have quick answers, want to make sure that they can progress with their work, can be focused, can have a sense of accomplishment in their jobs. (Jerome)

The complexity of the UWC system was identified by several adult leaders. This complexity was articulated by a leader from a UWC national committee:

I think probably we are quite complex even though we are not so big. That we have, you know, it's in all regions of the world we have all the national committees, and we have volunteers and professional staff. We both must do things commercially to run a school but at the same time, it's supposed to be a non-governmental Organisation

(NGO) and so you have that sort of conflict of interest...[we are] very, very bureaucratic, maybe that's because you have all the stakeholders and that you have to please everybody (Jill).

All the leaders at the UWC International Office also identified this complexity. As one leader explained:

Sometimes I think we should make a documentary about how many hands are involved until one single student gets to the school...the amount of work we do here just from the offer process to the scholarships...It's a huge machine. (Lucy)

Another leader at the UWC International Office explained:

I think you're in danger when you're in the centre of a highly complex organisation with different strong stakeholder groups, of being sort of drawn under by the sum of expectations placed on you and not necessarily just you as a person, but on your role within the system. It's a serious challenge to always, you know, or as often as possible, try to reflect on how you can distribute work and give work back so that at the end of day we can accomplish this together, rather than me trying to be the single-handed changer of things. (Jerome)

These findings show that all the stakeholders who participated in the study recognised that they embodied a system. Within the UWC system, alongside UWC colleges and the UWC International Office, UWC national committees and alumni were identified as important leadership elements. There was also an acknowledgement from the different stakeholders of UWC that the system is complex.

The concept of leadership

Participants gave thoughtful, discerning, and reflective descriptions of the concept of leadership. These descriptions examined some general understandings of leadership and how these were applied in the UWC context. Unsurprisingly, there were many different perspectives on the concept of leadership. This sub-section explores leadership from the viewpoint of adult leaders in UWC colleges, principals, students, and the UWC International Office.

Adult leaders in the UWC colleges made interesting observations on leadership. One adult leader explained how leadership is:

situationally appropriate action so that your team is achieving the desired objective...if you're leading the International Office or the International board or if you're leading a college or an extra-curricular activity or expedition, I think this definition works. (Dhruv)

Another adult leader in a college saw:

leadership in terms of responsibilities to my community and to my students, and to my colleagues, rather than defining leadership through models or action or to find metaphors to what I'm doing...to watch out for the community, to help the community grow, to provide space and resources for this to do so and to look after their welfare. (Anthony)

Another adult leader in a school described a leader as “anyone who takes any initiative in their community...if you want to change the world, that necessarily requires people taking some initiative in their communities” (Sebastian).

One principal discussed leadership in the context of his roles at the school through his legal responsibilities and the experience and authority he has.

In legal terms, I'm like a chief juror. I have legal authority and responsibility for the school...in terms of experience...in most areas, I have more experience than most of the other people on the staff. So, I have that leadership role in that I can bring experience from other situations to bare on the set of circumstances we are in at this stage. (Tristan)

In terms of authority, the principal also said, "I'm an authority figure within my school...authority figure and leader does not necessarily mean the same thing" (Tristan). He goes on to explain that you use your authority as a prompt for people to go on journeys:

You have to make slightly transparent your own journey, and people need to get a sense of your integrity in that journey...at that point, I start to think of myself as becoming a leader rather than as an autocrat, or a person simply relying on their legal authority. (Tristan)

Another principal focused on the teamwork aspect of leadership by saying that "my reading of leadership is you need to learn to be a team to work within a team and have some interpersonal connections before you can take on the role of leadership" (Isaac). Another principal noted, "there are many different ways of leading...it's all about skill building and capacity building" (Patrick).

This data shows that principals and other adult leaders have different perspectives on leadership, examining themes around situational leadership, responsibility to the community and different aspects of their roles as leaders.

Students had some fascinating perspectives on leadership. For example, one student explained that a leader is someone that “makes others better” (Oliva). Another student explained that a leader “needs to lift up more... if there is need in education so you need to make the education better, if there is need in healthcare, you need to make the healthcare better” (Austin). Another student said, “to me a leader is someone who I look up to and who I can trust” (Niral). Another student perspective on leadership came from Kyoko, “I think being a good leader also is knowing when to not speak, and when not to do anything.”

Within the UWC International Office, there were some reflective thoughts on leadership, particularly how they applied to the UWC movement. A leader at the UWC International Office highlighted the following:

Leadership has many components. One, leadership is a question of setting an example, of trying to model what you say or what you expect others to do. Second, it's a way of mobilizing people. At the end of the day, leadership to me is not about me solving problems, but enabling others to solve problems. And being an enabler, a coordinator of that process, to some extent maybe a supervisor of that process, in the sense of making sure that it happens, a follow up-er, so to say. But as in essence, it is about enabling groups to do the right thing, and not just doing the right thing yourself.

(Jerome)

Another leader at the UWC International Office explained that for her leadership is “the ability to actually divert or move the part in a direction...rather than just blatantly sitting on a path” (Selina). Another leader at the UWC International Office noted that she has had difficulty in recognising that leadership was non-linear. She explained that she saw the importance of seeing the:

bigger good...the bigger is more important than yourself, and sometimes you need to say, okay, this might be hard for us, but you know, for the purpose of the bigger good actually, we will follow, and we will not continue to question every decision again every time. (Lucy)

A theme that emerged from the conversations with the three staff members from the UWC International Office, was the role they had in direction setting. This may be best summed up by Jerome:

I see it [my role], a balancing function between different stakeholders; a function where you try to condense from the different perspective, a direction that people can agree on, at least most people can agree on. You may not find this, in a global, highly diverse organisation, but you need strong support for certain directional decisions. (Jerome)

These findings demonstrate that within the UWC system, there is some deep thinking on the notion of leadership. However, there was not a coherent concept of leadership among the different stakeholders within UWC.

Tensions of leadership within the UWC system

This sub-section explores the leadership tension that emerged as a theme from the conversations of the adult leaders within UWC. All the staff working in the UWC International Office who were interviewed expounded on this challenge. This is best reflected thus:

When it comes to leadership in UWC, we all struggle with this question, so is it leadership at the school? Is it leadership of the students themselves? Which is what

we're encouraging and expecting of that body, is it leadership in terms of UWC International? Is it the interactions between the leadership of UWC International, the schools and colleges and the national committees? (Selina)

A specific tension that emerged from the data was the degree of control that the centre had, namely the UWC International Office. One UWC International Board member reflected on “tensions between how much control the centre should have and how much control the school should have” (James). Indeed, one of the UWC International Office leaders reflected that people have:

all kinds of different expectations...it's very difficult to satisfy all these expectations...there's a danger to become this martyr for a cause that you think you've identified but now you have to fight for it no matter what. There's a danger of too many expectations being focused on you. (Jerome)

The same leader also reflected on the challenge of distributing work so “we can accomplish this together, rather than single-handedly changing things” (Jerome). Another leader at the UWC International Office stated: “For entities within UWC to accept that maybe we need to give up responsibility on some parts and let others decide because otherwise, a complex organisation like this is will not actually develop” (Lucy).

The findings in this sub-section demonstrate a degree of tension between the UWC International Office and the stakeholders of the UWC system, e.g. UWC colleges and UWC national committees. The lack of common understanding within UWC on the concept of leadership and the complexity of the UWC system may be factors contributing to this tension.

Evolution of leadership at UWC

Within the discussions with adult leaders, there was a recognition of how leadership in UWC has evolved. One head summarised it as follows:

Leadership has changed...if you look at this office, this was a decision we took after I've been here for a couple of years, maybe 18 months, not to have the head with the big office and the big desk and sit in one office. (Patrick)

Leadership now, he goes on to say, is much more consultative and collaborative rather than “didactic and dominant”. A different adult leader based in a college noted when he first joined over 15 years ago, that we had a “very undefined leadership team” and that the “director was in charge as the number one” (Bjorn).

Another adult leader, based in a UWC College, commented that when he joined UWC over 20 years ago, leadership was “almost a fascist concept” (Piotr). At the same time, there appears to be some contention in what some staff perceive as UWC values and leadership. Some of those interviewed clearly see “democracy” and “egalitarianism” as inherent within UWC values and see “leadership” as an antithesis to this. This may be best summed up by Dhruv, an adult leader at a UWC college:

There's this tension between grassroots, democracy, activism and then, how much authority does a teacher have to be a leader? How much authority does the headmaster have? Even students in college assemblies sometimes get pushed back from the other students. Like, who are you to represent us? We should always question leadership.

As leadership of UWC has changed over time, it suggests that a more distributed leadership system has evolved. Specifically, at least two of the adult leaders at the UWC International Office referenced the term “distributed leadership” unprompted. One adult leader referenced

distributed leadership as part of the UWC system stating, we have “distributed leadership already because of the autonomy, legal, and financial autonomy of the schools and colleges and of the national committees” (Lucy). A leader at the UWC International Office referenced distributed leadership and how this was important in the eyes of the students as follows: “I think it helps to distribute leadership within your school so that a number of people can take on positions of leadership and be leaders in the eyes of students” (Jerome).

These findings identify how leadership in UWC has evolved. The leaders of the UWC International Office explicitly mentioned the concept of distributed leadership. It suggests that distributed leadership is emerging within the UWC system.

Other observations about leadership within the UWC system

One theme that emerged was the contextual aspect of leadership. For example, in discussion with the adult leaders at UWC Red Cross Norway, a common theme was the idea of a Nordic way of leading. The school had a statute outlining what this meant. One of the adult leaders at the college in Germany described how the previous UWC he worked at had an extremely flat leadership structure with rotating leadership positions, something he believed could not be duplicated in his current context. A leader at the UWC International Office noted that different leadership approaches were needed within the different UWC schools and colleges across the system:

The leadership at UWC Mahindra college has to be different to the leadership at UWC Southeast Asia, Singapore...Singapore is like a huge machine, where I think its protocols and procedures are more important in order to work it. (Lucy)

She explains further that the cultural context requires different leadership approaches. She specifically referenced the different leadership styles required in UWC Robert Bosch (Germany) compared with UWC East Africa (Tanzania).

At the same time there appeared to be no significant differences between the three campuses in how leadership affected students' understanding and enactment of UWC mission and values. This is a significant finding and would suggest that the leadership practices and environment created outweighs any contextual factors. At the same time contextual factors add to the complexity of the UWC system.

Another theme that emerged from a range of adult leaders interviewed, whether from a UWC national committee, UWC International Office, or within a college, was the importance of the principal in shaping the college. One adult leader who worked within a college and who had served under at least two principals said, "I think both pragmatically, and symbolically everything that the school does is mirrored through whoever is the head." (Allan). He goes on to say that even with the flat management structure of the college, "certain decisions have to be made by the head". Another leader, based at the UWC International Office, identified how the principal is the visible leader of the school for the students: "Students want to identify the head of their school as the heart and soul of their school and living the UWC mission" (Jerome). Another leader based in the UWC national committee system saw how a particular principal she worked closely with shaped the community, developing his leadership team and understanding of UWC's mission. She saw in this head someone who demonstrated "empathy-driven leadership" (Fen).

These findings highlighted two main themes. First, there is the contextual aspect of leadership. The UWC system consists of 18 schools and colleges in 18 different countries/territories, coupled with UWC national committees in over 150

countries/territories; the contextual element will add additional complexity to the UWC system. Second, this sub-section highlighted the leadership role of the principal within the UWC colleges, which is relevant to findings detailed later, notably the structures and environment within the UWC colleges.

Key findings

This subsection identified four key findings related to how UWC stakeholders related to UWC and conceptualised leadership.

- 1.1 Stakeholders who participated in the study recognised that they embodied a system beyond the individual entity they were a part of. For example, students saw themselves as part of something more significant than just the UWC college they attended. Participants acknowledged the different leadership elements within the UWC system. Students were identified as an integral leadership element alongside the principal and other adult leaders within the colleges. Besides the UWC colleges and the UWC International Office, UWC national committees and alumni were also recognised as important parts of the overall UWC leadership structure.
- 1.2 Members of the UWC system, including students, appeared to have reflected carefully upon the meaning of leadership. However, a common or coherent understanding of leadership was not apparent across the different stakeholder groups. In fact, even within the stakeholder groups (e.g. adult leaders within a UWC college), no common themes on leadership emerged. The only exception to this was within the UWC International Office, where the common theme of “direction setting” emerged.
- 1.3 A tension exists between the UWC International Office and other UWC system stakeholders, including UWC colleges and UWC national committees. This tension

appears to reflect the lack of a common understanding of leadership within UWC and the complexity of the UWC system itself.

- 1.4 Conceptions of leadership across UWC have evolved. Adult leaders who have been part of the UWC system for a significant period identify changing approaches to leadership. They observe that 20 years ago, UWC leadership focused on the heroic head, with less recognition of leadership teams. Now there is greater identification of distributed leadership, as recognised by leaders within the UWC International Office. It suggests that distributed leadership is emerging within the UWC system.

Two other main themes emerged from the data in this sub-section. The first was the importance and influence of context across the colleges and UWC national committees. Given that the UWC system comprises 18 schools and colleges in 18 different countries and territories and has UWC national committees in over 150 countries/territories, it is perhaps unsurprising that these multiple contexts add complexity to the leadership of the UWC system. The second theme highlighted the significance of the principal's leadership role to the structures and environment within the UWC colleges.

2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?

This section considers the data that emerged from the study related to the question “What does UWC leadership understand by the UWC mission and values?” As identified in the previous section, the leadership of the UWC system includes principals, adult leaders in UWC colleges, UWC national committees, UWC International Office, alumni, and students. Therefore, this section explores what these leaders understand by the UWC mission and values.

First, this section examines whether participants had knowledge of UWC's mission statement and, if so, what their understanding or interpretation of it was. Second, it examines whether participants had knowledge of UWC's values and, if so, what their understanding or interpretation of these were. Third, as sustainability and peace are key concepts within UWC's mission statement and they emerged as themes from the data, these terms are further explored.

Knowledge of UWC's mission

During the student focus groups and the semi-structured interviews with the adult leaders, all participants demonstrated knowledge that UWC had a mission statement. Not one person hesitated to make a comment or observation about the mission.

Within the student focus groups, while it was clear that students had knowledge of the mission statement, many of the students said they could not recite the statement. However, in all three focus groups, at least one student could quote some element of the mission statement. Their response may be best summarised by Oscar:

Well, the mission, I had to memorise it for a presentation, so it's ingrained in my head. The values I can't remember but for me, the mission was: Making education a force to unite people's nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. (Oscar)

Several adult leaders were also able to quote the mission during the semi-structured interviews. When asked whether they felt students had knowledge of the UWC mission, all the adults stated they believed the students did. Indeed, one adult leader said, "I think today's students in UWCs, they can recite the mission. Maybe [in the] week after they arrived at the UWC" (Elijah).

One feature that came out strongly from several participants of both the student focus groups and the adults was how “powerful” UWC’s mission statement is. One principal of a UWC college referenced how it is helpful as a school leader to “have a mission that is understood and recognised by students and staff” (Isaac). Participants used terms such as “ambitious” (Frazier, Jeremiah), “guiding principle” (Elijah), and “idealistic” (Jeremiah, Bjorn, Jose). Many participants identified that the mission was about “improving the world” (Damian), “a better world” (Bjorn; Lucy), or “chang[ing] the world”. (Amber, Jason, Patrick, Selina).

In all three of the student focus group discussions, students could debate and question the mission statement. The level of questioning demonstrated students not only had knowledge of the UWC mission but were able to examine nuances or subtleties of the mission statement. For example, in one discussion a student said:

I think that's admirable that the vision tries to aim for a more peaceful and sustainable future, but I think it's not clear how that's supposed to happen because my understanding is that we come here and learn together and yes, we learn about it when we come to UWC but for me what happens after that is a bit uncertain. (Idhai)

As all the students attended other schools before they joined UWC, it was possible to ascertain what they knew about the missions of their previous schools. Very few students from the three different focus groups were able to recollect the missions of their earlier schools. Those that did referred to statements about “respect and excellence” (Idhai) or “empower[ing] women and provid[ing] them with an education” (Damian). This underlines that the UWC system has a process where students are aware of the mission, while in many schools, it appears this is not the case.

Finally, though there was clear knowledge of UWC's mission, there was a recognition that UWC's mission was interpreted differently. This theme is further discussed in the next section on how leadership enacts the UWC mission.

These findings highlight that all study participants knew UWC's mission statement. Not only were all the participants able to refer to UWC's mission statement, but they were also able to passionately discuss the deeper meaning of UWC's mission. Notably, students were able to converse and debate the different elements of UWC's mission statement.

Knowledge of the UWC values

From the adult leader interviews, there was a clear recognition by the majority not only that the UWC movement had a mission but also that it also a values-based movement. UWC principals, in particular, had a depth of analysis of UWC values. For example, one UWC principal explained:

I remember my first meeting in New York of the heads, we were talking about the educational model at great length, and I remember my sole contribution really to it was, I thought, that the heads were missing the point. That actually our USP [Unique Selling Point] as an organisation is, in fact, our values and they weren't really being articulated in one of those first drafts of the educational model. Now, many international schools have quite similar values, and at other schools across the world, but I think certainly the ones that stick in my mind, most of all, are the celebration of difference and international and intercultural understanding. That's certainly underpinned by having deliberate diversity in the centre of UWC educational model. The other distinction there to complement international and intercultural understanding is that it's not deliberate diversity of students, it's deliberate diversity of

community which includes students, staff and other people who are connecting with our educational model. (Isaac)

Another principal carefully reflected on the importance of values in this way:

I'm not nearly as interested right now in people's activism. I'm interested in the growing consciences, in the growing sensibilities, in the growing understanding of what is right and wrong.... So, to me, it's a fascinating journey for these kids who come in each with slightly different sets of personal values derived from home, derived from their schools and derived from their community of friends, derived from their societies. And then they have to find what values that we can construct together, that hold us together? (Tristan)

These two quotes demonstrate deep thinking by two principals on the UWC values. It demonstrates their commitment to values-based education. Articulating the UWC values is essential in developing students' understanding and enactment of UWC's values.

Other adult leaders were able to reference UWC values, whether it be “celebration of difference” or “personal responsibility and integrity”. This would suggest that these leaders can relay these values to others, specifically students.

A theme that emerged when adult leaders reflected on UWC values was their ability to identify the concept of humanity. This is probably best summed up by an adult leader in a UWC college who said, “UWC is a kind of commitment to common humanity” (Jeremy). Another adult leader in a UWC college explained that UWC is “about a mutual respect. It's about celebrating humanity” (Advik). A principal thoughtfully expounded that “it's the ability to see the humanity of other people that are critical in what you do, the capacity to do that, and then the experience of doing that” (Patrick).

In the student discussion no student specifically mentioned one of the nine UWC values. At the same time, students recognised that UWC was a values-based organisation. One student explained the following: “I think when you can get a school of 200 students [from] multiple areas in the world then I guess there must be some consensus about these values” (Joseph).

The depth of thought and reflection on UWC values is best summarised by this principal:

My thinking is that, that maybe those values should be slightly fluid. They should certainly be up for discussion, and I think they should be up for discussion always...every generation, because my thinking today, might be different to my thinking tomorrow...I don't think UWC has values...we should be asking, how as humanity can we build a common set of values and what would those values look like in this day and age? That is the educational part... the sustainability part of those values would not have been in my equation when I became a school head 29 years ago. (Tristan)

These findings show that participants in the study recognised that UWC is a values-based educational organisation. The findings demonstrate deep thinking about the UWC values and how principals and adult leaders convey these values to students.

Understanding about sustainability

Sustainability is a term within UWC’s mission statement, and *respect for the environment* is listed as one of the UWC values. In all the colleges visited, students and staff discussed the sustainability aspect of the UWC mission, even questioning the degree that UWC is sustainable.

UWC Robert Bosch College (RBC), the newest of the three colleges visited, has a particular focus on sustainability:

UWC Robert Bosch College places an emphasis on environmental sustainability. A key area of investigation is how technology can contribute to sustainable, ecologically responsible development. (UWC Robert Bosch College, 2021, “Experiencing diversity at UWC Robert Bosch College” section)

One student at RBC discussed one aspect of sustainability and how it was impacting him and his family:

There aren't any plastic bags here, but the shopping bags are from cotton, and we constantly use it which is super nice. I got one to take it back home and I started explaining why we use it to my parents and my parents actually loved that idea.

(Damian)

In another college, an adult leader shared how the students decided not to fill up the colleges' swimming pool with water as a sustainability initiative (Dhruv). At the same college, an adult leader identified that there is a sustainability theme within their extra-curricular activities. Students undertook composting, waste management, monitored electricity consumption, and arranged a competition between student residences to see which unit used the least electricity and water (Rudra).

In another college, an adult leader spoke about the student group *Ozonizers* that he founded (Advik). He mentioned how the students noticed that they were wasting a lot of hot water for showers. The students discussed whether they could implement a 15-minute shower rule, which they decided they would be unable to police. Instead, they studied the different types of showerheads and proposed one that reduced water consumption to the college's leadership

team. The leadership team adopted this idea, and as a result, the showers across campus have more environmentally friendly showerheads.

In all three colleges, examples were given of students questioning sustainable activities. An adult leader noted that students were raising questions such as “Should we fly on Project Week?” and “What is our petrol budget?” (Dhruv). There was also evidence of students discussing issues among themselves, with one student sharing the discussions that happen with his peers between “vegans” and “meat-eaters” (Michael).

At the same time, one adult leader based in a college was critical about whether the UWC movement had a coherent sustainability strategy:

Something like sustainability, for example, I think it's just more difficult to take on because it's not structurally built into UWC...naturally speaking, our setup doesn't have sustainability built into it...our format of bringing people from all around the world isn't particularly leading on climate change with all the emissions from flying.
(Sebastian)

Another adult leader working for a UWC national committee was also critical of the approach to sustainability across the UWC movement.

Two years ago, we used to receive the invoices in paper, three copies, and maybe three times the same invoice by normal mail. So, this is not consistent with the mission...for example, the meetings in person, flying around the world, it's crazy. We have now incredible systems that can work perfectly without the need of traveling around the world every six months. (Amber)

The findings here demonstrate the rich, deep, and passionate discussions about sustainability occurring within the UWC system. There was an acknowledgement by participants that sustainability was a part of UWC's mission statement. Participants raised questions about how sustainable the UWC system is. At the same time, the focus of the discussions by the students and adult leaders was on environmental sustainability.

Understanding about peace

“Peace” is another term used within UWC's mission statement. The concept of peace emerged in the data, though compared to sustainability, it was referenced less.

An explanation of this was provided by an adult leader in one of the colleges: “peace I think is harder for our students...I think everybody draws different imagery when they think about this...what does economics say about peace? ...everybody has a different take on peace” (Dhruv). At the same time another adult leader, who is a volunteer for a UWC national committee, spoke poignantly about the importance of peace as part of UWC's mission statement and how this distinguishes the UWC schools and colleges from other international schools: “as we have now so many international schools...[UWC is] working for peace in this world, I think that is still for me more important than the sustainable future, it's [peace] is a bit more wishy-washy to me” (Jill).

An adult leader at Red Cross Norway UWC (Isaac) gave another example of the importance of peace within UWC's mission. When he meets visitors of the college, he relates the story of Malala Yousafzai and her friends as an example of UWC championing peace. Malala, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 following her attempted assassination in Pakistan by the Taliban, subsequently became a leading advocate of girls' rights. On the same bus were two of her friends who were also shot, Kainat Riaz and Shazia Ramzan. Gordon Brown (Prime

Minister of United Kingdom 2007–2010) coordinated scholarships to attend UWC Atlantic College, UK (Etan Smallman, 2017).

The findings in this sub-section show that several participants identified with the concept of peace detailed within UWC's mission statement. At the same time, there was less discussion and acknowledgement of this concept than sustainability.

Key findings

This subsection identified four key findings of UWC stakeholders' understanding of UWC's mission and values.

- 2.1 All participants in the study had knowledge of UWC's mission statement. The participants accurately referenced the mission statement and discussed its meaning passionately and intelligently. Students were able to articulate and debate the different elements of the mission.
- 2.2 The participants in the study recognised that UWC is a values-based educational organisation. The findings demonstrated deep thinking about the role that UWC plays in shaping UWC values. This included the role that UWC plays in developing the consciences of young people.
- 2.3 There was a rich, deep, and passionate discussion about sustainability within the UWC system. There was an acknowledgement by participants that sustainability was a vital component of UWC's mission statement. Participants raised questions about the sustainability of the UWC system. Environmental sustainability was the focus of both students' and adult leaders' discussions.

2.4 Several participants identified with the concept of peace as detailed in UWC's mission statement. However, there was less discussion and acknowledgement of this concept compared to the concept of sustainability.

3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?

This section first explores the concept of the enactment of UWC's mission and values as perceived by the leadership of UWC. Second, there is an outline of how students enact UWC's mission and values based on students' perceptions gathered through the focus group discussions, adult leader semi-structured interviews, and observational data. Third, there is an exposition from the adult leaders on how they perceive they enact UWC's mission and values. Finally, there is an exploration of the impact that stakeholders' consciousness of the UWC mission and values has on their enactment of the mission and values.

The concept of the enactment of UWC's mission and values

No single phrase emerged from the interviews or student focus group discussions that captured the essence or concept of the enactment of UWC's mission and values. Phrases that did emerge from the data included the following: "this urge to make a difference" (Jerome), "driven by the attempt to *make the world*" (Lucy), "agents of change" (Mankee), "change the world" (Rudra, Selina), "change-maker" (Dhruv, Frazier, Sangja), and "active citizenship" (Anthony). These phrases indicate that UWC's mission encourages members to act beyond UWC.

However, what did emerge from the data was the feeling that each person enacted UWC's mission and values in their own personal way:

I think each person takes the mission in their own personal way...but at the root of it, if you care about social justice....you're very conscious of what you have compared to

what others have...although you're not going to change the world by giving everything away that you have, at least you'll change the lives of some people by not thinking so much for yourself and sharing what you have. (Patrick)

One teacher (Anthony) gave the example of a former student who had become an abbot in Australia and has taken a vow of silence for the next ten years. Another teacher explained that “anybody who tries to be compassionate, to communicate openly across cultural and other boundaries, and tries to live responsibly, does already a pretty good job of being a UWC person” (Piotr). An alum identified, “it's the pausing for reflection. It's a sense of holding your own perspective of life” (Daiyu). A teacher shared, “I think it's about consciousness. I think it's about...being mindful, being aware of what you're doing and why you're doing it” (Allan).

It was clear from the interviews that different adult leaders had strong opinions on what did or did not constitute the enactment of UWC's mission and values. One teacher may best sum this up:

We had a student from Jordan here a few years ago, all the time, he was here saying he wanted to be a plastic surgeon. I was thinking...great, repairing people after conflicts...but apparently, he does liposuction and Botox and breast enhancements in the middle east for rich woman...and you think...how is that enacting? ...you can stretch these principles a long way...to opposite ends of a very wide spectrum because he would argue that he's bringing happiness to people and if somebody is happy, they're probably a more peaceful person...so where do you stop? (Allan)

An alum commented with another strong opinion on enactment of UWC's mission and values: "it's not people going into NGOs and working to save the refugees...I'm personally, quite critical of [this] aid business" (Jill).

On the other hand, an alum articulated the following:

I don't think that the enactment of our mission can only come through if you go and work for an NGO in Africa...if you decide to go into business and you follow legally whatever fiscal obligations you have, and you give your workers whatever legal compensation they require, and you provide a good service to whoever your customers are, and you treat people fairly, and you are a good citizen day in and day out with your neighbours, you're also living the UWC mission. (Elijah)

These findings demonstrate that participants thought that UWC's mission and values statement includes an expectation of enactment within it. At the same time, the data illustrates that the interpretation of the enactment of UWC's mission and values is a personal one. Participants had strong views on what did or did not constitute the enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Students' enactment of UWC's mission and values

The enactment by students of UWC's mission and values was identified through the observation data, students' discussion of enactment in the focus group meetings, and in the semi-structured interviews with adult leaders.

Observation data.

On all three UWC campuses, examples of students enacting the UWC mission were observed. For example, on one campus, students were seen organising and running a five-a-side football match off-campus for young people who had mental disabilities.

On the same campus, students were seen supporting classmates that had physical disabilities and who were being supported by the Red Cross Rehabilitation Centre adjacent to the UWC college. On another campus, students were observed working with local villagers and assisting them in developing vocational skills. Students had worked with the villagers to develop a marketing strategy (including the labels) for a tomato paste that the villagers had manufactured. In another UWC college, students were observed working in the college garden, tending the vegetable patch, and looking after the beehive. As this college focuses on sustainability, there were a series of posters around the college persuading students not to attend a conference on sustainability off-campus due to the impact travelling to the conference would have on the environment.

Students' perceptions of enacting UWC's mission and values.

Students in the focus groups discussed how they felt they enacted UWC's mission and values. One student (Joseph) gave a personal example. He explained that he was a facilitator for a *UWC Short Course* in Germany, where his team designed from scratch the programme for approximately 50 participants from across Europe. The programme was giving the participants a "mini-UWC experience". Another student gave an example of how Year 1 students supported Year 2 students, who were taking their Standard Assessment Tests for US university admissions, by standing outside the examination room and giving them brownies: "it's that putting others above yourself" (Jermiah).

An element of enactment that emerged in students' discussions was the importance of interacting with non-mission aligned individuals. A student explained, "I think that living the UWC mission would be going into a certain kind of surroundings where not everyone has this mindset" (Damian). Another student explained that enactment for him would be "talking to people that actually don't think about it [UWC mission and values] on a daily basis or don't care about it and then moving those people because those are the ones who need to be moved" (Michael). At the same time, another student expressed that the UWC mission could easily be viewed as propaganda (Joseph).

Adult leaders' perceptions of students' enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Adult leaders within and external to the UWC colleges were also able to give examples of what they saw as students enacting UWC's mission and values. A teacher (Piotr) gave an example of how a group of students created an online store to sell items that refugees produced. Another teacher (Allan) on a different UWC campus explained how students supported various charities, which sometimes involved them taking a specific action (e.g. supporting a demonstration). Yet another teacher (Dhruv) told a story of how last year, the student body decided not to fill up the college's swimming pool. He went on to say:

I, being a little bit maybe practical, I thought the pool represents 2% of our annual water consumption. There's no need to sacrifice the pool. But I think as a symbolic gesture, it was good that they were willing to do that. I think it'd be even better if they could all bring themselves to go bucket showers 'cause that's a lot more water saving.

(Dhruv)

A leader (Selina) at the UWC International Office gave an example of how, when she visited a UWC, she observed a student giving a provocative *Ted Talk* on the theme: "I am a racist".

He talked about his origins, how he came to UWC and what he learned at UWC. The leader went on to explain that:

Of course, he wasn't now a racist but in some ways a bit like an alcoholic. I think he was using the title to say I can't now say I'm not because that was part of my psyche and my understanding. (Selina)

Other comments on students' enactment of UWC's mission and values.

One interesting theme that emerged was the IBDP's effect on students' enactment of UWC's mission and values. One teacher explained that there are tensions between the requirements of the IBDP and the desire for students to engage with aspects of UWC's mission and values (Allan). Another leader in a school suggested that some "teachers are too concerned about their subject and the results, and that's when I think students experience a little bit of tension" (Bjorn). Another explained that students "get so caught up in assignments that they are no longer even thinking about the mission, but they are just thinking about their internal assessments or extended essays" (Dhruv). One teacher explained that:

for some of the students, it's fair to say that their main goal is the [IB] diploma. And in a way, you can see why...you come from a certain country...this is really your one opportunity to do something amazing with your life, not only your life but probably your whole family as well. (Allan)

A teacher commented, when reflecting on student enactment, that:

The culture of enactment is often a relatively shallow one, and that is partly due to the time stress...everyone has so little time and so many things to do at the same time...[students] are left to have awareness-raising things or a social media

campaign...students love the kind of enactment where it's about having somebody take a picture of you holding a sign that says, *Stop genocide now* or *Stop climate change now*. (Sebastian)

Students also explained the psychological impact of the UWC education on enactment. A student articulated that:

because we are from UWC and we are supposed to be change makers...this mentality still sticks with us...even if you're not doing something right now, the fact that we are UWC graduates, we want to do something in the future. (Lekha)

Another student commented on how the enactment of the UWC mission occurs in everyone's own personal way: "...they're [UWC mission and values] very ambitious, but they're also very vague. There's much room for personal interpretation" (Jermiah).

The findings identified several different ways students were enacting UWC's mission and values. There was a range of perceptions about what was meant by students' enactment of UWC's mission and values. Teachers reflected on the possible conflict between enacting UWC's mission and values and the demands of the IBDP.

Adult leader enactment of the UWC mission

Teachers within UWC colleges also discussed how they felt they enacted UWC's mission and values. For example, Sebastian explained how he worked at the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales before he came to the UWC college: "[it] is an eco-centre...a sort of hippie commune, with a strong focus on sustainability education. I was a consultant and lecturer there and doing a lot of adult education." Piotr, who had worked in four different UWC colleges, stated that since he began working in his current UWC college he has been

much more aware of his carbon footprint. He explained how at a previous UWC he pioneered a virtual Model United Nations which significantly reduced the carbon footprint of students travelling to different parts of the world. Another teacher identified that she felt that she was enacting UWC's mission and values:

by not placing myself above my students...like what I expect my students to do, I always expect myself to do. So, it starts in little things, like if I'm walking in the cafe and I see a piece of rubbish on the floor, I will pick it up. If I see a dirty plate, I will clear it up and then I will tell other students around me, hey, there's a dirty plate next to you, you pick it up, too. (Mankee)

Alumni gave specific examples of how they felt they were enacting the UWC mission. Three alumni (Elijah, Garndi, Jill) all explained how they saw volunteering for UWC national committees as enacting UWC's mission and values. For example, an alum volunteer who was chair of a UWC national committee explained, "I think initially it is a sense that you've been given a scholarship and that you want to do something to give back" (Jill). She went on to explain two reasons for giving back, namely the large scholarship provided, "so in a sense you owe something to the organisation," and second, the positive experience she had at the college she attended (Jill).

An administrator of a UWC national committee (Amber) saw alumni enacting UWC's mission and values through their commitment to the community where they live and work. She can ascertain and track the activities alumni participate in by connecting with alumni at the UWC national committee's reunions. An alum who is a publisher saw enacting UWC's mission and values as "doing an extra step in being slightly more bolder in terms of freedom of speech" (Jill). An alum who had a paid role within UWC reflected on whether she is enacting UWC's mission and values:

You know, some people see me as somebody who has enacted the mission. But I was paid staff...I don't know how you reflect yourself as a paid staff? Are you acting on the mission, or are you acting on your professional career? I think it's both. (Fen)

A staff member in the UWC International Office (Selina) explained how two staff members (both UWC alumni) left the office to set up a Sky School (now Amala) to “use transformative education to create opportunities and inspire positive change in the lives of refugees and their communities” (Amala Education, n.d., “Education for Change” section).

This staff member also reflected on how she felt that she was enacting UWC’s mission and values:

So, in some ways, for me, the mission and values means you apply yourself more...I think I react differently within UWC. I became a school governor when I joined UWC partly to learn more about the school system but also it was my volunteering piece...I felt I should do. (Selina)

The findings illustrate the different ways that UWC adult leaders perceive they are enacting UWC’s mission and values. Different adult leaders, whether within the UWC colleges, UWC national Committees or UWC International Office, gave examples of how they felt they were enacting UWC’s mission and values or provided examples of how others were enacting UWC’s mission and values. These findings are significant in considering how role modelling impacts students understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

UWC consciousness

Though there was no agreement on what constituted the enactment of UWC’s mission and values, one theme that did emerge was the presence of UWC’s mission and values in

people's consciousness. Alums and teachers interviewed reflect that UWC's mission and values are omnipresent.

This is best explained by an alum who worked in the private sector as a management consultant for 16 years and is now a paid employee of the UWC organisation:

How can you be a match when consulting in the private sector and serve the UWC mission? ...of course I have asked myself that question many times...I convinced myself at the time that it was as much about how I do think of things, as it is about what I do. (Jerome)

A teacher explained:

If we have had an impact, it is probably more of a psychological one than anything. I think one of our products as a school...is we give people food for thought. Just a different set of ways or a different set of lenses, a different set of ways of looking at the world and themselves and their relationship to it. (Allan)

Adult leaders stressed the psychological impact of UWC's mission and values. An alum added that "enactment is a sense of consciousness, a sense of being an active participant in your own life" (Daiyu).

Other adult leaders identified the delayed impact of UWC, saying that it was not until students had completed their UWC education that they really understood its impact on them.

A teacher explained:

There's a good number of students who only fully come to understand what's happened to them here afterwards. When they look back and reflect on it...we see this

when we talk to alumni at reunions...when you're in something, it's very hard sometimes to understand what it is that you're in...you need time. (Allan)

At the same time, several people interviewed spoke about the burden of UWC's mission and values. A member of the UWC International Office explained how many alumni she talked to observed that being selected as a UWC student is "a real privilege" (Lucy), which at the same time comes with the responsibility of enacting UWC's mission and values. A leader within a college summarised this burden as follows:

I think we need to kind of stop hyperventilating about the enactment and I think we need to just start doing it. And I feel really anxious about our students, because I don't want them to leave this place with this weight on their shoulders. (Mankee)

She goes on to say that there is:

a tendency to intellectualize and philosophize a lot about what the mission means and how much of an impact we need to have in the world. And I think by constantly worrying about how big an impact we should be having, we miss out on the opportunity to have a small impact in a place that matters. (Mankee)

These findings illustrate that UWC's mission and values are omnipresent in the consciousness of alumni, staff, and students. Alumni referred to how UWC's mission and values had become embedded in their minds since they left their UWC college. Alternatively, the data also shows how the enactment of UWC's mission and values can be a burden for some alumni.

Key findings

This subsection identified four key findings about how UWC stakeholders enact UWC's mission and values.

- 3.1 Participants stressed that members of the UWC community were expected to enact the organisation's mission and values. The data showed that the interpretation and enactment of mission and values varied considerably among UWC stakeholders, often on a personal level. Participants had strong views on what did or did not constitute enactment.
- 3.2 Students enacted UWC's mission and values in different ways. Adult leaders within the colleges, UWC national committee volunteers, the UWC International Office, and students themselves provided a range of examples of how students enacted the mission and values. Some teachers reflected on the possible conflict between enacting UWC's mission and values and the demands of the IBDP.
- 3.3 Adult leaders also illustrated different ways they enacted the mission and values. Leaders from within the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, or UWC International Office, provided examples of how they felt they were enacting the mission and values themselves or gave examples of how others were enacting them. These findings are significant in considering how role modelling impacts students understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.
- 3.4 The findings in this sub-section illustrate that UWC's mission and values are omnipresent in the consciousness of alumni, staff, and students. Additionally, alumni referred to how the mission and values were embedded in their minds since they left

the UWC college. Interestingly, the data also showed that the ongoing enactment of the mission and values became a burden for some alumni.

4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values?

Several key features emerged regarding how UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. This section first explores how UWC national committees affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. Second, there is an examination of the impact that articulation of UWC's mission and values by adult leaders at the UWC colleges plays in students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. Third, this section investigates how organisational structures within the colleges (e.g. dormitory set up) allow for students' understanding of UWC's mission and values.

The role of the UWC national committees

A very strong feature that emerged regarding students' understanding of UWC's mission and values was the role played by the UWC national committees. At the UWC colleges, most of the students were selected through the UWC national committee system. There is strong competition for places at UWC. Based on the UWC national committee report for 2021, there were 13.5 applications for each place. Indeed, one of the interviewees explained how at her UWC national committee, they have between 160–170 applicants per year. They send approximately 20 students to the college in the country where the college is situated and 20 more to colleges in other areas (Jill).

It was recognised by several leaders both within the UWC colleges and UWC International Office that UWC national committees were the start of the journey for many UWC students. UWC national committees, therefore, have a key leadership function within the UWC

system. Key elements that emerged in students' understanding of UWC's mission and values depended, first, on their preliminary research about UWC; second, on the application and selection processes; and third, on the orientation organised by their UWC national committees before joining their UWC college.

Preliminary research about UWC.

Even before students formally embark on the selection process, it is acknowledged both by leaders and students that the preliminary research on UWC helps students understand UWC's mission and values. As one teacher explained, "There's no application brochure in the world, hopefully, that doesn't outline the mission statement" (Sebastian). As one student explained, "Oh that sounds cool and you apply, right? Oh! This organisation has laid out what I believe right?" (Kyoko). A UWC national committee representative explained that a great deal of thought is given to the messaging of UWC's mission and values in their marketing, whether this is on Facebook or other social media (Daiyu).

One member of a UWC national committee helpfully explained that even before knowing much about UWC, many applicants come with a curiosity: "They are on a mission: whether this is to leave home, to go somewhere else...they are curious...they are looking for something before they can actually know what UWC is about" (Fen).

The preliminary document review for the present research showed that the websites of UWC International, of the three colleges visited, and of the UWC national committees local to those colleges all gave great prominence to UWC's mission and values statement. It would seem probable that applicants recognised the statement as a prominent and distinctive feature of UWC.

The application and selection process.

The application process also places emphasis on students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. As one student said, "When you apply, you see the mission" (Giorgia). As a representative from a UWC national committee explained, in the application process students need to "formulate their thoughts about the mission...how do you enact the UWC mission? What do you think and why do you want to apply? ...So that's part of the learning...I mean, internalising it" (Jill).

Due to the relatively large number of applicants per place, the UWC national committees have developed mission-aligned selection processes for selecting students. All the UWC national committees representatives in the study sample explained their mission-aligned activities within the selection process. For example, one UWC national committee representative (Amber) explained that students are asked to write a proposal about a social project while considering how this project might impact their local communities. In their interviews, they must present this project. Adult leaders explained that typically in the interview process, students are asked what they understand by UWC's mission and values. For example, a student explained that in his interview, he had an activity where he had to make a collage from magazines to illustrate what UWC's mission and values represented to him (Kyoko).

The selection criteria for acceptance to UWC is transparent and applies to all applicants. The UWC International website lists the criteria as follows:

- **Intellectual curiosity and motivation:** a genuine urge to learn about the world around oneself and the ability to recognise the details and grasp a breadth of issues

(for example, global and local concerns) involved in any given topic and to analyse them thoroughly

- **Active commitment:** the ability to develop and readiness to reflect, question, and confront one's own values, to measure one's behaviour within family and community against one's values, and to act on one's own beliefs accordingly and responsibly
- **Social competence:** the ability and readiness to make contact with other people, to interact respectfully with them, to work together with them in a team and to achieve solutions; the ability to express oneself adequately in different situations and to different people
- **Resilience, personal responsibility, and integrity:** the ability to look after oneself physically and emotionally during the challenging and transforming experience that UWC offers; the personal motivation to adhere to UWC's common moral and ethical principles, a sense of humility and an ability to listen and value another person's opinion and experience
- **Motivation for UWC:** passion, ability, and serious incentive to contribute to and actively promote UWC's values (UWC, n.d., 'UWC selection criteria' section)

Orientation of students.

Students and staff explained how before students arrived at their UWC college, orientation activities were organised. These varied from an afternoon session with alumni to orientation camps of varying lengths of time. Some students explained that they had a specific orientation to UWC led by their UWC national committee. They learned from alumni and how they enact the UWC mission after graduation (Frazier, Joseph). A representative from the UWC national committee explained that "beside UWC mission and values we explain the

IB Diploma and topics such as safeguarding, mental health and wellness, alcohol and consent” (Daiyu).

At the same time, a student explained that he felt “that there’s a fundamental issue with the selection process...these [UWC] values...they’re very easy to blow out like a pipe...you don’t really internalize them, you just say them out because you need to say them” (Niral). He went on to explain further that as a result, students arrive with different agendas and, from his perspective, do not enact the mission and values.

These findings indicate that UWC national committees have an essential role in students initially developing an understanding of UWC mission and values. Students and adult leaders within the UWC colleges identify UWC national committees’ role in students’ preliminary understanding of UWC’s mission and values. This demonstrates a system leadership model of voluntary organisations (UWC national committees) impacting students.

UWC college adult leaders articulating UWC’s mission and values

The research findings identified that adult leaders within the UWC colleges shared UWC’s mission and values both within formal and informal settings. A principal stated, “In my very first opening address to the whole community at the beginning of the academic year, I include a slide on the mission, and I include a slide on the values” (Isaac).

The same principal reinforced this when explaining how UWC’s mission and values were infused into staff meeting discussions. The discussion focused on the one-week November break the college used to have. One issue that arose at the meeting was that students who were funded or from wealthy backgrounds could pay to travel in Europe. However, students receiving financial support were unable to travel. The issue surfaced from a discussion about the UWC value of *celebrating difference* and Isaac’s question was “Should we be celebrating

socioeconomic advantage?” Another adult leader within a different UWC college also identified how staff discussed the calendar to explore special focus days on interfaith and sustainability, which went beyond the IBDP (Anthony).

As part of the observation data, I saw a principal at a college meeting (similar to a school assembly) specifically referencing UWC’s mission and values when explaining the leadership team’s decision. In another UWC, an adult leader was seen having a discussion with students in the dining room on whether a conference on sustainability should occur because of the transport required. In the UWC colleges visited, images displaying UWC’s mission and values or referring to them were clearly seen. A selection can be found in Appendix N. This is another way adult leaders articulate UWC’s mission and values.

These findings recognise adult leaders’ roles in articulating UWC’s mission and values. Principals identified both formal (e.g. college meetings) and informal settings where this occurred. Observations in the three UWC colleges supported the examples given by the adult leaders. The observation found that UWC colleges also had images relating to UWC’s mission and values displayed in various locations. These different articulations help develop students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values.

Organisational structures to allow understanding of UWC mission and values

A theme that emerged from the data was the role organisational structures within the UWC colleges played in students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values. The identified organisational structures were dormitory set-up, student orientation activities, and the role of student voice in the leadership structures of the colleges.

Several adult leaders within the colleges explained, in general terms, the role that organisational structures played in students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values.

These structures allow students to read, discuss, and interpret UWC's mission and values. "It is the institutional tricks and structures...and then the interaction between them on a daily basis in the structures that we created" (Piotr). A principal saw the general role that "intentionally created groups, house groups or service groups" have in students' understanding of UWC's mission and values (Patrick).

Structure of the dormitories.

At the three UWC colleges visited, all students reside on campus. At UWC Red Cross Nordic, there are five students in a dormitory. At UWC Robert Bosch, four students share a dormitory, and at UWC Mahindra, there are typically four students in a dormitory. A college dormitory customarily consists of a mix of Year 1 and Year 2 students. This information was noted in observation at three UWC campuses and from examining the respective UWC college websites.

A principal explained that great lengths are taken to ensure "our rooms are that micro UWC experience" (Tristan). It was explained that they aim to put one local student in a room with three students from other countries/territories, with a minimum of two different languages spoken within the group, and with a minimum of two different faith or non-faith groups being present in the group, to represent different aspects of socioeconomic diversity. An alum stated that this living arrangement is the:

first realization that this is a very different place to what they were used to, and where some of the questions get raised, where the curiosity gets developed to understand that something must be very different about this place to what I'm used to. (Jerome)

As a teacher explained the dormitory set-up is a "kind of hidden curriculum" (Jeremy). One student commented how he had learnt so much from his Year 2 roommate: "I got to know

about the UWC mission and values from him...there wasn't any hierarchy; we were equal” (Michael).

Orientation.

Another activity identified in developing students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values was the orientation procedures that occur when the students first join the college. All three colleges spend time with the students inducting them into the colleges they are joining. A student explained that in orientation week “we started talking about UWC...so that we won't actually come here and have a shock” (Damian). Another student commented that orientation week at the college was the most meaningful part of his overall introduction to the UWC movement (Joseph). A principal noted that when he explains UWC’s mission and values at the beginning of orientation week, they “think they understand it, but actually they don't” (Isaac). He goes on to explain that this is a two-year learning experience, and it is through this that they understand UWC’s mission and values.

Student voice.

All the colleges examined had organisational structures in place for student voice. Mitra (2005) explains that their student voice programme involves young people sharing their problems with administrators and faculty or collaborating with adults to address issues within their schools.

In one UWC college, there is a college assembly of students, a group of students who meet regularly with senior college leaders. These students also take positions on other staff committees and attend senior leadership meetings. In another college, a teacher noted, “We have a very engaged student council, who have a lot of responsibility put on their shoulders. They sit on all committees: they have a board representative. So, it's not something tokenistic

at all” (Allan). The same teacher referred to the role of their student council in a disciplinary matter. A group of students had been off campus drinking to celebrate graduation, two of them being student council members. The student council then voted to suspend them until they had time to reflect on their actions and write a letter of apology to the school and the student body. “There is this element of self-awareness...I feel it is one of the things that is quite noticeable in UWC students” (Allan).

These findings illustrate the impact that organisational structures established within UWC colleges have on students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values. The structures allow students to dialogue with their peers or adult leaders about the meaning of UWC’s mission and values. The dormitory structure allows for the potential discussion of different elements of UWC’s mission and values within a group of four to five students from diverse backgrounds. The orientation activities held by UWC colleges build on the work of the UWC national committees to develop students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values. The student voice component allows students to engage with adult leaders in fulfilling UWC’s mission and values. The adult leaders develop and support these organisational structures.

Key findings

This subsection identified three key findings related to how UWC leadership affects students’ understanding of UWC’s mission and values.

- 4.1 UWC national committees played an important role in how students initially developed their understanding of UWC’s mission and values. Students and adult leaders within the colleges identified UWC national committees’ role in students’ preliminary understanding, suggesting that these committees have a leadership role within the UWC system. UWC national committees have roles to play in the

preliminary research of UWC, the application and selection process, and the orientation of students before they arrive at a UWC college.

4.2 Adult leaders play an important role in articulating UWC's mission and values.

Principals identified both formal (e.g. college meetings) and informal settings where this occurred. Adult leaders' explanations in this regard were supported by observations in the three UWC colleges and the presence of physical images of UWC's mission and values in various locations. These different articulations help develop students' understanding of UWC's mission and values.

4.3 The structures established within UWC colleges support students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The organisational structures allowed students to discuss the meaning of UWC's mission and values either with their peers or with adult leaders. The dormitory structure seems to promote discussion of different elements of the mission and values within a group of four to five students from diverse backgrounds. Students who are part of the formal leadership structure of the UWC colleges engage with adult leaders and connect with UWC's mission and values. The orientation activities within the colleges build on the work of the UWC national committees in developing students' understanding of UWC's mission and values. These structures are developed and supported by the adult leaders in UWC colleges.

5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?

This section explores how UWC leadership affects students' enactment of UWC's mission and values. First, this section explores the theme of role modelling by leaders in the colleges to demonstrate the enactment of UWC's mission and values. Second, an examination of

alumni's roles in inspiring and guiding students to enact UWC's mission and values is undertaken. Third, there is an examination of organisational structures within the colleges that encourage the enactment of UWC's mission and values, such as the operation of the Creative Action and Service programme (part of the IBDP), Project Week, and student leadership opportunities.

This section also explores other themes that emerged from the data that impact *both* students' understanding and enactment of the mission. These themes include the low power distance between teachers and students and the provision of opportunities for students to articulate and enact UWC's mission and values as part of their school and personal lives.

Role modelling by leaders within the UWC colleges

Adult leaders role modelling the mission and values emerged as a leadership practice that impacted students' enactment of UWC's mission and values.

A member of the UWC International Board recognised the role that principals “have in living out those values and modelling them to the students” (James). Another adult leader in a college explained the importance of role modelling: “I need to be an authentic role model...I need to walk the walk and not just talk the talk” (Anthony). He goes on to explain how students respond positively to this and then apply the mission through student leadership, hence multiplying its effect. “We move and stay with UWC because it gives us hope for the future” (Anthony). An adult leader within a UWC college also outlined the importance of role modelling, whether it be “on punctuality, on time management, on, interpersonal communication...I like to create personal moments” (Advik).

Another adult leader from a different UWC college explained how as educators in this unique setting, a trust could be built so that students look up to teachers as role models (Bjorn). A

different adult leader within a UWC college noted that he quickly noticed that people were watching him and seeing the way he acted (Rudra). As the UWC colleges are residential, being in a relatively small community in an isolated location may accentuate the importance of role modelling.

Students also spoke about the importance of role modelling, particularly peer-to-peer role modelling. One feature that was explained was the part that Year 2 students played in modelling UWC mission and values to Year 1 students. One student framed this by describing how Year 2 students give advice and share experiences with Year 1 students (Damian). Another student from a different college emphasised the importance of role modelling actions: “I think by picking trash up, and people see me do this...I kind of lead their minds towards picking up trash in the future” (Michael).

A principal explained the importance of role modelling from his perspective:

It's very helpful to be a teacher and I think the fact that I've kept on teaching class during my time as principal helps me connect with the teachers, but the students and the staff see me as an educator as well as administrator, not that they're distinct but that I'm a practicing teacher. I think that's an example of rolling up your sleeves and being prepared to engage. (Isaac)

These findings show how (both adult and student) leaders' role modelling of UWC's mission and values within the colleges influences students to enact the mission and values. It demonstrates how the actions of a leader within a school can positively impact students.

Impact of alumni on students' enactment of UWC's mission and values

A clear feature of the findings was the impact that alumni had on students' enactment of UWC's mission and values. Many adult leaders and students referred to alumni inspiring them to enact UWC's mission and values; as one principal explained, "Hopefully, they [alumni] become the educators or inspiration for students so when they come back and speak, that involvement, inspires students" (Patrick).

Other examples of alumni inspiring students to enact UWC's mission and values also emerged. For example, an adult leader in a college gave the example of how an alum came to the college to speak to students. She had spent three months on a refugee boat rescuing refugees in the Mediterranean. "To talk about what that experience is like and why she did that...[you] see the mission in action and see how this can be done" (Anthony). The same leader went on to explain that "alumni coming back, giving talks and focusing on that is so important for the students that we have because it gives them ideas of what they can become, in that very true sense of the word" (Anthony).

Other adult leaders spoke positively about UWC alumni. A principal, for example, stated that he "deals with some fantastic alumni" (Isaac). He went on to explain how the head of a local UWC national committee was working for the United Nations in Sierra Leone and is now working for the United Nations in New York. He was able to share these inspirational stories with the UWC college community.

Two alumni were identified in the semi-structured interviews and student focus group discussions for their role in establishing UWC schools. One adult leader (Bjorn) in a college referred to an alum, Mark Wang, who established UWC Changshu.

Mark was seriously injured in an air crash when he was 12 years old. During the five years of rehabilitation, he studied the school courses by himself and kept up with his peers. In 1998 he received a scholarship and became the first student from the Peoples Republic of China to study at Red Cross Nordic UWC. Mark wrote and published his autobiography, which became a bestseller in China and was adapted into a television series and a musical that inspired many people (UWC, n.d., “Mark Jiapeng Wang” section).

In the focus group discussions, a student (Helen) referred to Lin Kobayashi, who established UWC ISAK Japan. Lin received a full scholarship to study at Pearson College UWC and, once she returned to Japan, felt a need to develop leadership education there (UWC, n.d., “Lin Kobayashi” section). This demonstrates the inspirational effect that alumni can have on students.

It is interesting to note the number of alumni who work full-time for UWC. For example, at the UWC International Office, two senior positions are occupied by alumni.

Not all alumni were seen as positive influencers on how students enact UWC mission and values, however. For example, one adult leader at the college commented that some alumni are rather “entitled”, though he felt that in recent years this has been changing (Jeremy). A leader in the UWC International Office referred to the UWC Facebook page, stating, “It's questionable at times whether that's a positive or a negative influence” (Selina).

Organisational structures within UWC colleges that allow for students’ enactment of UWC’s mission and values

This section examines the organisational structures within the colleges that encourage students’ enactment of UWC’s mission and values, namely the operation of Project Week,

Creative Action and Service Programme (part of the IBDP), student leadership opportunities, and the organisation of UWC mission-aligned activities.

Project week.

One feature at all three of the colleges visited was that students undertook Project Week activities. A representative from a UWC national committee saw Project Week as an element of enacting UWC's mission and values as "you get a chance to do something" (Jill).

Through a document search of the websites of the three UWC colleges, information could be ascertained about Project Week activities. The website of UWC Robert Bosch explains that Project Week occurs twice a year when students undertake activities in various parts of Europe. Each student is given a budget of 23 euros a day and works with an advisory staff member to research, plan, and organise a specific project. Many students undertake activities where they are not supervised by an adult (UWC Robert Bosch, 2021, "Experiential Learning" section). At UWC Red Cross Nordic, students participate in two special project-based learning programmes per year, including surfing, climbing, and kayaking expeditions, and traditional Norwegian boatbuilding (UWC Red Cross Nordic, n.d., "Project-based learning" section). At UWC Mahindra, students get an opportunity to travel around India, mostly independently (UWC Mahindra College, 2020, "Experiencing India" section).

One principal discussed how Project Week groupings allow an opportunity for students to be mixed in different ways: "it is yet another throw of the dice and another set of natural opportunities for people to be thrust together across diversities" (Tristan). The principal also explains how Project Week develops leadership skills as the students do not have an adult making decisions on their behalf. Many Project Week activities are developed by students, with adults present as students undertake the activities (Tristan).

CAS.

Within the IBDP, all students must undertake CAS activities. Creativity is defined as arts and other experiences that involve creative thinking; Action is the physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle; while Service is an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. CAS is not formally assessed, though students must reflect on their CAS experiences (International Baccalaureate Organisation, n.d., “Creativity, activity, service” section). At all three UWCs visited, this was a major part of the programme offered.

A documentary search of the websites of the three UWC colleges visited highlighted the approach to CAS activities. At UWC Mahindra, students participate in a Triveni Programme, which “is at the heart of a MUWCI education and goes beyond fulfilling the IB’s CAS requirements” (UWC Mahindra College, 2020, “Triveni programme & co-curricular activities” section). This Triveni Programme consists of an IB CAS+ Programme, with an enhanced emphasis on service learning; multiple experiential learning weeks, both on campus and across India; and a calendar of campus events, including regional weeks, seminar series, and experts in residence. At UWC Red Cross Norway, the college has developed its CAS programme through project-based learning activities based on the three pillars of the college: humanitarian, environmental and Nordic (UWC Red Cross Nordic, n.d., “EACs” section). At UWC Robert Bosch, the 70+ CAS activities offered interlace with Project Week, outdoor education programmes, and learning in the school garden (UWC Robert Bosch College, 2021, “Experiential Learning” section)

One strong feature that emerged both from adult leaders and the students was that the CAS programme allows the development of UWC mission-aligned activities. For example, an adult leader explained how their extra-curricular programme ran on themes: “social justice is one; sustainability is one” (Dhruv). An adult leader at another UWC college explained how

the extra-academic programme's focus on the three foundations of "humanitarian, environmental and Nordic" themes were the pillars of the CAS programme. This programme promotes a "feeling of teamwork, ...empathy, the feeling of supporting others, the feeling of and listening to others' viewpoints" (Advik). A principal explained how the CAS activity he ran allowed the development of UWC mission-aligned activities:

Another example, you heard yesterday when we sat down and had a sort of post power football discussion...a student saying...we're running our first-ever power football tournament on campus inviting in the local community, and we're going to lead it. It's not staff led, it's student leadership. But also, it's a sort of team around one particular student helping deliver it. We can help and support and give ideas as facilitators, staff members. But what make experience, it's for them to actually learn about running a tournament on the theme of inclusion. So leading, educating other students, educating staff. (Isaac)

In the context of service learning, leaders and students consider the location of their college and the service opportunities that this provides. For example, an adult leader in a UWC college explained that the students identified that many women did not know how to swim in their community. The students worked with women in the neighbouring villages and taught them to swim in the college swimming pool. The leader explained that although this seems a simple project, it was deeply complicated, and students learned to navigate many issues to make it successful:

For example, the young women on campus will have no hair on their legs. And the women participants who come and see this, they're like, what is going on? ...it's not just about jumping in the pool and practicing freestyle...it is about what is a safe space? You have to build that trust...building a one-to-one relationship. The students

who facilitate this, they get so close to the participants that they go and stay in the villages for home-stays with the women participants. (Dhruv)

The location of the UWC college also influences the type of service that is possible. A leader at UWC Red Cross Nordic explained that there is no relatively poor community in their vicinity. The college, he explains, creates opportunities for “students to reflect and think deeply about these things” (Advik). Next to the college is the Haugland Rehabilitation Centre, owned by the Red Cross, and it is a specialised level of the Norwegian health care system. As part of their community service commitment, students from the college work with the patients and professional staff in physical and cultural activities.

Student leadership opportunities.

Within all three colleges, evidence emerged on the importance of student leadership with a focus on activities aligned to the UWC mission. Both students and teachers explained how student leadership operated and how this enabled the enactment of UWC's mission and values. One principal explained that student leadership:

is getting our young students to be ready to take up the mantle of speaking out with courage and with the skill to be able to be influential. Sometimes that would be in the role of a follower or supporter and sometimes it would be in the role of the initiator. So, finding that own place where they're comfortable to be influential is what leadership is about. It doesn't mean being the champion here or standing on the hilltop who's pointing the direction...it comes naturally through what we're doing and we, as an organisation. (Patrick)

Students recognised the opportunities that the UWC colleges offer for student leadership. For example, one student explained that “there's definitely an emphasis on students leading in our extracurriculars” (Ada). Another student explained: “We have leadership opportunities...we get to do things hands-on and get to experience like a personal enrichment and things such as extra academics, [including] some projects with local communities” (Frazier). At the same time, a Year 1 student recognised the leadership role of their fellow Year 2 students in extra-curricular activities that he undertakes. “I can trust them to do that job” (Niral).

Adult leaders within the colleges also identified the importance of student leaders in leading UWC mission-aligned activities. For example, an adult leader at one of the UWC colleges explained the operation of their peer support group. This consists of a group of students selected by the counsellor to support other students. “I think these students become really

conscious of how they need to know stuff to help their peers, and how they become conscious of the UWC values when they're trying to help their peers” (Mankee). A principal explained the role that student leadership structures can play in the enactment of UWC’s mission and value, such as through “more formal situations where you have a community service group” (Patrick). Another principal commented that “[in] of our extra-academic program, there's much more emphasis on student initiative” (Isaac).

Overall, the emphasis on student leadership for the enactment of UWC’s mission and values may be best summarised by an adult leader at the UWC International Office:

Students [are] encouraged to develop their own services, or entrepreneurship initiatives...they are asked to take roles in groups that are leadership roles...my understanding and observation is that this happens, of course, in varying degrees in different schools...some schools have the adults more present, and therefore leaving less room potentially for student leadership. Others very strongly emphasize student leadership and just leave the adults in the background, to observe, support and mentor [the students]. (Jerome)

UWC mission-aligned activities.

There were a number of UWC mission-aligned activities that were either discussed or observed at the different colleges.

Reference was made to themed days or themed weeks that focus on the UWC mission and values, whether that be on sustainability, peace, cultural days/weeks, or other mission-aligned days/weeks (Sebastian). For example, five times a year, at Robert Bosch College, *Special Focus Days* are organised. These are platforms for students to take a closer look at topics such as interfaith dialogue, politics, democracy, peace, injustice, or sustainability.

A staff member at the UWC International Office referred to UWC Day as an event that allows for the enactment of UWC's mission and values. UWC International has run UWC Day since 2015. It coincides with the United Nations International Day of Peace, which occurs annually on 21 September:

Previous events and activities have included community service initiatives, film screenings, panel debates, TEDx events, fundraising events for the UWC Refugee Initiative or for UWC national committees, outreach events held in partnership with other initiatives and a range of volunteering opportunities. (UWC, n.d., 'UWC day events' section)

A teacher explained the outline of a Year 1 life skills lesson. The subject is a mixture of academic and social support:

One unit we study is to critically examine, after they've been here for a term, critically examine the mission statement and the values and principles by which we operate. I ask the students to think about how they engage with those on an individual level, and to what extent is the college living the mission? (Allan)

A student discussed the opportunity he had to propose a project to enact in his own country through the *GoMakeADifference* grant scheme (Jude). "GoMakeADifference is a grant scheme available to UWC students only...an opportunity to be awarded a grant of up to USD 1,000 to help you put your mission into action!" (GoMakeADifference, n.d., "Go Make a Difference" section). This scheme was established by an alum of UWC Atlantic College and is supported by her husband and some other alumni from other UWCs. They now donate USD 30,000 for 30 student-initiated projects each year.

These findings illustrate that organisational structures within the UWC colleges influence students' enactment of the UWC mission. The structures identified were Project Week, CAS,

student leadership opportunities, and the organisation of UWC mission-aligned activities. All these structures emphasise student actions and provide opportunities for students to enact the mission and values. The data showed that the adult leaders within UWC colleges develop and enable the structure. The UWC International Office and alumni organise some of the mission-aligned activities, demonstrating system-wide leadership.

Factors that affect both students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values

The data gathered identified factors that affected *both* students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The elements explored here are the low power distance between teachers and students and the provision of space for the articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Low power distance between teachers and students.

One strong feature of the environment is the low power distance relationship between staff and students. In a school context, teachers have a degree of power with respect to students.

Through observations at all three colleges, it was noted that all students refer to teachers by their first names. The dress codes for both staff and students are informal. Teachers open their homes to students for social activities or house-parent meetings. Staff and students eat at the same table in the dining hall.

In focus group discussions, one student explained how “we have a Facebook group where teachers and students are in...that's kind of the platform for an exchange of opinions without having to come together” (Damian). An adult leader noted that “the faculty are interacting with students at many levels” (Rudra). He notes that besides being teachers of a subject,

teachers are advisors for a small number of students (approximately ten). With the absence of adults, they are effectively surrogate parents. At the same time, teachers are also involved with working with students on activities outside the classroom. He also observes that the college selects staff who “understand the UWC mission and want to live the UWC mission” (Rudra).

This low power distance between teacher and student allows the student to question and challenge. One teacher, for example, explained that in his class, “there are students who will challenge you and it's good...you take any position, and you will get pushback... they're [the students] quite outspoken...we don't kind of muzzle them” (Dhruv). Another teacher described that in a classroom setting, there are pedagogical ways to empower students with “leadership, autonomy, responsibility and sustainability that are in the mission statement” (Piotr). A principal expounded on how he permitted the students to challenge him and the system. “That isn't seen as insurrection, it is seen as we create the space for that” (Tristan). Another adult leader in a different school noted that the college “gives space to students to speak their mind and you as the leader to interact with them and understand the students’ perspective” (Rudra).

However, this environment was not without its critics. A student explained:

that there are some students who are very vocal, and they sort of try to dominate the whole spectrum and the way of thinking about certain situations where there are others who might have opinions...they feel sort of oppressed by those people because they don't speak as much. (Giorgia)

An adult leader in a UWC college noted that this low power distance between teachers and students “makes us vulnerable and it’s blurring the differences between a teacher and a student” (Bjorn).

The creation of space for the articulation and enactment of UWC’s mission and values.

A feature that clearly emerged from the data was the importance of creating space for the student to explore and enact UWC’s mission and values. This is best explained by a principal at a college:

It is the way in which faculty don't show and tell students what they have to think and do but they create situations in which they can discover that themselves so that's quite a clever, subtle difference, that sort of institutional leadership, faculty leadership, adult leadership, the role, facilitating role...if you don't crowd them out without adult common sense and lead them to develop their own common sense. (Patrick)

Another adult leader from a different college noted: “we create deliberate moments and events for them. So, when they arrive, there are discussions...I would say group discussions, presentations which focus on these [UWC] values” (Advik).

A director of studies at a UWC college explained that it was important to create:

space to ensure there is a timetable that allows for transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary explorations...to look at a calendar that allows for moving beyond the IB [for] special focus days on interfaith and sustainability, where values can be shared, can be talked about, and put into action. (Anthony)

This creating of space was not just identified by the adults in the school community. Students also recognised it. A student explained, “This place gives you more technical skills, like the ability to debate with others with rigour. Because everyone has a strong opinion. You have spaces to actually do this” (Niral). Another student at a different UWC college noted that staff organised discussion circles where students discussed compassionate leadership. (Frazier)

The spaces that are created enable and encourage students to enact UWC’s mission. This goes beyond the student leadership structures detailed earlier – it is about empowering students to truly lead. A member of the UWC International Office offered the following further explanation: “giving them [the students] the sense that they can own it and giving as much space as possible to them...to understand that they're trusted as leaders” (Jerome). A leader in a UWC college explained it is about “giving space to grow, to allow communities to develop, and to constantly reflect on their actions” (Anthony). Another adult leader in a college saw his role as “shaping the students [and] creating a mindset” (Bjorn). A teacher identified that within the residences, there are “minimal rules that are imposed on them [students] in order to be able to be living together” (Piotr). A principal at a college had clear expectations of his teachers regarding creating space for students: “The role of the professional teacher [is] to create space for the student, the voices of those students who feel marginalized in the discourse within the school” (Tristan).

This space was also about putting the students into situations where they would be challenged. As a principal noted:

Being pushed from your comfort zone in a whole host of different situations whether within the classroom...exploring intellectual and academic challenges to being on a hilltop, wondering how the hell you're going to get off because you're not quite sure

where you are, to being in a social community engagement situation where you're trying to work out the needs of another. (Patrick)

A teacher also shared the dilemma of giving space to students and allowing students ownership of organising activities:

How many empty slots do we still need to leave for the students to fill up and to bring in their own input? ...on some level, I can maybe get a more perfect outcome if I organize everything myself, and every workshop is done by somebody who I've personally invited and some external speaker. But on another level, maybe it's good if students do their own workshops, even if some of those workshops will not be so great (Sebastian).

In examining space for students, it was also recognised that the UWC education model also creates space for teachers. A teacher noted:

There is room for manoeuvre, there is room for experimentation, there's room for research, there's room for debate and discussion. We're not all just necessarily marching to the beat of the same drum. And I think that that's a healthy educational environment for, especially for this age range. Because I think they're very, they're open to new ideas. (Allan)

A director of studies in another UWC college expounded on this, identifying the importance of creating space for faculty to discuss “what the content is that we need to discuss in our classes to engage our students” (Anthony).

The findings established two features that impacted both students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values. The features identified were the low power

distance between staff and students and the creation of space for the articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These features are aspects of the environment of UWC. The findings show how leadership within UWC colleges is shaping this environment.

Key findings

This subsection identified five key findings of how UWC leadership affected students' enactment of UWC's mission and values.

- 5.1 Adult and student leaders role modelled the enactment of UWC's mission and values, encouraging students to enact UWC's mission and values. Such actions demonstrate how leaders within a school can positively impact students. Adult leaders recognise that students are observing their actions.
- 5.2 UWC alumni are seen as role models for the students by adult leaders and students within the UWC colleges. Alumni are often seen to inspire UWC students to enact the mission and values. Alumni, therefore, have a distributed leadership role within the UWC system in helping students enact the mission and values.
- 5.3 Organisational structures within the UWC colleges influence students' enactment of the UWC mission. The structures identified were *Project Week*, *CAS*, and *Student leadership opportunities*. All these structures emphasise student actions and provide opportunities for students to enact the mission and values. The data showed that the adult leaders within the UWC colleges developed and enabled the structures.
- 5.4 Other mission-aligned activities support students' enactment of the mission and values. These activities are organised by the leadership within the UWC colleges, staff at the UWC International Office, and alumni. This demonstrates system-wide

mission-focused leadership activities providing students with opportunities to enact UWC's mission and values.

- 5.5 Two features emerged from the data that have an impact on students' understanding *and* enactment of the mission and values. These features include low power distance between staff and students and the creation of space for articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

When participants defined their understanding of the mission, "diversity" was a key element of their description. Though the term "diversity" in itself is not cited in UWC's mission statement, it is central to the UWC educational model (UWC., n.d., "UWC educational model and principles" section). It is also implied in some of the values of UWC, notably "celebration of difference".

This section first identifies different forms of diversity evident within UWC, including nationality, socioeconomic status, and others. Second, it explores the importance of diversity as perceived by participants in the study and how this affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Different forms of diversity

The nature of the deliberate diversity was clearly articulated by one of the principal's interviewed when he was discussing UWC's mission and values:

[UWC mission and values] are certainly underpinned by having deliberate diversity in the centre of the UWC educational model...[this is] not just deliberate diversity of

students, it's deliberate diversity of community which includes students, staff and other people who are connecting with our educational model. (Isaac)

He further elaborates that by identifying diversity in terms of nationality and socioeconomic status:

I always think the key difference between us, and many international schools is the deliberate diversity...if you go to the International School of Bergen, they have got over 50 nationalities represented. So, there is that diversity, but it is not socioeconomic diversity, and I think that is what we have on our campuses, given our scholarship programs. That's, again, one of the learning points for students to live alongside those from a very different context, not just different nationalities and cultures. (Isaac)

Diversity by nationality.

Diversity by nationality is one of the hallmarks of UWC. UWC college students are selected from more than 150 countries/territories, through UWC's national committee system.

Robert Bosch UWC's website states that the school hosts students from over 100 countries/territories, with 50 places reserved for students who reside in Germany (UWC Robert Bosch College, 2021, "Experiencing diversity at UWC Robert Bosch College" section). On its website, Red Cross Nordic UWC communicates that they have students from over 85 countries, with a host group of students from the Nordic countries representing 30% of the student body (UWC Red Cross Nordic, n.d., "Students" section). UWC Mahindra college indicates on their website that they have over 80 nationalities represented on campus, "including students from internally displaced, refugee, or stateless backgrounds" (UWC

Mahindra College, 2020, “Frequently asked questions” section). Around 30% of UWC Mahindra students come from different regions of India.

In observing the staff and students on all three campuses in the classroom, partaking in student activities, and in the dining room, it was clear that large numbers of nationalities were represented. The UWC national committee system undoubtedly means that colleges can recruit students residing in countries or territories that other international residential schools would not usually be able to attract. Great thought goes into recruiting for diversity within each country or territory, as Elijah (a representative of a UWC national committee) explains. He asks current students and alumni to present at information sessions with approximately 1,400 prospective students and their parents:

I always called them to the forefront, that they gave a little half a minute talk saying: “Hello, I am Jorge, I come from Merida, I knew about UWC in such and such a way and I'm going to go to Hong Kong”. That's all they need to say so that people in the meetings attest to the diversity of the origin, geographical origin, sometimes they could possibly see the diversity of the socioeconomic background of students that we selected. (Elijah)

A principal in a college not only recognised a diverse range of nationalities within the student body but also saw the importance of the number of different nationalities within the staff body:

We probably talked about having 88 nationalities represented on campus. But actually, this year, for the first time, I really looked at the number of nationalities in our staff body and it's 23. We used to have it as a norm of 18 to 19, and we're now up

to 23. I think that's important for the students to see leaders from across the world gathered in a UWC community. (Isaac)

In the early days of UWC, as referenced by some of those interviewed, diversity was narrowly defined, primarily based on nationality. One adult leader explained that diversity was based on “the number of different passports you had on campus” (James), while another referenced that diversity was only defined “in national terms, which [was] a mistake” (Piotr).

Diversity by socioeconomic status.

An important feature of UWC is the demonstrated need scholarships that are offered to students. As stated on the UWC International website:

More than 80% of students selected by UWC national committees receive full or partial financial assistance, funded by our generous supporters. Our Refugee Initiative has also been funding full scholarships to displaced young people from conflict hotspots for many years. (UWC, n.d., “What is UWC?” section)

Demonstrated needs scholarships allow young people to access an international education that they would not otherwise be able to afford.

A leader of a UWC national committee and alum stressed the importance of socioeconomic diversity: “It's not a rich people's school, I think that is very important for us...it's not just the rich parents who can send their kids to an international school it's something more than that.” (Jill). This was confirmed by a comment from a student from Nepal who commented, “I used to live in one of the poorest countries, Nepal, and I mean if I didn't get a scholarship in UWC, I would not [be] able to meet people from Canada or Norway” (Jude). Another student was able to see the effect of socioeconomic diversity by making a comparison with her previous

school: “My previous school was an American school. Even if there are people from different nations, [there] was no sense of bridging the gaps between or providing scholarships to native students who can't afford the school” (Lekha).

An alum spoke reflectively of her time at a UWC college in 1990, just after the fall of the iron curtain. She explained how she came from a middle-class German family, her father being a doctor and mother a teacher. She explained that it took her over a year to reflect on the socioeconomic diversity at the college. Her vivid memory was of the Bulgarian students who never joined at the bar in the main street as they could not afford to go out (Fen). A similar experience was also shared by a teacher at a college who explained how the college shapes those students who come from more wealthy backgrounds. “When they meet their peers from not so privileged backgrounds, I would say their sense of understanding, their sense of empathy, charity, all this increases, and they start thinking of what can I do to help the others?” (Advik).

Other types of diversity.

One of the colleges visited, UWC Red Cross Nordic offered one unique approach to diversity: The Survivors of Conflict Programme. The college has a specific scholarship programme for young people “who have been injured or are born with disabilities and live-in conflict or post-conflict zones” (UWC Red Cross Nordic, n.d., “Survivors of conflict programme” section). The college works with the Red Cross Haugland Rehabilitation Centre, located adjacent to the college, to support these students.

The principal spoke powerfully about how a student in The Survivors of Conflict Programme impacted the college:

We had a fantastic student from El Salvador, paralyzed from the chest down, having been shot by a gang while swimming, and all his friends were killed. Wonderful artist, fit upper body strength. His roommates trained for a month beforehand, to get him to the top of the mountain. They didn't want to leave him behind. He'd never dreamt of making it to the top of the mountain...They went up overnight. The night before they camped out with him, so they can get up with a head start. They borrowed a wheelchair from the rehabilitation centre. They were able to take him up on the wheelchair, but also for the trickier sections on their backs. It's actually on the front cover of our strategic plan launched in 2015 as an example of sort of inclusion, and the whole reaching the summit of the mountain as they took him to the top. The whole year group swarm down around him on the final section. (Isaac)

Another teacher identified another aspect of diversity:

You probably realise, we have a very deliberately diverse student body. We push the idea out to the national communities that we don't necessarily just want your academic highflyers. We want kids who take five, 10, 15 years to really grow into what they're going to become. We've seen people who've left here without the diploma get into an American University. Within a couple of years, they've got a Grades Point Average of 3.8 or whatever. So, it is entirely possible, and I think it's about sustaining those possibilities as much as anything, rather than putting people into boxes too early. (Allan)

Some adult leaders also reflected on the extent to which there are limits to diversity. An adult leader not working in a college reflected: "In some ways, I think the challenge [is] to make the students understand that you cannot be diverse on an infinite number of dimensions."

Here the leader referred specifically to the challenge of accepting students with significant mental health issues. He went on to say:

We chastised ourselves a lot in UWC that we weren't always quite as diverse and as open to different socioeconomic groups as we might be, not least because people weren't always honest about declaring what socioeconomic group they're in. And also, because obviously someone who just had a really lamentable education and home background. I mean, it's difficult for them making a jump right into UWC. (James)

These findings outline the different types of diversity observed by this researcher and discussed by the study participants. It demonstrates that, as indicated in the UWC educational model (UWC., n.d., “UWC educational model and principles” section), diversity is “deliberate”. It is a conscious element of the selection of students by the UWC system. This diversity is primarily based on nationality and socioeconomic status. Other international schools are diverse concerning nationality, though the emphasis on other forms of diversity, such as socioeconomic diversity, is less common. The data identifies that adult system leaders have an essential role in promoting, developing, and enabling deliberate diversity within the UWC colleges.

The importance of diversity

Many participants in the study, when they started to discuss diversity, did so with passion. One adult leader saw it as “a vaccination against racism; vaccination against stereotyping” (Advik). Another teacher fervently spoke about his kayaking expedition:

The groups are always really diverse. The students see that even...whether it be race or male, female, or physically disabled, or whatever, we just have so much in common with each other. Different people show different strengths in this different context. (Jeremy)

This same teacher articulated how socioeconomic diversity influences decision making. In his UWC college, the winter break arrangements were changed to enable the college to fly those students back to their resident countries/territories during off-peak times, rather than the costly peak times. He went on to explain that due to the large number of students on scholarships, he has to think carefully about advertising any event organised by another organisation where there is a cost. He explains to the providers:

Unless you are offering financial support, I'm afraid I cannot advertise this...I often put out a challenge. Can you name any other educational institution on this planet that educates people at this kind of age group that offers as much support as a proportion of its capital and expense? So that diversity I think, that educates a lot of our students whether we talk about it or not. (Jeremy)

In considering why diversity was important, a theme that emerged from the data was the impact that diversity has on conversations and perspectives. This was probably best summarised by a student:

When I compare when I was at home... you usually observe one side, you see how it looks from your perspective...but then when you come to UWC you might start thinking...let's observe the problems from many sides and with other things...what's especially interesting you get challenged and I would say you get very annoyed by someone else's opinions...you just gain this flexibility and you realize that there is

something more than one view and that there's diversity of opinions and things.
(Frederick).

A principal gave an interesting example of how diversity affected a conversation he had with a first-year student on a disciplinary matter involving alcohol. The principal described the conversation:

In the final meeting I had with him just to sort of clarify my expectations going forward, his line was, “Yes, I understood it was a drinking episode.” And I was explaining how important it is that drinking doesn't happen and certainly doesn't happen in the student village [the residential part of the college], and the impact it has on the community that we keep...given that some students, culturally, are deeply insensitive to other students to be drinking around them or being alcohol affected.... This student said to me, “I understand home values.” And I had to slow him down and say, well, you don't, because here's your whole individual responsibility here, the international and intercultural understanding you are applying is very much of Nordic, your Eurocentric viewpoint here on all the other people in the student village and you're not showing that you understand the values. You're saying cosmetically you do but actually in the lower level you don't and that's why this is going to be an enlightening conversation. So we can talk about the impact you're having which you don't recognize on others. (Isaac)

Finally, this reflection, by an adult leader in a college, recognises that it is not diversity alone that influences students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Sometimes we, at UWC, think by throwing together these diverse people, we expect something to happen organically, and I don't think it does....I think that we need to be

a lot more self-conscious about the way that we promote that, and I don't think that happens. I think that you can have an Indian student and a Norwegian student who...because of the social class, or the socio economics background that they come from actually provide very little diversity to each other. (Mankee)

These findings identify that the UWC system sees diversity as necessary, enabling students to develop different perspectives on a topic or issue. The data suggest that diversity alone does not influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. At the same time, UWC system leadership influences students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The diverse student body may help to explain why there are differences in students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, which was identified earlier in this chapter.

Key findings

This subsection identified two key findings about the diverse nature of UWC's student body and whether this influenced the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

- 6.1 Different types of diversity were apparent across UWC. This reflects UWC's educational model (UWC., n.d., "UWC educational model and principles" section), which positions diversity as "deliberate" and an intentional student selection strategy by the UWC system. Other international schools are diverse with respect to nationality, though the emphasis on other forms of diversity, such as socioeconomic status, is less common. The data showed that adult system leaders have an integral role in promoting, developing, and enabling diversity within UWC colleges.
- 6.2 The UWC system sees diversity as important because it enables students to develop different perspectives on a topic or issue. The UWC leadership supports diversity

across the system, influencing how students understand and enact UWC's mission and values. The diversity of the student body may help to explain differences in students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the main findings of this study, utilising the research sub-questions. Within each sub-question, several key themes emerged. These themes form the key findings of each section. These research-based findings were used to construct five main assertions that underpin how UWC leadership affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These assertions form the basis of chapter six.

Chapter 6 – Assertions and discussion

This chapter has two purposes. The first is to outline and discuss five assertions developed from the findings explored in chapter five. The relevant literature frames the discussion of the assertions. The second purpose is to answer the main research question: “How does the leadership of UWC affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values?”

The five assertions are:

Assertion A The UWC mission and values statement provides a mechanism for all the system stakeholders to identify with an international system.

Assertion B A distributed system leadership model is evident across UWC. Within the UWC colleges, the principals, adult leaders, and students are important leaders. In addition to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and UWC International are integral parts of this international school system. These different components form a complex international system and lead to several tensions between system components and actors.

Assertion C There is a broad range of understanding of UWC’s mission and values, which is reflected in the mission and values’ enactment in and beyond the system. The UWC mission and values are ubiquitous in the consciousness of alumni, staff, and students alike.

Assertion D Students understand and enact UWC’s mission and values within the distributed system leadership model. Students engage with multiple stakeholders to develop their understanding and enactment of the mission and values. Within the UWC colleges, the principals, other adult leaders, and students are key to directly influencing students by articulating and role modelling the mission and values. They also act indirectly by developing

and nurturing structures and environments that foster student understanding and enactment. External to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office are essential stakeholders. UWC national committees have a crucial role in informing students' initial understanding of UWC's mission and values. Alumni inspire students to enact these values. UWC International has an essential role in developing system-wide structures for students to engage with the UWC mission and values.

Assertion E Diversity is a deliberate key component in how UWC forms its student populations. UWC students interact with each other within this diverse student population, which results in them broadening their perspectives and horizons. The diverse student population at UWC colleges gives meaning to UWC's mission: "UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future".

The five assertions were derived based on the data-driven findings used to answer the research sub-questions. The assertions serve to pull the findings together to highlight the main outcomes of the research. The relationship between the key findings and assertions is detailed in the following table.

Table 5 - *The relationship between the key findings and assertions*

Research question	Assertions	Key findings
How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?	A	1.1
	B	1.1; 1.2; 1.3; 1.4
	C	2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4
	D	4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4
	E	6.1; 6.2

This chapter will explore each of the five assertions, discussing their features using the available literature. The chapter concludes by assimilating the assertions into a response to

the research question: “How does the leadership of UWC affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values?”

Assertion A The UWC mission and values statement provides a mechanism for all the system stakeholders to identify with an international system.

The UWC mission and values statement permeates the consciousnesses of all the stakeholders who make up the UWC system. The data collected identified that no one in the study was unaware of UWC’s mission and values. All the students, staff working in the UWC colleges, volunteers on the UWC national committees, and personnel working in the UWC International Office had knowledge of UWC’s mission and values. The UWC mission and values are clearly present on the websites of the UWC colleges visited, the UWC International website, and the websites of the three UWC national committees connected to the three UWC colleges visited.

The data from this study ascertained that all the interviewees and focus group participants recognise that they are part of a broader UWC movement. Students, for example, identified not only with the UWC college they joined, but they also saw they were part of the UWC movement. The data in this study also indicated that staff within the UWC colleges ascertained that they are part of a larger entity that goes beyond the UWC college that they work for. Those who volunteer for the UWC national committees and those working in the UWC International Office readily identified as belonging to the UWC movement.

It is important to note how students readily and easily engaged with UWC’s mission and values. In the focus groups, they were prepared to question elements of the mission and to ask questions about how sustainable, for example, a particular activity was. Remarkably, even when students said they could not recite elements of the UWC mission and values, they

then quoted different elements. At the same time, when asked about the mission statement of their previous school, many students could not remember one or identify with it. Clearly, there is a process at work which means students do have knowledge of the UWC mission and values.

All interviewees and focus group participants could pinpoint different elements of UWC's mission and values. For example, discussions on sustainability were forthright with both the student focus groups and the adult leaders. Participants also could explain, though perhaps to a lesser extent, the role that peace played in UWC's mission statement and recognised the values identified in the mission statement. Many identified how powerful UWC's mission statement is in that it is recognised and understood by those who are part of the UWC movement.

The responses from all the adult leaders interviewed and the student discussion in the focus groups demonstrate that those who are a part of the UWC system identify with an internationalist approach to education. The participants identify with the concepts of global peace and citizenship rather than students accessing higher education. Adult leaders, particularly those who had worked for other international schools, could clearly differentiate between other international schools and UWC due to its underlying mission. Indeed, from the semi-structured interviews, there was a sense that UWC adult leaders wanted to continue to develop this internationalist focus. Not one adult leader made reference to the importance of university admissions or IBDP. This would suggest that UWC does not have the tension between ideological "internationalism" and "market-driven" multinationalism, as outlined by Bittencourt and Willetts (2018). The data also suggest that UWC colleges are aligned with the IBO mission statement and focus on international mindedness, supporting the findings of Lineham (2013) and Hacking et al. (2018).

It is clear from the findings that UWC's mission statement provides an identity for all who are part of UWC. Mission statements have a variety of purposes, whether it be for identifying areas for planning and resource allocation (Allen et al., 2018), defining the physical, social, and political contexts (Abelman, 2014), providing a framework for action, promoting collaboration, or incorporating goals for the future (Jones & Crochet, 2007; Manley, 2010). Mission statements are not without criticism. Morpew and Hartley (2006) argue they have little operational consequence and are unrealistic and vague.

Within the UWC system, the findings suggest that the internationalist outlook of UWC is a sufficient focus around which the various stakeholders of UWC can form an identity. It is this broad internationalist position that binds the different UWC stakeholders together. Morpew and Hartley (2006) argue that an organisational mission statement "succeeds when everyone inside and outside the organisation agrees that it is" what it claims to be (p. 458). In this context, UWC stakeholders are cognisant of the internationalist mission of UWC.

Assertion B A distributed system leadership model is evident across UWC. Within the UWC colleges, the principals, adult leaders, and students are important leaders. In addition to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and UWC International are integral parts of this international school system. These different components form a complex international system and lead to several tensions between system components and actors.

The discussion here is divided into two sections. First, there is a discussion of distributed system leadership and how this applies to UWC. Second, the six different components of the UWC distributed system leadership model are individually discussed, namely the principals, adult leaders, UWC national committees, alumni, and UWC International Office. The leadership practices that the different components and actors undertake to influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values are explored in assertion four.

The concept of distributed system leadership

The data demonstrate that the UWC system operates with a distributed system leadership model. The data highlighted different components and actors that impacted students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Within the UWC colleges, three components emerged from the data that influenced students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These were principals, adult leaders, and students. External to UWC colleges, two other components influenced students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These were UWC national committees and the UWC International Office. This international UWC system, with 18 UWC schools and colleges and over 150 UWC national committees, is a complex organisation and perhaps understandably has tensions inherent within it.

There is a lack of literature on the relationship between distributed leadership and system leadership. System leadership literature focuses on examining the role that leaders within a school play externally. Most of the literature on system leadership, for example, focuses on the role of a school principal within the system (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009). Boylan (2016) identifies three components of system leadership: *interschool leadership*, which is leadership exercised beyond a single school; *leadership identity*, which is related to systems thinking; and the *system leadership paradigm*, which is how school leaders influence and advocate for the system as a whole. The research on system leadership puts leaders within a school at the centre and places emphasis on how they interact with the system.

The findings of this study identify another view on system leadership that warrants further attention from researchers. The starting point for this research was how system leadership impacted students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, putting the

student at the centre of the system. This study demonstrates that different constituents within a system impact student outcomes. Principals, adult leaders, and students all have key roles to play within a school. Externally, UWC national committees, the UWC International Office, and alumni also have crucial roles. This demonstrates a distributed system leadership model at work. These six different components are discussed in the next sub-section.

The components of the distributed system leadership model

Six components of the UWC distributed system leadership model have been identified. Principals, adult leaders, and students have been identified as three components within UWC colleges. Three components external to the UWC colleges identified are UWC national committees, the UWC International Office, and alumni. Each component is discussed individually.

Principals.

Predictably, principals were identified as important agents impacting students within their UWC colleges. Adult leaders within UWC colleges, the UWC International Office staff, and leaders based in the UWC national committee system all identified the importance of the principal in shaping a UWC college. This supports the view in the literature that principal leadership might be the single most important factor leading to school improvement (Day et al., 2008).

The data suggest that principals in UWC colleges support a distributed leadership model within their colleges. This is particularly evident when considering how principals encourage student leadership roles within the UWC colleges. It supports the findings of Lavery and Hine (2012) that suggest that principals play an essential role in developing student leadership. They decide what human and financial resources will be allocated to student

leadership and indicate to the school community the value of student leadership. This also confirms the finding that the distribution of leadership is successful if principals support the concept (Harris, 2005; Printy & Liu, 2021).

Exactly how principals impact students understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values is explored in assertion four. The direct and indirect (mediated) principal leadership models (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2010; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012) are used to explore the principals' role.

Adult leaders within the UWC colleges.

It was unsurprising that the data identified that staff within the UWC colleges had an important role in students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Students identified how adult leaders were supporting them directly to understand and enact the UWC mission and values.

For the purposes of this study, the adult leaders were selected by the UWC college principals based on their perception of which adult leaders impacted students. Two principals chose adult leaders who were not teachers; hence, the adult leaders chosen include teachers and support staff. One of the challenges in researching leaders other than the principal is how to define adult leaders or middle leaders. For example, in his study of leaders in Australia and New Zealand, Cranston (2006) included deputy principals as middle leaders. Others have conceptualised deputies as part of the senior leadership group (Brooks & Cavanagh, 2009; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). The current study reflects the challenge of identifying who represents an adult leader in a school. The term "adult leader" was chosen to recognise that both teachers and support staff are part of a UWC college's leadership and to differentiate them from student leaders, which the study identifies as an important constituent.

The findings suggest that adult leaders within the UWC colleges operate within a distributed leadership framework. All the adult leaders interviewed could give concrete examples of how they directly and indirectly impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. These examples included supporting students to run mission-aligned workshops to guide students in CAS activities. The findings build on the work exploring teacher and middle leadership in schools (Bryant, 2019; De Nobile, 2018; Drysdale & Gurr, 2011). How adult leaders impact students is explored in assertion D.

Students.

A key finding from this research was the students' role in distributed leadership within their UWC colleges. Students identified their peers as having both an informal leadership role and a formal leadership function in students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. All principals and adult leaders identified the role that students played in influencing other students. All UWC International staff and most UWC national committee stakeholders specifically mentioned the leadership role that students played within the UWC colleges.

In analysing the role that students play in distributed leadership within a school, Mitra and Kirshner's (2012) student voice typology was utilised. Three distinct areas were identified as pertinent to the UWC college context. First is student voice, whereby students are involved in school decision-making structures. Second is student leadership of students by students. This includes organising and operating student clubs or performing the duty of a school prefect. Third is student leadership, whereby students take action, notably outside of the school. This study adds to the limited literature on the role of students in distributing leadership within schools (Lizzio et al., 2011; Mitra, 2007). This study highlights the informal peer-to-peer

relationships that develop and how they influence student outcomes, which for the current study is students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

UWC national committees.

UWC national committees were identified as an important component in the distributed system leadership model. A key finding was that adult leaders and students within UWC colleges recognised how UWC national committees had a leadership role that impacted students. An interesting element of this system is that the UWC national committee network consists of over 150 voluntary organisations. These voluntary organisations are mainly organised and supported by alumni volunteers. These volunteers have an impact on how students understand and enact UWC's mission and values.

The data revealed that several UWC alumni consider this volunteer role to be a way of giving back to the UWC movement. This giving back was seen by many within the UWC system as an enactment of UWC's mission and values. The alumni saw volunteering as a way to connect with the UWC movement. The literature on volunteerism provides insight into the motivation of UWC alumni's desire to give back. The research of Synder et al. (2011) is most helpful in this regard. They identify three approaches to understanding volunteerism. First, there is volunteerism from a functional perspective, exploring the purposes, needs, and goals that volunteering serves for the individual. Second, there is the role of identity in motivating volunteerism. The third approach is the influence volunteering has on building connections in a community that instigate and sustain volunteerism. For UWC national committee volunteers, the findings suggest that the motivation for volunteering is a combination of functional reasons (i.e. the desire to give back) and connections to a community (i.e. the desire to be connected to the UWC movement).

UWC International.

The UWC International Office was not mentioned specifically by the other constituents of the UWC system as impacting students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. However, during the semi-structured interviews, the three staff members at the UWC International Office demonstrated how they were indirectly shaping students.

The three staff members all commented on the complexity of their roles. They spoke about the complex application process for students and the challenges of managing the different stakeholder groups such as principals, UWC national committees, and alumni. Little research has been carried out on central offices of a system. However, the Crawford et al. (2020) study of district education leaders recognised that a central office role was larger and more complex than that of an individual school's principal. This study highlights some of the complex challenges faced by central offices, which are further amplified due to the international context of the system.

Alumni.

Alumni were identified both by teachers and students for their role in influencing students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

There has been little research on the role that alumni play in schools. A master's study by Ng (2008) on alumni school associations in Hong Kong found that they are basically established as social and fraternal groups for alumni. This study highlights the role leaders can play in schools by inspiring students and being role models. Further research is warranted on alumni's impact on schools and school systems.

Complexity and tensions

It is evident that the UWC system is a complex one. This study identifies at least six components of the UWC system: principals, adult leaders, students, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office. The data suggest that the complexity of the UWC system is based on the interrelationships between these six different components and the international nature of the system, with locations (UWC colleges and UWC national committees) in over 150 countries/territories. The data also suggest that there is a lack of a common understanding of leadership within UWC, which adds to the complexity of the UWC system. The data also indicate that there is tension within the system, which appears to arise from the lack of a shared understanding of leadership and the degree of control the UWC International Office has.

The complexity of the UWC system is demonstrated in three ways: through the interrelationship of its components, its varied international context, and its diverse interpretation of leadership.

Component complexity.

With the six components identified (i.e. principals, adult leaders, students, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office) that contribute to the UWC system, it is hardly surprising that stakeholders in this system identify UWC as complex. A stakeholder from a UWC national committee recognised this complexity, while all staff at the UWC International Office recognised the complexity of working with the different components. Adding to this component complexity is that the UWC national committee network primarily consists of alumni volunteers, in contrast to the paid employees that make

up the rest of the organisation. It is difficult to find literature on the leadership of a system based on both paid employees and volunteers.

International complexity.

With UWC schools and colleges in 18 countries/territories, UWC national committees in more than 150 countries, and coordinating international offices in the (United Kingdom) UK and Germany, UWC is a powerful presence in international education.

The literature on leadership within the international school landscape has identified the challenges of such complexity. Keller (2015) identifies the complexity of duality in two areas: spatial dualities and temporal dualities. Spatial dualities are more prevalent within the international school landscape (e.g. local citizens vs. expatriates). Temporal dualities are relevant not just to schools within the international school landscape but to all schools (e.g. school history vs. pressures for change). Bunnell (2021) also emphasises this complexity in his literature review on the leadership of international schools.

This research identifies a further level of complexity: that UWC is an *international school system*. The different components of the UWC system are located across 150 countries/territories. Adult leaders within the UWC colleges identify contextual or locational factors that affect the leadership of their respective UWC colleges. A staff member at the UWC International Office recognised the need for different leadership approaches within the UWC schools and colleges across the system due to context or location. Undoubtedly, these formal and informal interrelationships across national boundaries are intricate. This area of complexity is worthy of further investigation.

Leadership.

A clear theme that emerged from the data was the lack of a common understanding of what leadership means within UWC. There were many deeply thoughtful and discerning reflections on leadership among the UWC stakeholders, but their definitions of leadership were varied. The literature on leadership suggests that there is no agreed upon definition of leadership (Leithwood, 2003; MacBeath, 2004; Rost, 1991), and this study supports such a conclusion.

Spillane (2006) emphasises the importance of defining leadership. A lack of a common understanding of the definition of leadership appears to exacerbate tensions between the different constituents of the UWC system. A leader at the UWC International Office identified the struggle that the organisation has with whether leadership comes from the schools and colleges, from students, or from the UWC International Office. Though many leaders recognised the relevance of the distributed system leadership model, it appears that there is an insufficient understanding of each constituent's role in UWC's leadership within the system.

Assertion C There is a broad range of understanding of UWC's mission and values, which is reflected in the mission and values' enactment in and beyond the system. The UWC mission and values are ubiquitous in the consciousness of alumni, staff, and students alike.

Broad range of understandings of UWC mission and values

As has already been explained earlier in this chapter, all the stakeholders were aware of UWC's mission and values and engaged with UWC's mission and values statement. however, the stakeholders within the UWC system had a range of interpretations of the meaning of UWC's mission and values. Indeed, even among similar stakeholder groups,

there was no consistency in their perception of the meaning and enactment of UWC's mission and values. For example, the staff within a particular college had different understandings of UWC's mission and values. Students discussed different aspects of UWC's mission and values and brought their own perspectives and interpretations to the focus groups. Though there was no clear interpretation of UWC's mission and values, all participants within this study spoke passionately about them. The pithiness of the UWC statement allows everyone, especially students, to access and attach their own meaning to it. The different interpretations of the statement do not detract from its ability to provide an identity to all those who are a part of the system. This may have important positive implications for other international school systems or international systems not in the educational sector (e.g. global youth organisations).

Broad range understandings of enactment of UWC's mission and values

The different understandings of UWC mission and values have an inevitable impact on interpreting how they are enacted. At the same time, a greater consensus on the broader philosophy in enacting UWC's mission and values appeared within the data. Themes that emerged focused on “making a difference”, “change-maker”, and “changing the world”. The findings demonstrate that UWC's mission statement encourages those who are or were a part of the UWC movement to take action. Participants had a consensus that UWC's mission and values should lead to a focus on personal action.

Adult leaders, whether within or external to the UWC colleges, were able to give a wide range of examples of how they felt they were enacting UWC's mission. This included volunteering for UWC national committees, taking environmentally sustainable actions (e.g. reducing their carbon footprint) or “doing an extra step in being slightly more bolder in terms of freedom of speech” (Jill). Students also were able to give examples of how they felt they

were enacting UWC's mission and values, whether by facilitating a UWC short course or interacting with non-mission aligned individuals to spread the word of UWC.

Omnipresence of UWC mission and values

A strong feature that emerged from the data was the omnipresent nature of UWC's mission and values. Alumni discussed how UWC's mission and values were ever-present once they left the UWC colleges. Alumni also explained how the impact of UWC could be delayed, as they did not often fully comprehend their UWC experience until they entered other environments. Conversely, some adult leaders spoke about the pressure that alumni had in fulfilling UWC's mission and values once they left UWC. The findings suggest that the impact of a UWC education lasts beyond the period in which the students were attending the school.

Assertion D Students understand and enact UWC's mission and values within the distributed system leadership model. Students engage with multiple stakeholders to develop their understanding and enactment of the mission and values. Within the UWC colleges, the principals, other adult leaders, and students are the key to directly influencing students by articulating and modelling the mission and values. They also act indirectly by developing and nurturing the structures and environments that foster student understanding and enactment. External to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office are other essential stakeholders. UWC national committees have a crucial role in informing students' initial understanding of UWC's mission and values. Alumni inspire students to enact these values. UWC International has an essential role in developing system-wide structures for students to engage with UWC's mission and values.

This study examines the role that leadership plays in students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The focus of the literature on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes has tended to focus on student outcomes based on standardised test scores or measures of student engagement. Robinson et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis of 27 studies referenced only four studies that examined the relationship between leadership and non-academic student outcomes. These non-academic outcomes included students' attitudes towards school and engagement with and participation in schooling. More recent studies have included a focus on academic outcomes. For example, Sebastian et al. (2017) considered the role of principal and teacher leadership in student outcomes. Their measurement of student outcomes was based on student performance within the Educational Planning and Assessment System, a series of three standardised tests. Wu et al. (2020) studied the mediated effect of principal leadership on student achievement in science using the 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment.

This study takes a different perspective on student outcomes. Student outcomes in the present inquiry are not based on standardised test scores but on students' understanding and enactment of a school's mission and values. This study takes a distributed system view of leadership and examines how the different constituents of a system contribute to the students' understanding and enactment of the mission and values of the system. Students engage with the various constituents and actors of the UWC system to develop their understanding of UWC's mission and values.

Assertion B previously identified six components of the UWC system that impacted students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Within UWC colleges, three components were identified: principals; adult leaders, and students. External to UWC colleges, three other components were identified: UWC national committees, the UWC

International Office, and alumni. Within the UWC colleges, it was identified that principals and adult leaders directly and indirectly impact student understanding of UWC's mission and values.

Direct influence of leaders on students within UWC colleges

This study identified that principals, adult leaders, and students all directly influenced students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The two direct leadership practices that impacted students, identified by all three stakeholder groups, were *articulation* of UWC's mission and values and *role modelling* UWC's mission and values. Articulation of UWC's mission and values came in various forms. How each of the three stakeholders directly influenced students is now explored in turn.

Principals.

Principals were observed articulating UWC's mission and values in informal discussions in the canteen or by having the students reflect on their performance during a service activity. They explained how they articulated UWC's mission and values in orientation activities, college meetings and in disciplinary matters. Members of UWC International emphasised the importance of a principal "living out those values and modelling them to the students" (James). Principals described role modelling UWC's mission and values through "selfless leadership" (Isaac) and were observed leading students during service activities.

The literature on principal leadership impacting student outcomes features three models: direct, indirect (mediated), and moderated leadership (Pitner, 1988; Hallinger & Heck, 1998). The direct effects model assumes that principalship is the direct driver for school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012). The mediated effect model identifies how principals indirectly shape a variety of school organisational features

and processes that subsequently affect student learning outcomes (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). The moderated model effect is based on contingency theory (Hallinger, 2003), which argues that principal effects occur in a more contextualised way (Pitner, 1988). In other words, the school contextual characteristics affect the relationship (direct or indirect) between principal leadership and student achievement. Research on the principal effect on student outcomes has tended to focus on the mediated or indirect effect of principalship (Hallinger & Heck, 1998).

This study identifies that principals do have a direct influence on student outcomes through articulation and role modelling UWC's mission and values. Critics of the direct effect model argue that this model reveals little about how principal leadership operates in a school and that the scholars adopting this model are unable to produce sound evidence (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). Despite criticism, the supporters claim that the direct effect model of principal leadership should not be abandoned and merits further investigation. The current study suggests that principals have a significant direct influence on student outcomes. This is an important finding. It may perhaps be a reflection of the emphasis on non-academic student outcomes in UWC schools. Further research would be warranted on the principals' impact on non-academic student outcomes.

Adult leaders.

Adult leaders gave several examples of how they articulated and role modelled UWC's mission and values. Adult leaders explained their role in discussing sustainability matters with students and conversing with students during lessons focused on UWC's mission and values. Adult leaders were conscious of how they role modelled UWC's mission and values through personally undertaking environmentally sustainable practices and sharing this with the student body.

The literature on adult leaders' impact in schools focuses on middle leaders or teacher leaders' roles. Drysdale and Gurr (Drysdale & Gurr, 2011; Gurr, 2015; Gurr & Drysdale, 2013) have developed a framework for analysing school leadership with a particular focus on the role that middle leaders play within this framework. The findings from the current study indicated that adult leaders had a direct impact on students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The direct effects of articulation and role modelling of UWC's mission and values satisfy Dimension L1 of teaching and learning in their model (Gurr & Drysdale, 2013). The practices of articulating and modelling UWC's mission and values are part of adult leaders' teaching and fostering of UWC's mission and values.

Students.

A key finding of this research was the leadership roles that students played in the UWC colleges and how they influenced fellow students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. There is, therefore, a distributed leadership model involving students in UWC colleges. As a result, this study supports the work of Mitra (2007) and Lizzio et al. (2011), who identify leadership by students as an integral part of an authentic distributed conception of school leadership. This study used Mitra and Kirshner's (2012) student voice typology and the identified framework of student voice, student leadership, and student action.

Student voice was important in all three of the UWC colleges visited. It was evident that students were actively involved in the formal leadership structures of the colleges, as well as in more informal structures. This included being on the school board, having a formal student consultative committee, and having student representatives on different staff committees. With students involved in different levels of hierarchy within the UWC colleges, they can be part of the decision-making processes and hear adult leaders articulating different aspects of

UWC's mission and values. It also allows the students themselves to question different aspects of the workings of their school. This supplements the findings of Lyons et al. (2020) regarding how student voice initiatives can positively impact students and schools.

Leadership of students by students was another key feature within the UWC colleges. This type of student leadership tended to focus on mission-aligned activities. Many examples of student leadership were given, including Project Weeks, UWC Day activities, or extra-curricular undertakings linked to UWC's mission. The research identified that there was a culture or environment of actively encouraging this, particularly by the adults within the colleges. There were many cases of staff being prepared to be the "guide on the side", whether it was by encouraging students to lead workshops on sustainability or supporting students to organise Project Week activities. This supports similar findings on student leadership (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Hart, 1992) that identify the value of an adult mentor.

Student leadership that involved action taken outside of school was another feature of UWC colleges. Adult leaders within UWC colleges noted that students engaged in social media campaigns to "stop genocide now" or "stop climate change now" (Sebastian), while a principal identified how students joined Fridays for Future (Tristan). However, some adult leaders were critical of this engagement as being "maximum visibility for minimum impact" (Sebastian). The study demonstrates that students are supported to take action outside of the UWC colleges.

The findings also demonstrated the role played by informal relationships between students. Students commented on their discussions with roommates on different aspects of UWC's mission and values and how older students role modelled different aspects of the mission and values through actions they took on campus. Spillane (2006; 2004; Spillane et al., 2001) emphasises the importance of informal leadership in a school. Pitts and Spillane (2009)

describe the use of social network analysis to collect data to understand the structure of relationships between school members. The findings from the current study illustrate that the informal leadership arrangements within a student body are an important consideration.

Indirect influence within UWC colleges

The findings demonstrate that principals and adult leaders not only directly influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, but they also affect students indirectly. There are two main ways this is done, first, through establishing and cultivating structures that allow students to understand and enact UWC's mission and values and, second, by creating and nurturing an environment within the UWC college that allows students to explore and enact them.

Organisational structures.

The findings demonstrated that principals and adult leaders play key roles in developing, promoting, and supporting structures within UWC colleges that develop students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Examples of this were Project Week activities, the CAS programme, and student leadership opportunities.

All the UWC colleges visited organised Project Week activities. The organisation of Project Week was supported by the principals and adult leaders of the respective UWC colleges, with students undertaking the leadership of the activities. The CAS programme, an inherent feature of the IBDP, focuses on activities aligned to UWC's mission. The study identified activities based on humanitarian, social justice, service-learning, and environmental projects. The student engagement in these programmes was fostered and encouraged by principals and adult leaders within the UWC colleges. The research revealed that within UWC colleges,

student leadership opportunities were rich and diverse. These student leadership activities were advocated for and promoted by principals and adult leaders within the UWC colleges.

Environment.

Two environmental features were identified as significant in impacting students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, namely the low power distance between teachers and students and the creation of space to articulate and enact UWC's mission and values.

When visiting all three UWC colleges, the low power distance between students and staff was very evident. Students referred to teachers by their first names, and teachers opened their homes to students for social activities or house-parent meetings. Students, adult leaders, and principals all identified this low power distance between students and staff.

The creation of space for the articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values was also a strong feature that participants in this study expounded on. Principals, adult leaders, and students commented on this feature, with an adult leader summarising this in the following way: "we create deliberate moments and events for them [students]" (Advik). This recognition of the creation of space for articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values was also identified by UWC International staff.

Principals and adult leaders indirectly affecting students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The three structural features of Project Week activities, the CAS programme, and student leadership opportunities, together with the environmental features of low power distance between teacher and student, and the creation of space for the articulation and enactment of

UWC's mission and values were all identified as important aspects of the colleges by both principals and adult leaders. This suggests that principals and adult leaders support and enable the structures and environment identified from the findings.

Hallinger and Heck (1996; 1998) proposed a mediated model for how principals indirectly shape school organisational features and processes that subsequently affect student learning outcomes. There is a growing number of studies that support this mediated effect model of principalship (Leithwood et al., 2010; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012). Hallinger and Heck (1996) identified mediators such as school goal-setting processes and goal consensus, school culture and climate, decision-making processes, programmes and instruction, resources, teachers' expectations, commitment and attitudes toward change, instructional organisation, sense of community, and an orderly environment. Leithwood et al. (2010) identified four distinct "paths" along which leadership's influence flows to improve student learning: rational, emotional, organisational, and family paths. Empirical evidence also identifies the mediating role that adult leaders have on student outcomes. The conceptual model of Gurr and Drysdale (2013) outlined the role that middle leaders played in building school capacity (i.e. organisational change, direction setting and capacity building) to impact student outcomes.

This study, therefore, identifies specific indirect or mediated approaches taken by principals and adult leaders that affect student understanding of UWC's mission and values. Principals and adult leaders support organisational structures such as student dormitory configuration, mission-aligned CAS activities, and student leadership. Principals and adult leaders also foster an environment with a low power distance between teachers and students and the creation of space for the articulation and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The influence by external leaders of UWC college on students

This study identified three external constituents – the UWC national committees, the UWC International Office, and alumni – that all affect students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values. Each of these constituents is now examined in turn.

UWC national committees.

UWC national committees have a crucial role in informing students’ initial understanding of UWC’s mission and values. The application and selection process for admission to UWC colleges strongly feature UWC’s mission and values. Students are aware of them when they consider applying for entry to a UWC college, and the mission and values are prominently displayed on relevant websites. Additionally, the application forms ask questions related to UWC’s mission and values. The selection process, which is often not limited to an interview, focuses on UWC’s mission and values, and the selection criteria specifically include UWC’s mission and values.

Once selected, induction activities are arranged before the students arrive at the UWC colleges, where UWC’s mission and values are reinforced and where examples how they are enacted are often given. The study also found examples of the UWC national committees running activities during the summer when students returned home between Year 1 and Year 2.

The role that UWC national committees play in influencing students’ understanding and enactment of UWC’s mission and values was not just identified by representatives from the UWC national committees. Adult leaders within the UWC colleges also recognised the leadership role UWC national committees play and, in many instances, applauded their work. In particular, there was recognition that without the UWC national committee framework, the

diversity of the student population, particularly in terms of nationality, would not be so pronounced. Students also recognised the importance of the UWC national committees' application and selection process in relation to the students' early understanding of UWC's mission and values.

UWC International Office.

The UWC International Office has an essential role in developing system-wide structures through which students can engage with UWC's mission and values. The UWC International Office indirectly influences students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Staff within the UWC International Office were able to give examples of how they impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. One staff member (Selina) explained how the introduction of UWC Day had a positive impact on mission-aligned activities within the UWC schools and colleges. UWC International Office supports the volunteer UWC national committee network. This network, as explained earlier, has an important role in students' initial understanding of UWC's mission and values.

As mentioned earlier, little research has been carried out on the role of the central offices of an educational system. Crawford et al. (2020) highlight the complexity of the role of a district education leader in the UK. As international school systems are expanding, and central offices are emerging, their role is worthy of increased attention.

Alumni.

Alumni inspire students to enact UWC's mission and values. Though not specifically identified in the conceptual model that was developed before the data were collected, the data identified the inspirational impact of alumni in promoting students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Examples were given by college staff of alumni

giving talks about work they were doing that demonstrated the enactment of UWC’s mission and values. Students also referenced how alumni were an inspiration to them in enacting UWC’s mission and values in the future. The importance of alumni giving back to the UWC movement through their work with UWC national committees was recognised by UWC International Office staff and UWC college staff.

As already indicated, there appears to be no literature on the leadership role that alumni can play in educational systems. Therefore, the inspirational role that alumni can play within schools is also an area worthy of investigation.

Assertion E Diversity is a deliberate key component in how UWC forms its student populations. UWC students interact with each other within this diverse student population, and this results in them having broader perspectives on many topics. The diverse student population at UWC colleges gives meaning to UWC’s mission: ‘UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future’ (UWC, n.d., “What is UWC?” section).

The data collected showed the importance of diversity to UWC. Participants spoke enthusiastically about this topic, recognising the different features of diversity within UWC. The evidence collected showed a strong commitment to diversity in terms of nationality and socioeconomic status. When visiting the UWC colleges, this diversity was evident within the student populations.

The UWC International documentation on diversity is clearly articulated. The UWC mission statement states, “UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future” (UWC, n.d., “What is UWC?” section).

The UWC educational model is outlined as follows:

The core of the UWC experience lies within a diverse community of learners who share a common commitment to the mission and values of the UWC movement. Diversity is supported by UWC national committees in over 140 countries which interview and select students who have made the most of the opportunities they have had and who exhibit qualities that fit with the UWC mission and values. Students are then chosen to join school communities to ensure cultural, racial, gender, socioeconomic, and language diversity in pursuit of a common mission. In this way, each campus reflects a global diversity that enhances connection, sharing, debate, and community living; and, thus encourages opportunities for growth, empathy, and understanding. (UWC., n.d., “UWC educational model and principles” section)

The findings from the current study demonstrated the crucial role of UWC national committees in building a student populations of diverse nationalities. In the three UWC colleges visited, there were at least 80 different student nationalities. Impressively, the data also showed how UWC national committees also carefully consider diversity within their own country/territory.

Financial needs-based scholarships promote socioeconomic diversity. Indeed, one of the UWC colleges visited was able to offer 100% need-blind scholarships, meaning it could admit any student irrespective of their financial need. There was evidence from the students who participated in the focus group discussions that there were students who, without the scholarship, would not have been able to afford an education in a fee-payer school. Alumni interviewed who received financial-based scholarships noted that this was one of the reasons for them to give back to the UWC movement.

In one of the UWC colleges visited, an extra dimension of diversity, namely disability, was valued. The Survivors of Conflict Programme undoubtedly benefitted the students who were

part of the programme and positively impacted non-disabled students and staff in terms of their perceptions and attitudes regarding the abilities of those students who were disabled.

Undoubtedly, this diversity did impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Within the student focus group discussion, it was clear that different perspectives on the topics discussed came from the participants' different backgrounds, whether in terms of nationality or socioeconomic status. Students identified that being part of a diverse school community exposed them to different perspectives in the classroom, during extra-curricular activities, in the residence, and in informal settings. Principals and adult leaders also reflected on the different perspectives that emerged on various topics within UWC colleges.

Much of the literature on international schools sees the range of nationalities in the student body as an important or even an essential element. Hayden and Thompson (2000) assert that “diversity is not only an inherent feature of international schools, but is also a crucial aspect of the process of international education” (p. 5). Sylvester (1998) has argued that a minimum of 30–40 student nationalities are needed for a school to be genuinely international. All three UWC colleges visited had over 80 different nationalities on campus.

The international school literature also recognises the growth in the number of local students accessing international schools (Doherty, 2013; Langford et al., 2002; Ng, 2012). Local students were an essential element of the three schools visited and were represented in all three of the focus group discussions. Third culture kids (Useem & Downine, 1976) or global nomads (Reeser & McCaig, 1992) are also another group of students that receive international schooling. These students were represented in focus group discussions, and they are an inherent feature of the diversity of UWC colleges.

The evidence from this study, from both the conversations with the adult leaders and students and through observation and documentary evidence, is that UWC strives for socioeconomic diversity. As already explained, one of the UWC colleges visited finances need-blind scholarships to all students selected. This is a distinctive feature of the UWC international school system, setting it apart from the burgeoning for-profit international school systems that are identified by Kim (2019).

In the context of UWC, the data suggest that diversity leads to different perspectives emerging within the UWC system. For example, this diversity may help explain why there are different interpretations of both the meaning of UWC's mission and values and how UWC's mission and values are enacted. This diversity may also explain the different conceptualisations of leadership within the UWC system.

How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

This sub-section answers the research question "How does leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?" This response is outlined in a diagrammatic form and supplemented with a textual explanation.

Figure 3 - Diagrammatic representation of how the leadership of UWC affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values

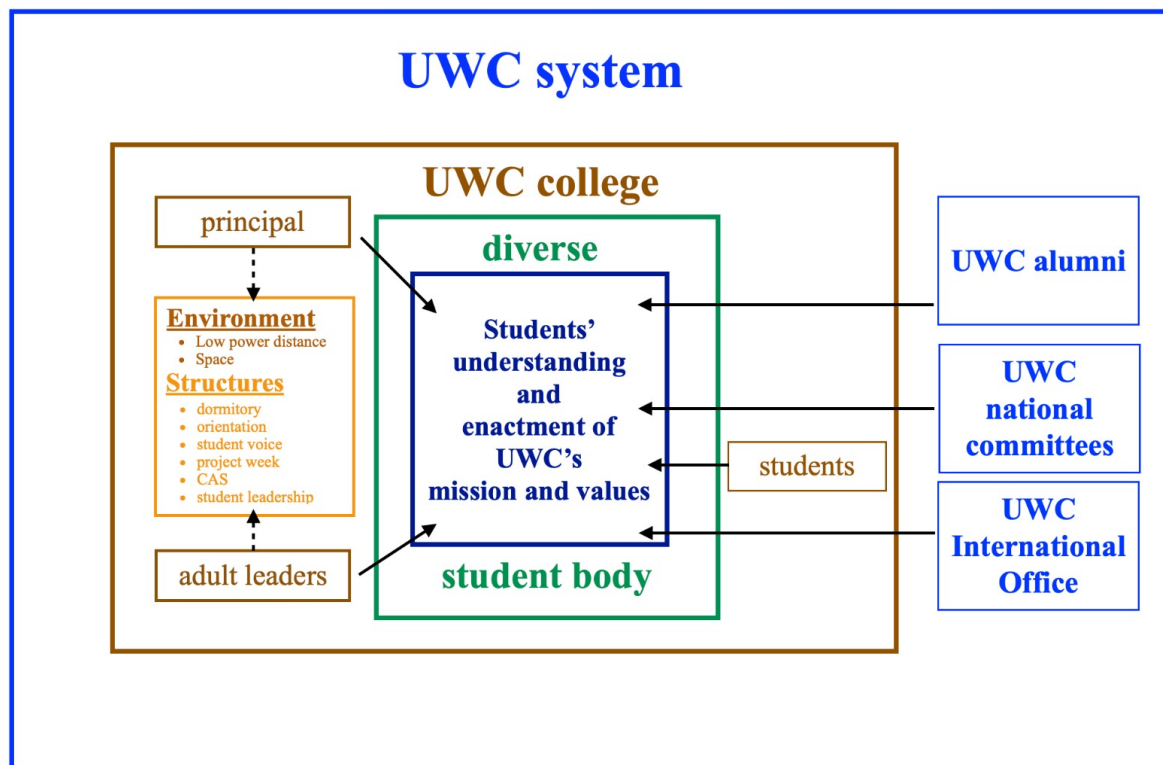


Figure 3 shows how the leadership of UWC affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

An individual student is at the centre of the diagram. This is the student understanding and enacting UWC's mission and values.

The student is a member of a diverse student community within a UWC college. The student community is diverse with respect to nationality and socioeconomic status. The individual student interacts with this diverse student body, impacting their understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

Within the UWC College there are three main actors who *directly* influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission, namely principals, adult leaders, and

students. This is achieved through articulation of UWC's mission and values and role modelling of the UWC mission and values.

Principals, in particular, and other adult leaders also influence students understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values *indirectly*. This is achieved by creating structures and environments that facilitate students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. The structures they develop and nurture include the dormitory set-up, orientation activities, student voice, Project Week, CAS, and student leadership. The environment they foster features a low power distance between teachers and students, giving students space to understand and enact the UWC's mission.

External to the UWC colleges, there are three main actors – namely UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office – that influence students' understanding and enactment of the UWC mission and values. Primarily through the student selection process, UWC national committees' influence enables students to develop an initial understanding of the UWC's mission and values. Alumni influence students by inspiring them to enact UWC's mission and values. The UWC International Office principally influences students by developing system-wide structures to support the enactment of the UWC mission.

Conclusion

This study identifies the different components and actors of the system that impact students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. It identifies a complex, interrelated system, both internal and external to the UWC colleges, which affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. This study puts the student at the centre of the system and identifies the different stakeholders both within and external to

UWC that influence student outcomes. The student outcomes in this research were their understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The final chapter will summarise the current study by outlining the methodology employed and providing a summary of the responses to the research question. It will also explore the major contributions this research makes, examine its implications for the knowledge base of various topics, and identify possible areas for future research.

Chapter 7 - Conclusions and implications

This final chapter has two purposes. The first is to review the findings related to the specific research questions posed and the procedures used in the context of UWC. The second is to consider the relevance of these findings to broader questions relating to other international school systems and systems leadership in general.

The chapter consists of six sections. The first two sections summarise the research process and recount the major findings. Section three explores the study's main contributions to empirical research. Section four explores the implications of the present findings in a number of other settings. Section five considers possible future areas for research, including distributed system leadership, international school systems, and UWC. The final section reflects on the limitations of this study and identifies some of its theoretical and methodological constraints.

An overview of the research process

The purpose of the study was to understand the role that leadership played in UWC students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. It aimed to unveil the constituents and actors in the UWC system and examine how they influenced students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values.

The study was initiated to better understand how the UWC system influences students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission. Given that UWC is a mission-focused educational system, the investigation was designed to uncover the different components and actors within the system and how they impact student understanding and enactment of the mission.

The investigation was guided by the following set of research sub-questions:

1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?
2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?
3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?
4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values?
5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?
6. Does the diverse nature of the UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's vision and mission?

A conceptual framework that put the UWC students at the centre of the system was developed, with the student outcome being their understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Different components of the system that warranted investigation were identified in the conceptual framework (Figure 1).

The study adopted a qualitative methodology based on O'Donoghue's (2018) explanation of symbolic interactionism. The framework was chosen as it was considered congruent with the purpose of this study, specifically the perspectives of students and adult leaders and the way students understand and enact UWC's mission and values. A grounded theory approach was adopted based on the theoretical framework of Glaser and Strauss (1967).

The two major data collection methods employed were focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The focus group discussions were conducted on campus with the students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on campus with adult leaders and

remotely with UWC external adult leaders. Three UWC campuses were visited, and observational data were collected. Documents, including information from the internet, were also collected.

All the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using MAXQDA coding software. Three different stages of analysis were applied based on the following schema: *initial*, *intermediate*, and *advanced* coding (Birks et al., 2006). Eighteen advanced codes were developed with observational and documentary evidence employed as appropriate. The advanced codes were used to develop the findings based on the six research sub-questions. From these findings, five assertions were developed that formed the basis of a succinct answer the research question: “How does the leadership of UWC influence how students understand and enact UWC’s mission and values?”

Summary of the major research findings

Five assertions were developed from the findings. These assertions were intended to be a way of summarising and synthesising the findings from the data. The assertions were as follows.

Assertion A: The UWC mission and values statement provides a mechanism for all system stakeholders to identify with an international system.

Assertion B: A distributed system leadership model is evident across UWC. Within the UWC colleges the principals, adult leaders, and students are important leaders. In addition to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni and UWC International are integral parts of this international school system. These different components form a complex international system and lead to several tensions between system components and actors.

Assertion C: There is a broad range of understanding of UWC's mission and values, which is reflected in the mission and values' enactment in and beyond the system. The UWC mission and values are ubiquitous in the consciousness of alumni, staff, and students alike.

Assertion D: Students understand and enact UWC's mission and values within the distributed system leadership model. Students engage with multiple stakeholders to develop their understanding and enactment of the mission and values. Within the UWC colleges, the principals, other adult leaders, and students are the key to directly influencing students by articulating and role modelling the mission and values. They also act indirectly by developing and nurturing the structures and environments that foster student understanding and enactment. External to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office are essential stakeholders. UWC national committees have a crucial role in informing students' initial understanding of the UWC mission and values. Alumni inspire students to enact these values. UWC International has an essential role in developing system-wide structures for students to engage with the UWC mission and values.

Assertion E: Diversity is a deliberate key component in how UWC forms its student populations. UWC students interact with each other within this diverse student population, which results in them broadening their perspectives and horizons. The diverse student population at UWC colleges gives meaning to UWC's mission: "UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future".

From these five assertions an overall description was developed of how the leadership of UWC influences how students understand and enact the UWC mission and values.

The research question focused on how students understand and enact UWC's mission and values and the role that leadership plays in this. Each individual student is a member of a diverse student community within a UWC college. Every student community is diverse with respect to nationality and socioeconomic status. Individual students interact with this diverse student body, thus impacting their understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Students understand and enact the UWC mission and values through a distributed system leadership model. They are influenced *both* by constituents or actors within their respective UWC college and by constituents or actors external to the UWC colleges.

Within UWC colleges, there are three main types of actors directly influencing students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission. These actors are principals, adult leaders, and students (peer to peer). This influence flows through the articulation of UWC's mission and values and subsequent role modelling. Principals, in particular, and adult leaders indirectly influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values by creating organisational structures and environments that facilitate students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Adult leaders develop and nurture the organisational structures of the college through dormitory set-up, orientation activities, student voice, Project Week, CAS, and student leadership. The environments they foster result in a low power distance between teachers and students and gives students the space to understand and enact UWC's mission.

External to the UWC colleges, there are three main constituents that influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values, namely UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office. UWC national committees influence students primarily through the student selection process by enabling students to develop an initial understanding of UWC's mission and values. Alumni influence students by inspiring

them to enact UWC's mission and values. The UWC International Office influences students mainly by developing system-wide structures to support the enactment of the UWC mission.

As explained in chapter six, the system of distributed leadership, and how it affects students' understanding and enactment of UWC's values, has been captured diagrammatically in figure 3.

Major contributions of the research

System leadership

This study makes a significant contribution to research on system leadership by reframing the approach to studying system leadership and by including the leadership roles played by the voluntary sector within an educational system.

Reframing the approach to studying system leadership.

The literature on system leadership has tended to focus on how a principal or other leader extends their leadership role beyond their immediate school (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009).

This study takes a different perspective on the concept of system leadership. It puts students at the heart of the system and then examines how the system's leadership affects them. It takes a distributed approach to the leadership of the system. The research examined the constituents and actors of a system that influence the students, whether these were within or external to a specific college. External to the UWC colleges, UWC national committees, alumni, and the UWC International Office affected students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values. Within UWC colleges, principals, adult leaders, and students also influence students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission. It is the

combination of the leaders within the UWC colleges and the constituents external to the UWC college that influences students.

The leadership role of voluntary groups within a system.

From a distributed leadership system perspective, the study highlights the role that volunteer organisations can play within a system of paid employees. The paid adult leaders within UWC consist of UWC college staff and UWC International employees. UWC system volunteers consist mainly of UWC national committee personnel, primarily alumni, who manage and lead the UWC national committee network. This study examined the relationships between a system's paid and voluntary sectors and how they influence students. It demonstrates that the voluntary sector can have an important leadership role within the UWC system. The UWC national committees affect students' understanding of UWC's mission and values, notably before joining a UWC college. There has been little research on the relationship between paid employees and supportive volunteers in an academic context. One study by Boezemann and Ellemers (2009) on a charitable volunteer organisation examined the satisfaction of intrinsic needs and the job attitudes of volunteers versus employees working in a charitable volunteer organisation. However, it did not examine the leadership roles of the volunteers and paid employees.

Leadership and student outcomes.

This inquiry examines how leadership impacts non-academic student outcomes. There is a lack of literature on the impact of leadership on non-academic outcomes. Most research is based on standardised test scores. Robinson et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis of 27 studies identified only four studies that examined the relationship between leadership and non-academic student outcomes. These included students' attitudes towards school and their

engagement with and participation in schooling. For example, in Silins et al.'s (2002) non-academic student outcomes included student absences and participation in extracurricular activities.

This enquiry focused on how leadership affects non-academic student outcomes. It examined the relationship between leadership and how students understand and enact UWC's mission and values. It takes a distributed system leadership approach in examining how leadership is affecting student outcomes.

Distributed leadership within schools – the role of students

This study employed a distributed leadership perspective to analyse how the leadership of a system impacted student outcomes. When examining the different stakeholders that affected student outcomes within a school, a clear finding was the role that students played in influencing fellow students.

The role that students play in distributed leadership within a school is under-researched. Mitra (2007) was one of the first researchers to identify the relationship between student leadership and distributed leadership, particularly the role that student voice plays in broadening the notion of distributed leadership to include young people's decision making. Lizzio et al. (2011) argue that the leadership role that students play is an integral part of an authentic distributed form of school leadership. Lavery and Hine (2012) argued that principals play a dynamic role as catalysts for developing student leadership. They decide what human and financial resources are allocated to student leadership and indicate to the school community the value of student leadership through their leadership practices.

This study used Mitra and Kirshner's (2012) student voice framework to understand UWC students' influence on fellow students. Three distinct areas were identified. The first was

student voice, whereby students were involved in the decision-making structures within UWC colleges, such as having a formal student consultative committee. The second was student leadership of students by students, which included students leading Project Week and extra-curricular activities. The third was student leadership, whereby students took actions outside their UWC colleges, such as attending climate action protests. The study also recognised the informal nature of student leadership, such as conversations with roommates in the dormitories.

International school systems

This study makes a significant contribution to the literature base on international school systems. Literature on the international school landscape has tended to focus on the categorisation of international schools. Studies on international school leadership have primarily focused on the leadership of an individual international school. This study examines the leadership of an international school system. It examines both leadership within and external to the UWC colleges that constitute the UWC system.

For the purposes of this study, an international school system was identified as a collection of schools formed into or by a system that shares a common mission statement, curriculum, model, and governance structure. The current study classified international school systems into three types. First, there are TECs (e.g. Nord Anglia, Cognita, and GEMS Education) (Kim, 2019), which operate as for-profit school groups. Second are the branded schools (Bunnell, 2008), typically originating from British private schools (e.g. Harrow and Dulwich College). Third, there are the not-for-profit international school systems. UWC is categorised within the not-for-profit grouping. This research has implications for all three groups of international school systems.

Implications

Implications for leaders of educational systems

International school systems typically have a central office that coordinates and manages its schools. This study shows that those in the central leadership positions of a system need to recognise the complexities of a system and how different components influence students. It illustrates that both actors within schools and different components external to the school impact students. Understanding the relationships between a school and other system constituents is essential for leaders in a central office role.

UWC national committees, which are voluntary organisations, inform students' initial understanding of UWC's mission and values. This demonstrates the leadership role that voluntary organisations can have in a system, particularly when they include a mixture of paid employees and volunteers. Many international youth organisation systems (e.g. the Scout Association) have a significant volunteer base. Therefore, this study has implications for administrators of such central offices in considering the voluntary group's leadership role and the relationship between paid employees and volunteers.

Implications for school leaders operating within a distributed leadership educational setting

Typically studies of distributed leadership identify principals and teachers' roles (Jambo & Hongde, 2020; Printy & Liu, 2021; Tashi, 2015). This study demonstrates that students also play a critical role in distributed leadership. The research highlights the role that students play as leaders in formal and informal settings, such as leading student CAS projects or informally mentoring younger students. This has important implications for adult leaders within schools and how they work with students. In this study, adult leaders in UWC colleges identified how

students initiated projects and ran peer workshops, with the teacher guiding from the side. It shows the importance of adult leaders recognising the leadership role students can play both formally and informally.

This study also has implications in terms of the influence that support staff in schools can have on non-academic student outcomes. In this inquiry, two of the adult leaders interviewed were support staff. Both provided evidence of how they influenced students. They explained how they directly affected students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values by role modelling and articulating UWC's mission and values. This suggests that further research on the role support staff play in influencing student outcomes may be useful.

Implications for administrators developing mission statements for an organisation or system

This study places students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values as the student outcome. Exploring the role that a mission statement plays in a system has important implications for administrators of schools, educational systems, particularly international school systems, youth organisations, and transnational charity operations.

This research demonstrates that UWC's mission statement provides an identity for all members of the organisation. Mission statements are not without their critics. Some claim that they have little operational consequence (Morphew & Hartley, 2006) or are unrealistic and vague (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Rozycki, 2004). However, in this study, everyone who was interviewed, notably students, was able to identify with UWC's mission and values statement. The study suggests that it is the philosophy driving the mission statement that influences stakeholders and their engagement with a mission.

These findings have important implications for other educational organisations that wish to develop mission statements. School leaders might give further consideration to how students relate to their schools' mission statement. The findings from the student focus groups reveal that most of the students could not remember the mission statement of the school they attended before they joined UWC. Leaders within schools can consider how they promote the mission and values of the school and the role that distributed leadership plays in this. This study shows how within a school, principals, teachers, and students can articulate and role model the school's mission and values. Within international school systems, school and central office leaders need to carefully consider how students and staff relate to the mission and values of their system. The finding from this study is that students, staff, and volunteers do identify with the mission and values of UWC.

Implications for UWC

Developing a common understanding of leadership across the UWC system.

The data collected from the UWC students and adult leaders showed no common understanding of the concept of leadership across UWC. The data collected suggest that this lack of a common understanding results in some tension within the UWC system around the meaning and shape of leadership. Greater clarity about leadership roles may help reduce some of this tension. As UWC is a complex educational system, administrators may consider how they can develop a more precise understanding of the concept of leadership across the UWC system. This may be related to the governance of UWC International and how the different constituents relate to the whole system.

Articulating the importance of diversity.

The current study demonstrated that all members of the UWC movement recognised the importance of diversity. All adults and students interviewed spoke with enthusiasm about diversity, articulating the different forms of diversity within the UWC movement, notably nationality and socioeconomic diversity. At the same time, the study revealed that the UWC movement does not articulate why diversity is a crucial component. For example, the UWC educational model (UWC., n.d., “UWC educational model and principles” section) identifies a “deliberately diverse, engaged and motivated community in pursuit of the UWC mission” at its centre. However, it does not articulate why this is important. This study suggests some of the reasons for its importance. These include the diverse opinions expressed by students and providing access to students who would otherwise not have access to international education. UWC needs to collectively decide why diversity is so important so they can make this explicit to stakeholders.

Possible areas for future research

Future research on the impact that leadership has on non-academic student outcomes

This study highlights the need for more research on the relationship between leadership and non-academic student outcomes. It focused on the impact that leadership within UWC has on student understanding and enactment of the mission and values. As identified earlier in this chapter, there is a lack of literature on the relationship between leadership and student outcomes that is not based on standardised tests scores or measures of student engagement (Robinson et al., 2008).

This study focused on the impact that leadership has on student understanding of UWC’s mission and values. More research is required to measure students’ accomplishment of school missions and the impact that leadership has on student understanding and enactment of

mission statements. The international school landscape would provide a good basis for this research. Hayden's (2012) analysis of international school mission statements identified *internationalism* as the characteristic that emerged most frequently. How students understand and enact internationalism is worthy of further investigation.

This suggests that further research on the impact that leadership has on student values, whether within schools or across an educational system, is needed.

Future research on international school systems

The study analysed an international school system. As outlined earlier, for this study, international school systems were categorised into three types: TECs, branded schools, and not-for-profit international school systems. UWC falls within the not-for-profit category. As shown, there has been considerable growth in the number of for-profit international school systems, whether TECs or branded schools.

This research illustrated that UWC's mission and values statement gave different stakeholders a close affiliation to the system. With the growth of branded schools, the relationship between the mission statement of an original school (e.g. public school in the UK) and how this mission is delivered in its satellite schools (e.g. in Hong Kong) is an area of worthy investigation. How different stakeholders within an international school system, particularly students, relate to the system's mission also warrants further study.

Future research on UWC

This study is the first substantial analysis of the UWC system, including the UWC national committees, since the organisation was established. Other studies have tended to focus on individual UWC schools and colleges (Rawlings, 1999; Tsumagari, 2010).

One particular feature that emerged from the study was the tension between the different constituents of the UWC system. The research suggested that much of the tension stemmed from the lack of a shared understanding of leadership. Further research on these system tensions would be valuable to further understand the leadership responsibilities that different constituents and actors have in terms of the betterment of students. In conducting this research, it was found that the relationship between the governance of an individual UWC school or college and UWC International would merit exploration.

Another area for further research on the UWC system would be an examination of the informal distributed leadership of the system. The research reported here focused on identifiable stakeholders within the UWC system such as principals, UWC national committees, or students. Further research on the informal relationships between different system constituents might show to what extent all those who identify with the UWC movement have a distributed leadership role in relation to students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission.

Future research on distributed system leadership

This study highlights the need to revisit the research perspective of the leadership of systems. Until now, the literature on system leadership has focused on leaders in schools, notably principals, and how and why they undertake system leadership roles (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009). Other studies have begun to research the role of middle leaders and teachers in system leadership. For example, Bryant (2019) identifies how teachers take system leadership roles within educational reform.

This study of system leadership takes a fundamentally different approach to the literature examined. It employs a distributed system leadership perspective. It places the student at the nucleus of the system and then considers the different components and actors of the system and how they impact students. This suggests that researchers of educational systems should consider putting students at the heart of the system they are investigating. From this conceptual standpoint, researchers can then develop a methodological approach to analysing how the different components of the system affect a student. This approach allows researchers to consider how leaders within a school and external to a school impact a student.

Limitations

Theoretical limitations

A theoretical limitation of this study is the applicability of the conceptual model to other studies. Conceptual frameworks are developed at the beginning of a study and evolve as the study progresses (Miles et al., 2014). No conceptual framework was readily available for use or adaptation for this study. There were two main reasons for this. First, there is a lack of literature on UWC, particularly on the UWC system, meaning that the contextual underpinnings of the model had to be based on observation. This observation was based on the researcher's knowledge of the system gained as principal of Li Po Chun UWC in Hong Kong. Second, the theoretical underpinning of system leadership used featured a fundamentally different approach than other analyses of the leadership of systems. System leadership models have tended to focus on leaders' roles both in schools and external to their schools (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 2011; Higham et al., 2009). Though the conceptual model is unique to UWC, the concept of putting the student at the centre of the system could apply to other studies.

Methodological limitations

One methodological limitation was the role of the researcher in this study. Hellowell (2006) argues that all researchers need to understand their position in the research process. My place on the “insider–outsider” continuum (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Hellowell, 2006; Mercer, 2007) is relevant to the current study. As an insider, I have presumed knowledge of the system, which may influence my perspectives on the data collected. In recognising this methodological limitation, the inquiry took particular care to demonstrate the coding method and the process of developing the final five assertions. At the same time, knowledge of the system was valuable in searching for documentary evidence and validating verbal responses from students or adults, particularly concerning UWC jargon.

A second methodological limitation of this study was the sampling approach taken. This research employed a grounded theory approach using a theoretical sampling method. The study employed Morse and Clark’s (2019) theoretical sampling techniques, namely convenience and purposeful sampling. This sampling strategy included UWC colleges of the same size that received a sizeable number of students from the UWC national committee system. However, the UWC system consists of 18 schools and colleges, of which six have cohorts of students that extend beyond the two-year model (i.e. below aged 16; see Appendix C). These younger students are generally not selected by the UWC national committees. Further investigation of these students may be warranted to see how they understand and enact UWC’s mission and values.

It should be noted that this study did not include the chairs of the boards of the UWC colleges. Literature on international school governance highlights the importance that school boards have in the operation of schools, notably because international schools often do not come under the same regulatory framework as government-run schools (James & Sheppard,

2014). The relationships between the principals and international school boards are a key determinant in the successful operation of an international school (Hawley, 1994; Sheppard, 2011). The perspectives from UWC college chairs may have added information on the relationship between the UWC colleges and the governance of UWC International.

A concluding epilogue

United World Colleges (UWC) is a global movement that makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

This thesis considered how the leadership of this complex international school system impacts students' understanding of its mission and values. It detailed the different components of the system that influence student outcomes and the leadership practices they perform. The key overarching contribution of this study is that it broadens understanding of what distributed system leadership means.

As the UWC movement is about to approach its 60th anniversary, this author hopes that this thesis and subsequent articles can go a small way towards positively impacting the world. If one person reads this thesis and changes their leadership approach, this research project will have been worth it.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The philosophy of United World Colleges

1. The aims of the United World College movement is to make education an active force to unite nations to unite nations and peoples by developing in young people of all backgrounds a lasting commitment to international cooperation and a readiness to promote actively this cause throughout their lives.
2. The means by which we hope to realise this aim is the establishment of a world-wide chain of Colleges and Associated Schools, bringing young people of all nations together at school age and united by a shared commitment to this aim.
3. These Colleges and Schools seek to develop in their students not only their highest intellectual and aesthetic potential, but more moral qualities of courage, compassion, cooperation, perseverance and respect for skill, which are vital to any training in active citizenship and service to the community. As Plato said “He who wishes to help his people must combine the power to think with the will to act”.
4. The United World Colleges movement is not a political but an educational venture. We seek not to promote within our colleges any particular ideology or transitory political cause, but so to educate the young that when they have their college they will be better motivated and better equipped to strive in their own countries for a just, peaceful and tolerant world.
5. The forms of education through which we believe these aims can best be achieved will vary according to the resources and location of the colleges, but UWC requires all of them to share the following common features:
 - a. A significantly international student body and teaching staff, with entry open to all students and teachers, irrespective of race, nationality, and religion, who accept and support the ideals of the UWC movement;
 - b. Selection of students for entry from the widest possible range of social and cultural backgrounds based on merit alone and irrespective of the family's financial resources;
 - c. A genuinely international academic curriculum orientated towards the development of greater international and cross-cultural understanding;
 - d. A challenging programme of activities and social services based on genuine local needs and including rescue training and rescue services where appropriate;

- e. Encouragement to students to return to their own countries for higher education wherever possible and to work for the aims of the United World Colleges with their own community. (Branson, p. 159)



Appendix B

Student focus group members

Pseudonym	UWC College	When	Notes on Nationality Identity
Jason	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	Portugal/Angola/Macau
Maurice	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	US – Chinese American
Giorgia	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	Italy/Denmark
Ada	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	Zimbabwe
Lekha	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	India
Idika	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	India
Niral	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	Nepal
Jose	UWC Mahindra	February 2017	Mexico
Frederick	UWC Robert Bosch	October 2017	Montenegro
Helen	UWC Robert Bosch	October 2017	Germany
Damian	UWC Robert Bosch	October 2017	Jordan
Michael	UWC Robert Bosch	October 2017	Germany
Joseph	UWC Robert Bosch	October 2017	Denmark
Oscar	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Canada
Jermiah	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Norway/Cuba
Kyoko	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Japan
Frazier	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Norway
Jude	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Nepal
Austin	UWC Red Cross Norway	June 2018	Western Sahara (refugee from Algeria)

Appendix C

List of UWC schools and colleges detailing the three UWC colleges chosen

Name of College	Size and Age Range	Choice for Sample
UWC Adriatic; Italy	200 students aged 16–19; 2 year college	
UWC Atlantic College; United Kingdom	350 students aged 15–19; 2 year college	
UWC Changshu; Peoples Republic of China	443 students aged 15 – 18; 3 year school.	
UWC Costa Rica	S200 students aged 16–19; 2 year college	
UWC Dilijan; Armenia	219 students aged 16-19 2 year college	
UWC East Africa; Tanzania	500 students aged 3-20 – K-12 school	
UWC ISAK Japan	200 students aged 15-19 3 year school	
Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong; Hong Kong SAR.	256 students aged 16–19; 2 year college	
UWC Maastricht; The Netherlands	915 students aged 2-18; K-12 school	
UWC Mahindra College; India	240 students aged 16–19; location: 2 year college	One of six colleges in Asia. 240 students; Visit took place in February 2017
UWC Mostar; Bosnia and Herzegovina	200 students aged 16-18; 2 year college	
Pearson College UWC; Canada	200 students aged 16–19; 2 year college	
Red Cross Nordic UWC; Norway	200 students aged 16–19; 2 year college	One of six colleges in Europe. Visit took place in June 2018
UWC Robert Bosch College; Germany	200 students aged 16-19; 2 year college	One of six colleges in Europe. A college opened in 2014. Visit took place in October 2017
UWC South East Asia	5,500 students aged 4–19; K-12 school	
UWC Thailand	480 Students aged 2-18 years; K-12 school	
UWC USA	235 Students aged 16-19 years; 2 year college	
UWC Waterford Kamhlaba UWC of Southern Africa; Eswatini	600 Students aged 11 to 20 years; K-12 school	

Appendix D

Interview schedule of UWC college staff

	Pseudonym
Head at UWC College 1	Patrick
Nominated interviewee at UWC 1	Rudra
Nominated interviewee at UWC 1	Dhruv
Nominated interviewee at 1	Mankee
Head at UWC 2	Tristan
Nominated interviewee at UWC 2	Anthony
Nominated interviewee at UWC 2	Sebastian
Nominated interviewee at UWC 2	Piotr
Head at UWC 3	Issac
Nominated interviewee at UWC 3	Advik
Nominated interviewee at UWC 3	Allan
Nominated interviewee at UWC 3	Bjorn
Nominated interviewee at UWC 3	Jeremy

Appendix E

Schedule of adults interviewed external to the UWC colleges

Who?	Pseudonym	When	Notes
Former Board Member	James	September 2018	
Senior Leader at UWC International	Jerome	September 2018	Alum
Senior Leader at UWC International	Lucy	September 2018	
Senior Leader at UWC International	Selina	September 2018	Alum
UWC national committee representative from where a college is situated	Amber	October 2018	Alum
UWC national committee representative from where a college is situated	Jill	October 2018	
UWC national committee representative from where a college is situated	Daiyu	October 2018	Alum
International Board Representative	Elijah	September 2018	Alum
International Board Representative	Fen	September 2018	Alum

Appendix F

Relationship between research question; research sub-questions; data collection and data analysis

Research Question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?			
Sub-Questions	Why?	Data Collection Method	Data Analysis – Advanced Coding Themes that emerged.
1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?	<p>This question focuses on the definition of leadership & leadership practices from different UWC system members.</p> <p>The Literature Review on leadership suggests that there is not an accepted definition of leadership.</p> <p>Are there differences in the perceptions of leadership in UWC?</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders (Appendix H Semi-structured interview guide - Question E)</p> <p>Focus Group of students from 3 UWCs (Appendix G - Focus Group Discussion Guide Question E)</p>	<p>leadership</p> <p>system leadership</p> <p>student leadership</p> <p>role of National Committees</p>
2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?	<p>To ascertain what the understanding of enactment of the UWC mission and values is from the different stakeholders.</p> <p>Are there different perceptions between the different leaders in the UWC system?</p> <p>How do the different stakeholders perceive they enact the mission?</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders (Appendix H – Semi-structured interview guide - Question B)</p> <p>Focus Group of students from 3 UWCs (Appendix G - Focus Group Discussion Guide Question B)</p>	<p>understanding of mission</p> <p>peace</p> <p>sustainability</p> <p>mission in other schools</p>
3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?	<p>To ascertain how different leaders within the UWC system perceive enactment of the UWC mission and values</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders (Appendix H – Semi-structured interview guide</p>	<p>enactment</p> <p>peace</p> <p>sustainability</p>

	<p>Are there different perceptions of enactment of the UWC mission and values across the system?</p> <p>Do students have different perceptions of enactment of UWC mission and values compared to adult leaders?</p>	<p>– Questions C & D)</p> <p>Focus Group of students from 3 UWCs (Appendix G Focus Group Discussion Guide Question C & D)</p> <p>Observation at UWC colleges</p> <p>Document study</p>	
4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of the UWC mission and values?	<p>To develop an understanding of the leadership practices that affect students' understanding of UWC mission and values.</p> <p>To examine if students have a role in affecting their peers' understanding of UWC mission and values.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders (Appendix H – Semi-structured interview guide - Question F)</p> <p>Focus Group of students from 3 UWCs (Appendix G - Focus Group Discussion Guide Question F)</p>	<p>understanding of mission</p> <p>leadership practices</p> <p>structure</p> <p>environment</p>
5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC mission and values?	<p>To develop an understanding of the leadership practices that affect students' enactment of UWC mission and values.</p> <p>To examine if students have a role in affecting their peers' enactment of UWC mission and values.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders (Appendix H – Semi-structured interview guide - Question G)</p> <p>Focus Group of students from 3 UWCs (Appendix G - Focus Group Discussion</p>	<p>enactment</p> <p>impact of UWC</p> <p>leadership practices</p> <p>structure</p> <p>environment</p> <p>barriers to enacting UWC mission</p>

		Guide Question G) Observation Document study	
6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?	<p>What role does the diversity of the UWC student body play in the understanding and enactment of UWC 's mission and values?</p> <p>What are the elements of diversity present in UWC?</p>	<p>Semi-structured interview with UWC leaders</p> <p>Focus Group</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Document Study</p> <p>N.B. No specific question. If significant will come from answers from respondents.</p>	<p>diversity</p> <p>local context</p>

Appendix G

Focus group discussion framework

Use: For students of UWC

Research Question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

Discussion Question	Moderator sub-questions/notes	Research Sub-Questions
A) Please introduce yourself, where you come from and whether you are Y1 or Y2 student	Ask each student to complete a name card for ease of identification.	
B) What do you understand by UWC's mission and values?	See if they acknowledge UWC mission and values. Seek to clarify any term used by responder	2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values? (Note – role of students as leaders)
C) What do you understand by the enactment of UWC's mission and values?	See if they acknowledge within their UWC college or external? Seek to clarify any term used or meaning.	3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values? (Note – role of students as leaders)
D) How do you feel that you enact UWC's mission and values?		3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values? (Note – role of students as leaders)
E) What does leadership look like from your perspective within UWC?	Which people are seen to be leaders within the UWC? (maybe prompt; Board; IO; Heads; teachers; students; NC) What practices do these leaders undertake? (maybe prompt; examples of good leadership activities; what have you seen these leaders do?) What do you understand leadership to be (in a UWC context)?	1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?

<p>F) From your perspective how does the leadership of UWC affect students' definition of UWC's mission and values?</p>	<p>How do you think that students define the UWC mission & values?</p> <p>How do you think students develop an understanding about the UWC mission and values?</p> <p>How do you think (or Do you think) that leadership has a role to play in students understanding of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>Are there other factors that effect students' definition of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>What leadership practices (intentional and unintentional) effect students' definition of UWC mission and values? (or What do you see leaders do that help students understand the UWC mission and values?)</p>	<p>4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of the UWC mission and values?</p> <p>6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>
<p>G) From your perspective how does the leadership of UWC affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>	<p>How do you think that students enact the UWC mission & values?</p> <p>How do you think (or Do you think) that leadership has a role to play in students enactment of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>Are there other factors that affect students' definition of UWCMV?</p> <p>What leadership practices (intentional and unintentional) effect students' enactment of UWC mission and values? (or What do you see leaders do that help students enact the UWC mission and values?)</p>	<p>5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>

<p>H) Anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Interviewer repeats the overall research question to see if this prompts any other perceptions/beliefs.</p> <p>Interviewer to consider whether any indirect question needed to examine the role of diversity in influencing the students' understanding and enactment of UWC mission and values?</p>	<p>6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>
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Appendix H

Semi-structured interview guide

Use: For Leaders of UWC

Research Question: How does the leadership of UWC affect students' understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?

Interview Question	Interview sub-questions/notes	Research Question
A) Please introduce yourself, particularly your journey with UWC and your current role within UWC		
B) What do you understand by UWC's mission and values?	See if they acknowledge UWC mission and values. Seek to clarify any term used by interviewee.	2. What does the UWC leadership understand by UWC's mission and values?
C) What do you understand by the enactment of UWC's mission and values?	See if they acknowledge within UWC system or external? Seek to clarify any term used or meaning.	3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?
D) How do you feel that you enact UWC's mission and values?		3. How does the UWC leadership enact UWC's mission and values?
E) What does leadership look like from your perspective within UWC?	Which people are seen to be leaders within the UWC? (maybe prompt; Board; IO; Heads; teachers; students; NC) What practices do these leaders undertake? (maybe prompt; examples of good leadership activities; what have you seen these leaders do?) What do you understand leadership to be (in a UWC context)?	1. What constitutes leadership in UWC?

<p>F) From your perspective how does the leadership of UWC affect students' definition of UWC's mission and values?</p>	<p>How do you think that students define the UWC mission & values?</p> <p>How do you think students develop an understanding about the UWC mission and values?</p> <p>How do you think (<u>or</u> Do you think) that leadership has a role to play in students understanding of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>Are there other factors that effect students' definition of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>What leadership practices (intentional and unintentional) effect students' definition of UWC mission and values? (<u>or</u> What do you see leaders do that help students understand the UWC mission and values?)</p>	<p>4. How does UWC leadership affect students' understanding of the UWC mission and values?</p> <p>6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>
<p>G) From your perspective how does the leadership of UWC affect students' enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>	<p>How do you think that students enact the UWC mission & values?</p> <p>How do you think (<u>or</u> Do you think) that leadership has a role to play in students enactment of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>Are there other factors that effect students definition of UWCMV?</p> <p>What leadership practices (intentional and unintentional) effect students' enactment of UWC mission and values? (<u>or</u> What do you see leaders do that help students enact the UWC mission and values?)</p>	<p>5. How does UWC leadership affect students' enactment of UWC mission and values?</p> <p>6. Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>

<p>H)Anything else you would like to add?</p>	<p>Interviewer repeats the overall research question to see if this prompts any other perceptions/beliefs.</p> <p>Interviewer to consider whether any indirect question needed to examine the role of diversity in influencing the students' understanding and enactment of UWC mission and values?</p>	<p>Does the diverse nature of UWC's student body influence the understanding and enactment of UWC's mission and values?</p>
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Appendix I

Sample from observation journal

Tuesday 12 June

Morning

2 interviews with adult leaders

Lunch

Went to the canteen – sat down on a table with three other students – from Cambodia, Finland and Mexico. They immediately asked why I was at the college. We discussed why they joined the college, the challenges of being at a UWC and what activities they were going to do this afternoon.

Observed staff and students sitting together at the dining room timetable. Students calling teachers by their first name. Relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Afternoon

Walked around the college observing and taking photos of UWC mission and value statements. Bumped into a student with mobility issues being assisted by an able-bodied student.

One interview with adult leader

Activity with Principal off campus. 8 students go to a sports centre to play football with some mentally challenged young adults. I was encouraged to play. Principal took a back step to allow the students to lead the activity. Student deciding on who should be playing at any time. Teams mix of UWC students and young adults. Overseas students found ways of communicating with the young adults. At the end of the session the Principal led the students in a reflection activity on what they had achieved today, what they could have done better and this initiated the idea of a football tournament on campus.

Evening

Leisure fishing trip with principal

Appendix J

Memorandum of leader transcript (Overview)

“Started with X college on teaching exchange. (note that I did not ask so much about background - insider as I know)

Makes linkage to the UWC educational model.

Shows how students ENGAGE with the mission (This may also be a theme?) (understand different levels of engagement)

Definition of leadership - explains this in terms of UWC context and students - leading on initiatives (is this another theme?)

Role of National Committees explained - arrive that they think they know it and they don't - (It is about the JOURNEY) - role of experiential learning - (UWC Educational model)

Role of the extra-curricular activities for leadership.

Co-designing the course to fit the students. - English Literature example.

Importance of inclusion. (Mountain example)

Alumni - questions the impact that the movement has had

Best years of their life (sentimental aspect)

Multicultural aspect of staff recruitment. - Importance of recruitment - staff to embody the mission and values.

Nordic pillar - why is there - rooted in the locality

More than an International School”

Appendix K

Early Stage of Coding

Frequency	
290	
not all students enact	1
enactment - lived in experiences	1
Rote learn UWC	1
Context and service learning	1
enactment of mission through service learning	1
alumni as inspirationists to students	1
support for alumni to impact the world	1
imbued UWC mission	1
importance of a value-based intake	1
concern of fee-payers affecting mission	1
decisions on the composition of students	1
role of International Board in students in UWC mission	1
Board responsible for the environment	1
role of teacher to focus on safety	1
student leadership emerges through experience	2
student leadership emerges through challenges they face	1
structure not leadership leads to enactment	1
leadership of purpose	1
formal student leadership positions	1
leadership and enacting UWC mission	1
leadership to develop the context to allow enactment	1
students dealing themselves with anti-social behaviours	1
structures to develop student leadership	1
role of college meeting in developing leadership	2
delayed impact on alumni of student leadership	1
leadership and understanding UWC mission	1
faculty create situations for students to discover themselves	1
challenging students	1
capable of doing something about that issue which is driving th	1
values-based selection	1
values matter	1
fee-paying parents having UWC values	1
structures of diversity	1
Not develop student leadership skills	2
naturally developing student leaders	1
The systems we create allow it to happen but do we really know	1
Enact the mission in own personal way	1
Enactment - dilemma between economic and social well-being?	1
enactment because of deliberate socio-economic diversity	1
We have students who can order pizzas and be delivered at the f	1
challenging predetermined attitudes	1
experiences	1
Exploring intellectual and academic challenges	1
being on a hilltop, wondering how the hell you're going to get	1
Kurt Hahn experience	1
Being pushed from your comfort zone in a whole host of different situations	1
Other aligned UWC mission schools?	2
Laissez-faire v purposeful?	1
If you don't crowd them out without adult common sense and lead	1
Impact of experience on leadership of UWC	1
I went there to teach History and Peace and Conflict Studies.	1
Long association with UWC	1
Impact of Northern Island on Peace	1
Canadian by birth, British by descent	1
Peace	1
concept different imagery	1
Y2 students drifting away from UWC mission	1
student initiative	1
it matters that the students we select who create the education	1
idealistic, capable individuals	1
Barriers to enacting UWC mission	1
student workload	1
faculty workload	1
Social Justice	2

f you really care about social justice you're very conscious of	1
Role of extra curricular activities	1
mission is formalized through that channel.	1
expert	1
big picture,	1
faculty holding them accountable	1
Leadership and Enactment	1
role leadership plays in understanding mission	1
facilitating	3
sage on the side	1
sharing dilemmas	1
IB deflects away from UWC mission?	1
indoctrination	1
Exposed to UWC mission and values and they make sense of it	1
Role of National Committees	1
Elite students	1
Leadership	4
developing students to speak out	1
leadership has changed, is changing	1
change didactic to consultative	1
The institutions that we lead have to emanate that sense of com	1
I think the usual answer to the question is that as leaders we	1
Definition of leadership	1
Cynical of leadership	2
democracy v leadership	1
Positive about leadership	1
push back from students on student leadership	1
student leadership for accomplishment	1
tension of democracy v leadership	1
students challenge teacher	2
students question	1
outspoken	1
facilitator	1
liberal education	1
vocal in my opinions	2
Brainwashing.	1
acting the UWC mission	1
service learning	2
relationship building	1
teaching swimming to community	1
ack of compassion and understanding, the stewardship. And there	1
compassion	1
values,	1
understanding of mission	3
ability to see the humanity of other people	1
Empathy	1
t is that our students learn to cross the bridge from where the	1
deeply intentional and reflective community or movement.	1
justice	1
inequality	1
Background	3
UWC alumni	1
Indian	1
Ethnicity	1
I wasn't like living the mission or like that.	1
student followers	2
student follower	1
Student to student relationship	2
Faculty to student relationship	4
Student observation of faculty	1
role model	1
recruitment of faculty	2
house parents	1
student-led initiatives	1
passion	1
want to engage	1
part of a global community	1
selection procedures	2
seen to live the mission	1
more than academic	1
social media	1

sustainability	5
Sustainable questions asked by students	2
Examples of sustainability initiatives	1
sustainability student group	1
students not filling swimming pool	1
School leadership on sustainability	2
Leadership	1
Formal structure	1
Heads	1
International Board	1
school leadership	1
enactment	3
This is kind of purposeful, reflective, empathetic team ethos.	1
Took time to understand mission	1
environment	3
space to speak your mind	2
selection	2
interventions	2
walk the talk	1
allows UWC values to flourish	1
environment	1
visionary	1
Powerful statement	1
From corporate world	1
Not know UWC for long	1
UWC anticapitalist	2
messages that faculty send	1
Impact of UWC	1
Dilemma of Impact - social v private	1
Students Perception of leadership	1
scaffolding	3
Global Affairs	1
India Program	1
structure	5
Empowerment	5
Peer Support Group	1
students in decision making teams	2
student internal conflict	2
intercultural understanding v self-expression	1
Student leadership	5
finding that own place where they're comfortable to be influent	1
student initiator	1
finding that own place where they're comfortable to be influential	1
all students wanting to be a leader	1
university applications emphasizing leadership.	1
it's a combustible combination	1
reality	1
idealism	1
Understand mission	2
Do not benchmark against oneself?	1
burden of the mission	3
talking not leading to action	1
Enactment	2
Role Model	1
small actions	3
Leader not above students	1
osmosis	1
Socio Economic status	1
cultural diversity	4
UWC exploit diversity?	1
mission permeates	1
religion	2
Differences to Previous School	1
culturally undiverse	2
more intercultural understanding?	1
less cultural understanding	1
Positive benefits of extra-curricular	2
Improvement academics if involved in sport	1
Sports Emphasis	1
Holistic education	2
Similarities to previous school	2

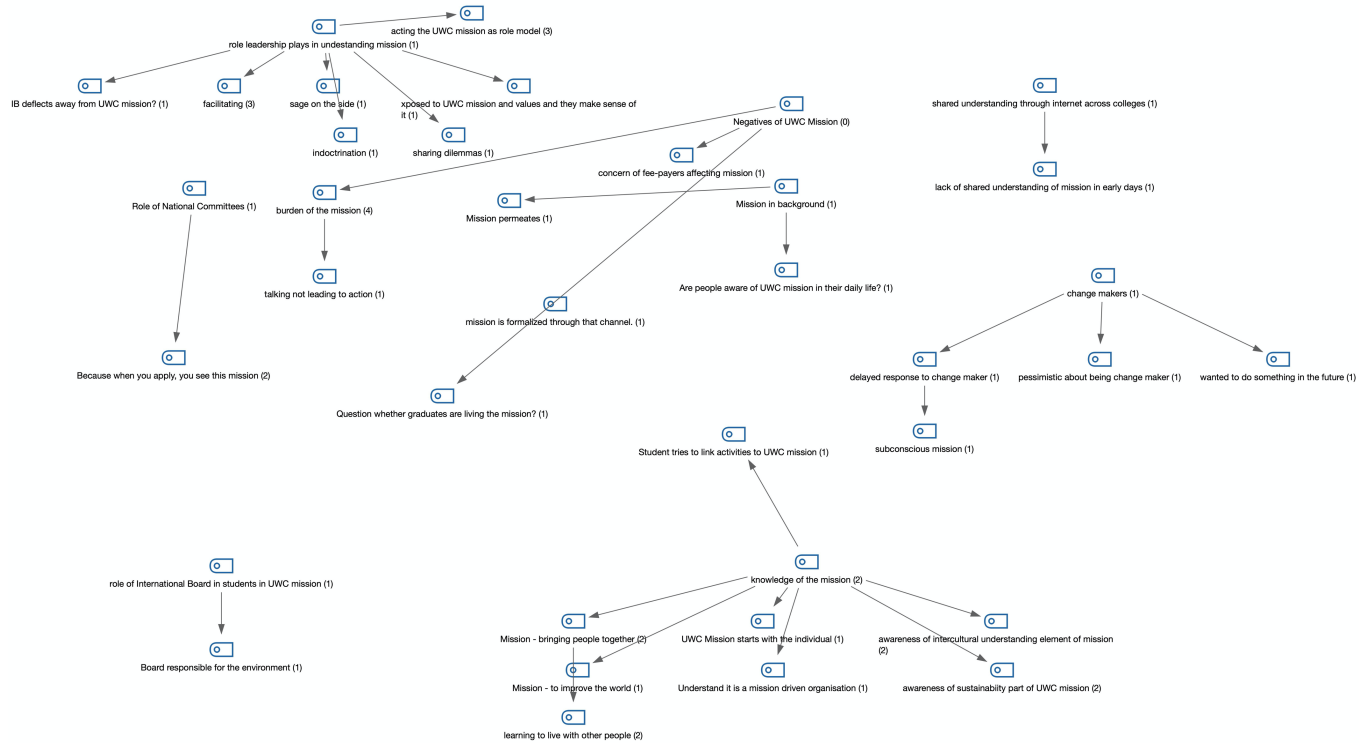
Knows mission of previous school	1
observation of student about students	1
Agents of Change	1
Confidence	1
difference into community	1
Understanding difference	1
Educational Model	1
Definition Quote	4
Values driven	1
Impact of UWC from interaction with UWC students	1
Know UWC for long time	1
Subconscious memory of UWC	2



Appendix L

An example of MaxMaps

Creative Coding



Appendix M

An example of an advanced code broken down into sub-categories

Code System	Memo	Frequency
ROLE OF UWC NATIONAL COMMITTEES		20
Because when you apply, you see this mission		9
concern on selection process	Suggests that people are playing the system. They say all the right things to get into the college.	3
Elite students	To what extent are UWC students the elite? What does that term mean? This comes from my personal view as well. (X student was he elite)?	1
Expectations from Admission to reality different		1
National Committee Living the mission		1
National Committees not important		2
Maybe some influence?		1
selection	This provides an opportunity to reference the UWC educational model	15
Head not directly involved with the selection of students	The challenge that the Head is not directly in charge of the intake. In HK more directly involved with the intake of local students.	1
deliberate diversity		8
understand people better		1
importance of a value-based intake		1

Appendix N

Example photographs at UWC colleges visited messaging UWC mission and values



