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Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards

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Abstract

This qualitative exploratory case study, situated in a Canadian community college, was designed to characterize the leadership practices that have emerged during the implementation of national curriculum standards in a Denturism program. The program has recently adopted the curriculum standards outlined in the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD). This research focused on the implementation of the NCPD standards in the program, with special emphasis on the field placement course. The purpose was to investigate the organizational structures that support the implementation of the NCPD standards, as well as the leadership practices that have emerged, as different stakeholders collaborate to support the implementation of this policy. Several approaches to educational policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning guided this study. Theoretical models, such as Bolman and Deal's (2013) Four Frame model and Eddy's (2012) Holistic Competencies model, informed the framework for this research. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews and from documents relevant to the Denturism program. The data was analyzed, and the following analytical themes were identified: (1) Organizational roles and processes undertaken by the actors within the community college inform the implementation of national curriculum standards; (2) Significant educational leadership practices inform and support instruction and curriculum initiatives across the Denturism program, including the field placement course; and (3) Organizational learning within the community college and the community of practice contribute to knowledge about the national curriculum standards. Based on these findings, this study offers recommendations for the implementation of the NCPD in the Denturism program and the field placement course.

Keywords

Implementation of curriculum standards in postsecondary education, policy implementation in community college, organizational learning in community college, educational leadership in community college, educational leadership competencies, organizational learning, communities of practice.

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction and Context of the Study

The recently completed National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) (College of Alberta Denturists, 2013; College of Denturists of British Columbia, 2013; College of Denturists of Ontario, 2013) emerged from a collaborative effort among regulatory bodies and national stakeholders involved in Denturism education. This document, which has been shared with Denturism programs in community colleges across Canada, identifies the standardized skill set that is expected of anyone entering the Denturism profession. The NCPD captures the expanding scope of practice, the force of innovation, the importance of serving communities, and the global impact of the profession, thus emphasizing the need for each Denturism program to maintain an updated curriculum that responds to these challenges.

The NCPD provides a standardized skill set, by identifying the expected competencies for graduates of Canadian Denturism programs. These professional competencies are organized into six areas: (1) Clinical Practice; (2) Laboratory Procedures; (3) Professional Collaboration; (4) Practice Management; (5) Jurisprudence, Ethics, and Professional Responsibilities; and (6) Communication. *Clinical Practice* and *Laboratory Procedures* emphasize the practical skills involved, from the assessment of the patient to the completion of a prosthesis (Professional Examinations Services, 2013). *Professional Collaboration* and *Communication* focus on interprofessional collaboration and interpersonal skills and outline the expectations related to teamwork and shared practices (Professional Examinations Services, 2013). *Practice Management* and *Jurisprudence, Ethics and Professional Responsibilities* describe ethical conduct as it directly relates to organizational learning, as well as the legal obligations that professional practice entails (Professional Examinations Services, 2013).

The development of the NCPD began in 2012, as a Canadian collaborative initiative, involving provincial regulatory bodies, members of the profession, and volunteers enlisted from the provincial and national professional associations and from educational institutions. The NCPD

shares knowledge of the profession among stakeholders, supports regulatory bodies in their mandate to establish credentials for licensing purposes, provides foundational research to develop future standards of practice, establishes a baseline for quality assurance purposes, and designates the entry to practice expectation of students who are graduates from Denturism educational programs (Professional Examination Services, 2013).

1.1 Connecting Denturism education to the Denturism profession through leadership practices

Denturism, which specializes in fabricating and fitting removable dentures (Denturist Association of Canada, 2016, About Denturism section, para. 3), is one of many allied professions that have emerged from the evolution of Dentistry. The global definition of Denturism was coined in Canada, and the profession continues to achieve worldwide recognition through advocacy, legislation, and education (Hansen, 2005). Denturism organizations and the policies they have established have been influential in the development of the profession as well as in the structure of the curriculum that educates future denturists. As a result of the leadership demonstrated by several organizations related to the field, “[D]enturists have become recognized by legislation in every jurisdiction in Canada” (Denturist Association of Canada, 2016, para. 4). The Denturist Association of Canada is a national organization, whose mission is to advance the profession and to “encourage and facilitate standardization of education” (Denturist Association of Canada, 2016, Objectives section, para. 1). It is a member of the International Federation of Denturists, which promotes and advocates educational standards on a global level (International Federation of Denturists, 2016). These two organizations have both been instrumental in the recognition of educational competencies (Denturist Association of Canada, 2016; Hansen, 2005).

Professional self-regulation, within the Denturism profession in Canada, is influenced by policies set by the various provincial colleges (College of Alberta Denturists, 2013; College of Denturists of British Columbia, 2013; College of Denturists of Ontario, 2013). This self-regulation, in turn, shapes the profession. One example of the influence of policy can be seen in the development of

professional standards (Professional Examination Services, 2013). Since Denturism is a self-regulated health profession, educators have a responsibility to connect the profession's standards with their curricula in order to model compliance and accountability for students and all stakeholders.

Central goals in the creation of the NCPD are to establish a national perspective of the Denturism profession and inform educational institutions of the competency expected of graduating students entering the profession. The community college that is the focus of this study began the NCPD implementation in its Denturism program by aligning the professional standards with the program curricula to connect Denturism education with the Denturism profession. Given that there is already a presence of educational leadership to bring the national competencies into alignment with the curriculum in this Denturism program, there is value in learning more about leadership practices that are relevant to the implementation of the NCPD. Educational leadership is crucial in developing a road map to engage stakeholders in *collectively* advancing this implementation. Gaining insight into distributed leadership practices would enable stakeholders in this college to enrich their interactions and relationships, learn how to make this implementation more effective, and continue to aim for positive impact on Denturism education.

It is important to understand processes, such as the implementation of policy in community colleges, as such understanding provides community college leaders and stakeholders with direction in addressing governance, resources, and challenges related to global issues that affect their institutions. The current study is relevant for our understanding of educational leadership in community colleges. It demonstrates how certain organizational roles, structures, and practices bring about change that inspires innovation in community college programs. The three main concepts that are highlighted in this research study—policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning—are interrelated in providing insight to address the problem of practice.

1.2 Problem of practice

The research presented here is situated in the context of a Denturism program in a Canadian postsecondary institution that has adopted the NCPD standards. This community college program has academic competencies, referred to as *course learning outcomes*, that specifically apply to each course within the overall curriculum and that collectively contribute to the *program learning outcomes*. These outcomes coincide with the *provincial vocational program outcomes*, all of which ultimately match the *professional competencies* outlined in the NCPD.

However, while this program recognizes the central role of the NCPD standards in the profession, there is no clear indication of how these standards have been integrated into the existing curriculum. This is problematic, as lack of knowledge about the implementation process prevents the Chair and faculty members from evaluating how the standards have been incorporated into the program. A comprehensive look at the organizational structure, the roles of the different organizational actors, and the leadership practices affecting the implementation of these standards would further support the improvement of the program outcomes. By gathering information on the organizational actors, their leadership practices, and the existing organizational structure, this study will inform our understanding of how these elements contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD within the context of a postsecondary Denturism program. This research has the potential to provide a guideline for community college leaders interested in implementing national standards, such as the NCPD. To future researchers, this study's examination of the development and implementation of national standards in community college programming could provide a baseline for investigating the nexus between leadership practices and policy implementation.

1.3 About the Denturism program

The Denturism program that provides the context for this study is comprised of thirty-nine courses, spanning six academic semesters. The program offers students a challenging learning

experience, while emphasizing principles of collaboration and professionalism, and the overall culture is very positive and progressive. According to Canadian community college standards, most programs have limited enrollment, in order to keep class sizes between 20–45 students (Schools in Canada, 2016, para. 9). In accordance with these standards, cohorts in this particular Denturism program are small, which provides a personalized experience in a unique learning setting.

Considering the influence that technological innovation has on the Denturism profession, industry partnerships are strong and in high demand. The program prides itself on the leadership of both administrators and faculty, who maintain collegial relationships with one another and with all stakeholders, including the provincial regulatory body, the national and provincial professional associations, the accreditation body, and the community of practice. These relationships benefit the program, by providing interaction and feedback that positively influence program initiatives.

The program offers both *academic courses*, in which students acquire knowledge of theoretical concepts; and *applied courses*, in which simulated practice environments help students acquire practical skills and develop competencies. While the academic courses expose learners to textbook knowledge and are intended to engage them in reflecting on specific theories and concepts, as dictated by the program learning outcomes; the field placement course is an applied course and exposes the learner to “real-world” scenarios, by enacting a community of practice (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Briefly, the field placement course involves learners in participating in and reflecting on relevant learning settings within the community, thus integrating theories and concepts in their understanding.

The research presented in this study explores this Denturism program as a whole, but pays particular attention to the field placement course in order to reveal the organizational structures and leadership practices that have emerged, as a result of collaboration among different stakeholders in the implementation of the NCPD, in both academic and applied courses. Particular emphasis has been placed on the field placement course because it provides students

with the opportunity to engage in culminating experiences that consolidate the students' learning through observation, practice, and mentorship. Before students participate in the field placement course, their learning has mostly taken place in an academic setting. The field placement course enhances students' learning experiences, by engaging them in professional settings. For these reasons, it is valuable to learn more about the existing organizational structures in order to inform the implementation of the NCPD in the field placement course.

Over the academic year, students in the field placement course gain perspective on practices and approaches, as they engage in a *community of practice* (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002; Wenger & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) define communities of practice as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (p. 4). According to Wenger (1998), organizations (such as this community college) operate through practices that create and transfer knowledge to sustain a level of competence: “Communities of practice are key to an organization’s competence and to the evolution of that competence” (Wenger, 1998, p. 241). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) argue that it is beneficial, both for organizations and for participants, to methodically cultivate communities of practice.

In this program, the community of practice is considered both a pedagogical strategy for the field placement course as well as an organizational improvement strategy for the Denturism program. As a pedagogical strategy, students set goals based on the NCPD to build skills, and they learn by practicing these skills in their field placement. By reflecting on their learning and sharing their feedback, students, in turn, inform the Denturism program about the NCPD implementation. The student feedback received can be incorporated in the organizational improvement strategy to further support the effective implementation of the NCPD. Considering this community of practice as serving both a pedagogical and organizational improvement strategy, aligns with Wenger’s (1998) conceptualization of a community of practice, which characterizes the learning that occurs in practice-based settings and highlights the importance of supportive practices within the organization.

In this study, the community of practice consists of field mentors, who are practicing professionals from the field of Denturism and/or industry partners; mentees, who are students in the Denturism program at this college and are currently enrolled in the field placement course; and faculty members and the Chair of the Denturism program. In this study, this community of practice will be referred to as the *field placement community of practice*.

The field placement course includes three phases: a preparatory phase, a community placement phase, and a reflective phase. The initial preparatory phase teaches students about their professional role within the communities that they will eventually serve as denturists. Students learn about their professional responsibilities and develop field placement goals, by gaining an understanding of national competencies and standards of practice, before they embark on their placement within the community of practice. In the community placement phase, each student prepares a curriculum vitae and begins the search for placement opportunities in the field, based on how the student has defined the communities in which he/she is interested in gaining practical experience. For example, a student may choose to participate in a charity and provide denture services to vulnerable populations in a foreign country; or to engage in clinical practice in a rural, urban, or remote community and provide denture services and receive mentoring from a professional denturist. There are several possibilities for field placements. Each opportunity pairs a learner with a practicing professional in a real working relationship. The role of the field placement mentor in this program is significant, as they offer opportunities for students to apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned to practical skills and develop their competency. Learning is facilitated in real-world settings, where the mentorship of the practicing professional engages students to enrich their learning. In the final phase of the course, students prepare reflections on their experiences in the field. Overall, the experiential learning provided in the field placement course is an important factor in helping students meet the program outcomes.

1.4 Curriculum structure in the Denturism program

Since its inception as a profession, Denturism has had an expanding scope of practice, which has required community colleges to restructure and implement curricula to ensure the competency of their graduates. Curricular restructuring initiatives in the program are informed by legislation, influential groups, stakeholders, and dedicated individuals who share their knowledge on curriculum structure in the community colleges (Hansen, 2005).

The structure of the curriculum in the program that forms the context of this study has been articulated in learning outcomes and organized into a chart, using a formal quality-assurance task, referred to as *curriculum mapping*, which provides a visual representation of course outcomes as they relate to the learning outcomes of the vocational program as a whole (George Brown College, 2016; NAIT, 2011; Vancouver Community College, 2016b). Indeed, “learning outcomes represent culminating demonstrations of learning and achievement” (Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, 2016c, para. 3).

In 2014, as part of a program review implemented to ensure that the curriculum was current and up-to-date, the program learning outcomes in this Denturism program were updated and mapped to the curriculum. The NCPD would have served as a resource to verify the currency of vocational program learning outcomes; however, at the time of the program review, the NCPD had not yet been adopted, and it was, therefore, not used in this capacity. Curriculum mapping of course outcomes, both to program learning outcomes and to the NCPD-defined competencies, would provide confidence that the two frameworks synchronize learning and would, therefore, offer meaningful information for program initiatives and accreditation purposes. Since the program review, the NCPD has indeed been acknowledged and adopted by this Denturism program; but as it was not implemented through a formal college process, it was not formally mapped to the existing curriculum. The lack of a formalized implementation process has hindered appropriate sharing of knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the NCPD.

1.5 Purpose of this study

The purpose of the study presented here was to identify and characterize the leadership practices that support the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) standards in the Denturism program in this particular community college, with a special focus on the implementation of these standards in the field placement course. The possibility existed that the implementation of these standards in this particular course might have involved curriculum-restructuring initiatives, which could have affected the structure of the educational organization. It was the purpose of this study to gain insight into policy, leadership, and organizational processes that could influence and support such developments.

1.6 Research questions

This study was informed by research on educational and organizational leadership (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2013; Eddy, 2012), with particular attention paid to the practices of the organizational actors (i.e., the Chair, the program coordinator, the faculty members, the program reviewer, the field placement mentors, the industry partners, and any stakeholders in the Denturism program); and the interactions that occur as these actors participate in the implementation of the NCPD through the various courses. The following research questions served as a guide for the present study:

- 1) What leadership practices in the existing organizational structure inform the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) standards in the Denturism program?
- 2) With the implementation of the NCPD, what organizational structures, actors, and leadership practices inform and support curriculum change and instruction across the Denturism program, including the field placement course?
- 3) How do the organizational structures, actors, and practices in the community college contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD standards?

1.7 Positionality

The positionality statement permits researchers to share with the audience their social and organizational interconnections as well as their motivations in relation to the study. Reflecting on my positionality, in the context of this study, is an important step in identifying my role in the research process. I am a faculty member in the program in which this study took place and have been assigned to teach three courses from the overall Denturism program curriculum. One of my three assigned courses is the field placement course, which placed me in a strategic position from which to conduct this research. This particular role allowed me to engage in this research from an insider's perspective, which resonates with a qualitative research orientation: "Qualitative research seeks to provide an understanding of a problem through the experiences of individuals, and the particular details of their lived experiences" (Bourke, 2014, p. 2).

My position as a faculty member allowed me to engage with all aspects of the Denturism program and of the field placement course, affording me both professional and instructional perspectives that brought me closer to an understanding of the ways in which the NCDP standards have been implemented. My position as faculty member also allowed me to engage with those in leadership roles within the college, including other faculty members, field placement course instructors in other programs, members of community groups, placement supervisors, critical friends, and learners. I value engaging with others to enrich my learning and share knowledge about curricular policy implementation as well as collaborating with others to implement organizational initiatives, such as the NCPD; these interactions have shaped my perspective on leadership practice. Furthermore, my role within the Denturism program promoted reflexivity in my research (See: Miller et al., 2012).

During my tenure, I have been afforded the opportunity to serve in several positions within the college. At different times in the past fifteen years, I have served as program coordinator, clinical coordinator, and faculty member. The culmination of my experiences has motivated me to learn more about leadership practices in the community college setting. I have been fortunate to engage in discussions with other leaders involved in college structures, practices, and curriculum

initiatives, and I have had the opportunity to benefit from the students' feedback and reflections. This has resulted in my appreciation of the value that knowledge of organizational processes and leadership practice brings to the Denturism program. I embarked on this research project from my developing interest in the leadership practices that can continue to support policy implementation in the Denturism program as a whole, and that will contribute to the growth of the field placement course in particular.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study is significant in various ways. Its relevance is embedded in building understanding of educational leadership in community colleges. There is value in identifying and characterizing the leadership practices that will engage stakeholders to advance this curricular policy implementation in the Denturism Program. Additionally, the study focused on educational and organizational leadership research that highlights organizational roles and interactions. There is a gap in this academic literature, particularly in the Canadian context, on the implementation of national competency frameworks in community colleges. As such, this study aims to address this gap by contributing to the existing literature. The next section reviews the existing literature that relates to the themes of policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning in the community college context.

Chapter 2

2 Literature Review

The process of implementing policy in community colleges involves the entire organizational structure. The process includes interactions among stakeholders that both inform and influence the college's practices. This study regards the community college as an organization, whose structure is understood to include multiple and diverse organizational actors, and considers how these actors' roles and responsibilities inform and influence practices that occur within the college.

Much important work has been done to illuminate the policy implementation process in community colleges. Townsend and Twombly (2001a, 2001b) argue that community college policies are a significant priority on policy-makers' agendas. Government policies generally speak to "provincial economic competitiveness, job training, efficiency, productivity, accountability, and responsiveness to industry" (Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006, p. 27). While studies have analyzed the implications for policy-making and the effects of implementation processes in community college settings (e.g., Ness, 2010; Weiss, 1979; Young & Lewis, 2015; Hill, 2003; Robinson, 2015), the adoption of a policy, such as the professional practice standards for Denturism in a practice-based context such as the field placement course, is an area in which very little previous research has been conducted.

The literature review presented here offers perspectives on the relevant themes of policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning in community colleges. In conducting this research, particular attention has been paid to how the aforementioned themes relate to policy, leadership, and program planning (See also: Kater & Levin, 2013).

2.1 Search method

The search focused on three broad areas: (1) educational policy implementation in community colleges; (2) educational leadership in community colleges; and (3) organizational learning in community colleges. Related topics within each of these areas include: the influential roles and processes within the organizational structure that inform the implementation of academic policy; educational leadership perspectives relevant to post-secondary education that influence curricular initiatives; and organizational learning that contributes to the dissemination of knowledge about professional practice standards, within a community college program and its related community of practice. The relevant literature was retrieved from online digital resources, such as Western Libraries' databases and Google Scholar. In addition, other specialized databases, such as ERIC and Scholar's Portal, as well as CBCA Education and Canadian Public Policy Collection, were used to access peer-reviewed journal articles.

The literature search was mainly conducted in higher education journals, more specifically, those related to theory and practices involving the community college sector. Multiple searches were conducted to retrieve the literature, using terms, such as "policy implementation," "policy implementation in community college," "outcomes-based education in community college," "curriculum change in Denturism programs," "curriculum standards," "curriculum mapping," "implementing professional standards in community college," "national competencies in postsecondary curriculum," "accountability in higher education," "curricular reform," "educational leadership," "educational leadership in community colleges," "community colleges," "Canadian community colleges," "communities of practice," "communities of practice in community college," "organizational learning," and "organizational learning in community college." The use of descriptors with broader terms generated more results, whereas literature specific to Denturism programs yielded very few. In any event, only literature that was relevant to the topics listed above was considered for this literature review. In addition to the databases accessed through Western's library website. The timeframe used for the search was 2010 to 2016; although some sources, dating as far back as 1979, were used for historical reference.

2.2 Educational policy implementation in community colleges

Community colleges were originally intended to serve the communities in which they were situated, with the goal of providing an education for people not interested in studying in a university setting and for those more interested in learning a trade (Dowd, 2003; Laden, 2005). The direction of the community college has changed over the years. Recently, governments' response to a competitive global economy has increased the demand for a skilled, educated workforce, which has drastically increased community college enrolments (Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development, 2016a). According to Levin (2001), “[g]overnment policies are viewed as directing community colleges toward economic goals, emphasizing workforce training and state economic competitiveness as outcomes, compelling colleges to improve efficiencies, increase productivity, and to become accountable to government and responsive to business and industry” (p. 237). The expectation is for community colleges to conform their values and norms to meet the demands of government policy and to incorporate such policy.

From a Canadian perspective, Skolnik (2004) concurs that colleges “were established to serve as instruments of government policy” (p. 10). According to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (2010a), “Colleges are also subject to other provincial and federal legislation that provide direction on how they conduct their business, that is, in the same manner as other organizations” (Policy Framework, Governance and Accountability, p. 1). The college’s Board of Governors is responsible for upholding the college’s policies and processes through the existing organizational structure in order to meet the goals of the institution and to uphold provincial and federal policy (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2010b; Alberta Innovation and Advanced Education, 2014; Ministry of Advanced Education, Province of British Columbia, 2016). As a result, when outlining strategies for curriculum direction, the academic plan of each college reflects both college policy and significant priorities that will affect teaching and learning (Vancouver Community College, 2015–2016; NAIT, 2015–2019; George Brown College, 2016-2019).

In the context of the present study, policy analysis is of fundamental importance because it provides an understanding of the origins and effects of the changes occurring in the Denturism program, as evidenced by the NCPD's influence on curriculum planning. There appear to be several driving forces that contribute to this process. It will, therefore, be helpful to investigate the Canadian community college context in order to understand how policy can be effectively implemented. The forces that contribute to the implementation process include: the globalizing economy, the increasing demand for instant information, the need for technical education, the continual decrease of resources and funding for postsecondary education, and a world where quality of programming and accountability are a requirement (Townsend & Twombly, 2001a, 2010b).

Implementing government policies may contribute to the rapid change in education, as a response to global pressures to educate a competitive workforce (Levin, 2001). Since education and training in community colleges has always been, and continues to be, closely associated with training the workforce, it is reasonable to infer that governance systems may promote policies that are aimed at "shaping institutional decisions and behaviours" (Townsend & Twombly, 2001a, p. xii). In this study, reviewing strategies that aim to maintain the currency of the curriculum and its relevance to the industry's competitive advancements is relevant to examining the implementation of specific policy, such as the NCPD. Along with the implementation of new policy, the process may result in curriculum changes that are intended to improve the quality of the Denturism program.

2.3 Outcomes-based education: Curriculum policy in community colleges

Out of the many different policies used in community colleges, the present study focuses on policy as it relates to postsecondary programming; that is, it focuses specifically on curriculum policy. Each of the Canadian community colleges considered for this review has implemented educational policy that mandates curriculum policy (George Brown College, 2016; Vancouver

Community College, 2016b; NAIT, 2011). Since the Bologna Declaration (1999), which reformed European educational policy to incorporate all the components of outcomes-based education, Canadian colleges have progressed towards this model of curriculum delivery. The Bologna Declaration (1999) recognizes that a quality education involves the recognition of diploma credentials, a time-related cycle in which diploma requirements are to be completed, an established credit system, and quality assurance measures (European Higher Education Area, 1999). This framework has been adopted by Canadian community colleges (along with colleges in 50 other countries around the world) and is used to implement curriculum policy that follows outcomes-based education: “[T]he 2009 Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) symposium focused on the Bologna Process and Canada’s role in the ever-changing global landscape of higher education” (Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, 2012, p. 11).

The outcomes-based approach has many features. The particular focus here will be on learning outcomes. Webster (2001) concludes that an outcomes-based curriculum incorporates a comprehensive approach to education, thus making it relevant to both learners and all other stakeholders. How this policy is understood, translated, and implemented throughout the organizational structure is significant, as are the practices that result from this process.

2.4 The difference between learning outcomes and competencies

Outcomes-based education highlights what learners are expected to know and be able to achieve upon graduation from a college program, and not how they are to attain this knowledge (Werquin, 2012; Frank, et al., 2010). Morcke, Dornan, and Eika (2013) agree that outcomes-based education is “tightly linked to the assessment and regulation of proficiency, but less clearly linked to teaching and learning activities” (p. 851). The findings from Morcke, Dornan, and Eika’s (2013) research on undergraduate medical education, as well as those presented in Cumming and Ross (2007), are applicable to allied health professions, such as Denturism, in that

a clear distinction is made between learning outcomes and competencies. According to this body of literature, learning outcomes identify the skills learners should attain through education, whereas competencies determine what skills and qualities professionals need in order to practice (Morcke, Dornan, & Eika, 2013). In a similar manner, Cumming and Ross (2007) make the distinction that learning outcomes are designated by educators and make reference to learning in relation to the program as a whole, upon completion; whereas competencies are achieved by the learner and are demonstrated upon completion of the program.

The concept of outcomes-based education presented in these studies is useful for further exploration of how this particular framework informs the Denturism program curriculum and the implementation of the NCPD. The Denturism program's learning outcomes reflect what students must have learned upon graduation, whereas the NCPD emphasizes the skills required before entering practice. Therefore, if the program learning outcomes are aligned with the NCPD, then upon graduation from the program, students should be competent as practicing professionals. For example, a program learning outcome states that a graduating student must be able to design and fabricate a variety of dentures. The NCPD specifically states that a graduating student must show competency in the specific procedures involved in the design and fabrication of dentures. More specifically, the NCPD itemizes procedures, such as impression techniques, try-in and insertion of dentures, as well as patient education and continuing patient care (Professional Examination Services, National Competency Profile for Denturists, 2013, Competency Area 1, Competency Elements 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7). In order for the NCPD implementation to be effective, it is, therefore, important for all courses in the Denturism program to address the program learning outcomes and the NCPD.

2.5 Challenges with outcomes-based education policy

Effective policy implementation requires knowledgeable educators. The degree to which actors understand policy can present a challenge to this process (Riveros & Viczko, 2015). Dobbins,

Brooks, Scott, Rawlinson, and Norman (2016) raise the question of how well educators understand learning outcomes, and whether they implement them as such or simply use this approach because it is required by accountability measures. In their conclusions, they note that it is important to empower educators, by sharing knowledge of the value of learning outcomes in a learner-centered approach to education as well as their use in accountability processes.

Scaffolding their research on the findings of Sin (2014), Dobbins et al. (2016) explored the implementation of outcomes-based education in order to gain perspective on the implementation of learning outcomes and the challenges this presents. Sin (2014) examined how outcomes-based education policy is interpreted in different higher education institutions. Sin (2014) concluded that although learning outcomes provided support in curriculum design and national frameworks, at the institutional level there were differences in understanding, interpreting, and implementing learning outcomes in academic practice. This, in turn, gave actors the ability to shape policy as they saw fit. Since the idea of outcomes-based education has been adopted globally, these findings may be applicable to other contexts around the world.

Sin (2014) further demonstrated the inconsistency of taking policy that was developed on a national level and implementing it (as learning outcomes) at the institutional level, along with the effects that all the organizational actors involved within each context have on shaping the policy. Sin (2014) refers to this process as “incongruence between policy fields” (p. 1834) and explains this as a disjunction between “where policy originates, the national policy field, and the local fields of practice” (p. 1834). Challenges in policy implementation are, therefore, the partial result of the context in which the policy originated and the context in which it is expected to be implemented. These findings are central to explaining the difficulty in translating national policy framework across contexts.

While Sin’s (2014) body of work has focused on implementing learning outcomes at the national level, Dobbins et al. (2016) have focused on the institutional level, conducting their research at one higher learning institution, in different academic programs that reflect more traditional vocational settings. Dobbins et al. (2016) investigated the impact of outcomes-based educational

policy in English, Science, and Medical programs. Their work adds to the literature by investigating how faculty members use learning outcomes and the challenges they experience. Findings from this work concluded that faculty members understood learning outcomes “from student centered learning and accountability perspectives” (p. 1217). Dobbins et al. (2016) concluded that academic staff must be empowered to re-conceptualize the process of learning outcomes in higher education to better understand and enact such policy for purposes beyond accountability. Further to this work, Barman, Bolander-Laksov and Silen (2014) researched how academic teachers enact policy and concluded that educational policies may be translated differently into practice depending on individual interpretations. The research findings of Sin (2014), Dobbins et al. (2016), Barman, Bolander-Laksov and Silen (2014) offer useful insights on the implementation of outcomes-based education policy and recognize issues that challenge this implementation.

In their research on developing curricular policy that addresses vocational skills with real-world, hands on learning, and its implementation in post-secondary settings, Albashiry, Voogt, and Pieters (2015a, 2015b, 2016) examined how community college faculty and administrators plan curricula. In their work, they found that faculty are challenged to find time to devote to this work. Their research identified the challenges teaching faculty face in interpreting the changing needs of the industry and implementing new curriculum as policy. In their recommendations for practice, they suggested assigning time to work on curriculum development and to learn about interpretation of learning outcomes (Albashiry et al., 2015a, 2016). Further to this, Albashiry et al. (2015a, 2015b) stressed that faculty need to work on establishing a connection between their curricular policy and program and course learning outcomes that represent the program’s goals. The findings of their research bear resemblance to implementing competencies that address the industry’s trends into program curriculum, such as the NCPD. In an attempt to conceptualize the specific process of implementing the NCPD in the Denturism program, the next section concentrates on literature that informs the implementation of national competency frameworks.

2.6 Conceptualizing the implementation of the NCPD in the Denturism program

Do professional national competencies, such as the NCPD, influence program curricula in community colleges? According to the literature, competencies in health-care education establish a learning environment that should enable equity and accountability (Verma, Paterson, & Medves, 2006). All professional regulatory colleges provide guidelines to direct professional practice, which are labelled using different names, such as “essential competencies” or “national competencies.” In any event, all such guidelines refer to required professional competencies (Verma et al., 2009).

Arellano and Marinez (2009) studied how both faculty and practitioners perceive competency frameworks in order to gain perspective on what students are learning, and whether this is reflective of what is needed in practice. Their research intended to reveal and evaluate how professional competencies can drive curriculum changes, based on how essential each competency is to practicing the profession. Arellano and Marinez (2009) concluded that it is essential to create a dialogue between actors, who are influential in policy, on the one hand, and graduates of programs and professionals, on the other; all of whom are stakeholders in postsecondary education. Therefore, professional national competencies can inform curricular initiatives and influence change, with the collaboration of all stakeholders.

Frank and Danoff (2007) note many important factors in the successful implementation of national outcomes-based competency frameworks, including faculty support and development, research, a repository of resources, support in managing curriculum change, and mindfulness towards the transition to an outcomes-based culture. Rekkor, Umarik, and Loogma (2013) argue that national curricular reform in vocational education is a complex process that requires faculty adopt the national competency framework at an individual pace. Their research found that instructors need to make sense and understand the national curriculum, before they can implement it effectively.

The NCPD implementation process introduces a standard curriculum for Denturism programs to

help graduates address the needs of the people they will serve, while maintaining currency in order to keep up with innovations in the profession. As the diversity of both teaching and learning in Denturism education continues to grow, this is relevant to educators and regulators, as it is equally important in related allied health education programs (e.g., Canadian Dental Hygienist Association, 2010).

2.7 Policy implementation and accountability frameworks in community colleges

When implementing policy, community college leaders must be cognizant that “accountability measures and performance indicators are required in exchange for funding” (Lovell, 2001, p. 34). Community colleges are challenged to validate their worth as postsecondary institutions (Laanan, 2001). Among several methods for demonstrating and reporting accountability, performance indicators are a common measure that community colleges use to assess and report their performance (Laanan, 2001). Laanan (2001) suggests that accountability systems must set clear goals, identify what is being measured, and state how this data could be used to define policy that can promote change.

One accountability framework employed in this particular Denturism program is program-level accreditation. In the context of this research, accreditation is voluntary and is conducted by the curriculum committee of the national professional association (Denturist Association of Canada, 2016). As Webster (2001) notes, accreditation associations can be professional associations that establish criteria. Program-level accreditation is based on standards outlined by the profession and is different from institutional accreditation in that it emphasizes the quality of the professional program, thereby placing a narrow focus on the process (Scott, 2014). In the context of this research, program accreditation seeks to ensure the quality of the Denturism program, validating the curriculum framework that forms the basis of the assessment. As a result of program-level accreditation, course learning outcomes, program competencies, and professional competencies are reviewed and educational effectiveness is evaluated to ensure that continued

improvements are made (Webster, 2001).

Another important accountability framework is *program review*. For Denturism programs, a comprehensive program review occurs every five to seven years, depending on the college, with an annual curriculum review also taking place within this framework (George Brown College, 2016; NAIT, 2011; Vancouver Community College, 2016b). The purpose of the program review is to gather information, using various methods; and to report on ways to promote academic excellence, provide feedback to faculty and administrators, encourage planning, and respond to the needs of the stakeholders (George Brown College, 2016; NAIT, 2011; Vancouver Community College, 2016b). The program review process serves as an accountability framework, in that it reviews the Denturism program's alignment with the college's mission, vision, and values, along with various college-wide initiatives, in order to provide direction for curricular initiatives. The curriculum specialist, who is a faculty member, leads the program review and works closely with all the organizational actors to complete this process.

In the context of this research, the implementation of the national competency framework uses tools to document curriculum and learning outcomes. One such tool is the curriculum map. Britton et al. (2008) confirm that improvements in professional programs can be achieved by using curriculum mapping as an evaluative process in order to attain curriculum goals, ensure professional competencies, and establish meaningful dialogue between stakeholders. The findings from Britton et al. (2008) concur with findings from Lam and Tsui (2016), who found that curriculum mapping does indeed facilitate dialogue amongst participants. Furthermore, Lam and Tsui (2016) concluded that curriculum mapping provides a visualization of the relationship between learning outcomes and particular courses, thus serving as a quality assurance tool and as an exercise in professional development. Additionally, their research shows how curriculum mapping can also be used for program development (See also: Pippen, Uchiyama & Radin, 2009; Plaza et al., 2007; Harden, 2001).

2.8 Organizational actors

Several organizational actors in the Denturism program inform practice for policy implementation. Community college faculty are influential in developing and implementing policy that in turn shapes curriculum (Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006). Young and Lewis (2015) argue that we need to be cognizant of the factors that have the potential to influence policy implementation. From their perspective, “1) implementers shape implementation of policy; 2) characteristics of the policy and context influence implementation; 3) policies that do not account for the complexity of schools are unlikely to be implemented effectively; and 4) variation in implementation is the rule rather than the exception” (p. 14). In line with these four factors, this study intended to identify the roles of the different actors involved in the implementation of the NCPD.

O’Toole (2000) suggests that many actors, representing varying dimensions of governance, are involved in educational policy implementation. While this may be the case, research has tended to focus on some of the obvious levels of implementers, such as educators and administrative leaders; rather than adopting a holistic view that includes the different actors in the organizational structure, such as government representatives, stakeholders, and other influential groups (Young & Lewis, 2015). Similarly, Hill’s (2003) model of implementation suggests that actors involved in policy implementation must first understand the meaning of the policy, before they can translate that policy into practice. To accomplish this, actors must access “implementation resources,” which are individuals and/or organizations that support policy implementation. These can be “consultants, academics, entrepreneurs, foundations, trade journals and journalists, and professional associations” (Hill, 2003, p. 272). Implementers learn how to implement policy by learning from these resources. According to Hill (2003), this process of interpretation contributes to capacity building, which “through training and the provision of information can shape policy outcomes” (p. 272). In addition, Higham (2003) has emphasized the importance of staff development and the allotment of time for implementation to occur.

In the context of the present study, accountability frameworks that exist within the Denturism

program require organizational actors to assume specific responsibilities within their roles, which, in turn, may prove to be influential in the process of policy implementation. This literature has been useful in identifying which actors and leadership practices may influence and support the implementation of standards.

2.9 Educational leadership perspectives in community colleges

The terminology used to describe leaders and their functions within organizations is evolving, from the use of the term “administration” to the more recently adopted “leadership” (Bush, 2003). Bush (2003) connects the term “leadership” with vision, values, and purpose; whereas “administration” refers to those who actually implement initiatives within educational institutions. Bush (2003) observes, “While a clear vision may be essential to establish the nature and direction of change, it is equally important to ensure that innovations are implemented efficiently, and that the school’s residual functions are carried out effectively” (p. 9). As a result, the term “leadership” is defined broadly and takes on different meanings (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). However, according to Nevarez and Wood (2010), “[T]he concepts of leadership and administration, when taken together, provide community college leaders with a holistic approach to leading their institutions” (p. 57).

2.9.1 Defining leadership practice

Spillane (2005) defines leadership practice as not just what people do, but how and why they do it. In terms of the leadership practices that may influence policy implementation, Robinson (2015) stresses the need for the recruitment of strong, effective leaders who possess a sense of moral obligation, along with the ability to share their vision and collaborate. The implementation leaders should be identified, so they can take responsibility and ownership of the policy goals, and so they can coordinate the action plan for policy implementation. Collaborative processes allow influential stakeholders to communicate, participate, and further “buy in” to the policy implementation process (Robinson, 2015). Robinson’s (2015) research indicates that leadership

practices, such as communication and collaboration with stakeholders, and accessing resources to build stakeholders' capacity in the process, are important factors influencing policy implementation.

Eddy and VanDerLinden (2006) studied community college administrators to further examine their views on leadership practice. Their study identified leadership as based on relationships throughout the organizational structure, in which each actor has an essential role; and found that leadership practice is shared throughout the college. For example, study participants reported that, based on their roles in the college, they provide the vision, shape it so that it positions the college on certain issues, and ensure that the college-wide vision is implemented. Conclusions from this research determined that more work still needs to be done to establish the nature of this shared leadership practice (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006). The literature on this topic reveals that formulating and sharing a vision is a leadership practice that, together with other mechanisms, is an important factor that supports the shaping of change. The leadership practices of administrators, who share a vision with others in their college, have meaningful effects on the practices of other organizational actors (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006). In this regard, Senge's (1990) work is relatable to higher education organizations. He suggests that individuals within organizations learn how existing policy shapes the organizational structure, and that vision-sharing allows them to gain a deeper understanding of how they can influence this process.

Additional research on postsecondary education settings has highlighted the positive effects of sharing a vision. For instance, Marshall, Kiffin-Peterson, and Soutar (2012) interpreted the self-efficacy and conscientiousness of teachers in a vocational school in order to predict positive self-leadership skills, a concept they perceived to be connected with self-confidence, self-management, and motivation.

2.9.2 Collaborative and distributed approaches to leadership practice

According to Amey (2013), educational leadership within community colleges has evolved from an autocratic model, in which institutional transformation is driven unilaterally, to a model that borrows from collaborative and distributed strategies to reinforce the institution's mission. Amey

(2013) uses the concept of collaboration to highlight the importance of leaders and other stakeholders working, communicating, learning, and making decisions together. Many labels, such as “distributed leadership,” “shared leadership,” “collective leadership,” and “collaborative leadership,” have been used to describe this approach to leadership (Amey, 2013).

From a collective leadership perspective, followers are not subservient members of the college or simply subordinates, who respond to the mission and edicts of the leader-on-high. Rather, they are positioned as co-leaders, ready and able to lead, shape the future direction, critique, and contribute to the institution. (Amey, 2013, p. 147).

Following Amey’s (2013) conceptualization, the terms *distributed*, *shared*, *collected*, and *collaborative* have been used interchangeably in this document; as my review of the literature demonstrates that different authors use different terminology to refer to what is essentially the same phenomenon.

Building on Senge’s (1990) work on team learning, Mitchell and Sackney (2011) agree that collaboration implies teams of individuals interacting through various methods of communication, which inspires inquiry, shared purpose, problem-solving, consensus, and the attainment of goals. In educational settings, individuals who are part of the team, frame goals and thus promote perspectives that inform and influence change (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011).

Meanwhile, Rawling’s (2000) work on collaboration and leadership concluded that teamwork is based on what is shared; that is, vision, knowledge, and commitment to the outcomes of the intended goals. The assumption could be made that collaborative skills are inherent; however, Rawlings (2000) argues that the team must build conditions that will allow collaboration to occur. One of the conditions that engage collaboration among members of the organization is communication. Rawlings (2000) concluded that leadership is not limited to behaviour and skills, but rather involves specific collaborative practices, such as meeting practices and decision-making practices that build the foundation that allows organizational actors to engage in collaborative interaction. These practices are supported by creating opportunities, such as providing enough time for collaboration to occur.

Further to the notion of collaboration established by Rawlings (2000), Mitchell and Sackney (2011) agree that collaborative opportunities should be incorporated into the organizational structure, as they bring colleagues together and create a reciprocal process. In addition to creating the conditions for collaborative interaction, according to Mitchell and Sackney (2011) and Senge (1990), specific communication skills enable individuals on the team to create conversations that balance advocacy and analysis, which progress the collaboration towards its goal. Both Mitchell and Sackney (2011) and Senge (1990) distinguish between two types of communication, each of which provides a basis for collaboration. According to Mitchell and Sackney (2011), discussion is an exchange of information where individuals share knowledge and opinions, whereas dialogue is an exchange in which information is used to develop a deeper contextual understanding.

Spillane (2006) states that the interactions of leaders, in relevance to their situation, define their leadership practice. By using this lens to understand how their interactions shape their leadership practice, this approach identifies that distributed leadership practice, “helps practitioners approach their work in new ways” (p.10). Relatedly, in highlighting interactions among leaders, Eddy (2010a, 2010b) stresses the importance of communication and makes reference to the pattern of organizational communication, using Lunenburg and Ornstein’s (2000) framework on communication networks. Lunenburg (2010) emphasizes it is the organizational structure that “influences communication patterns within an organization” (p.6); and that horizontal patterns occur in the form of task forces and committees in which communication occurs. Lunenburg (2011) and Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000) describe several directions in which organizational communication can be disseminated. Of relevance to this research, the *wheel network* describes a pattern of communication in which organizational actors all participate and communicate with the leader in the center and thus engage in decision making. In the *wheel network*, leaders of an organizational structure are positioned along a wheel. A leader may be positioned in the middle of the wheel and disseminates information to all organizational actors along the spokes of the wheel. As well, organizational actors positioned on the outside of the wheel communicate with one another and with the leader in the center. However, important decisions are made by the

leader in the centre of the wheel. Considering the work of Spillane (2006) on shaping distributed leadership through interactions, together with Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000) and Lunenburg's (2010, 2011) patterns of organizational communication, it becomes clear that understanding the communication that occurs in an organization is significant in learning about leadership practice.

Bolden (2011) reviewed the concept of distributed leadership and recommends that, among other areas, further research needs to illuminate how leadership practice impacts different organizational contexts and different organizational actors (e.g., how the leadership practices within one organization's boundaries affects the community or other programs at other institutions). Bolden (2011) also makes a distinction, as does Spillane (2005), between seemingly interchangeable terms, such as "distributed," "shared," "team," "democratic," and "dispersed leadership". Eddy (2010a) notes that, while these conceptualizations of leadership are shared by many authors and are referred to by different names, they all view leadership in light of relationships and teams. In the community college context, leadership responsibility is shared among various roles within the organizational structure. Eddy (2010a) suggests that this may be problematic in the community college setting because of the dependence organizational actors may have on defined hierarchical roles. Since research on distributed leadership originated in studies on K-12 education, Eddy (2010a) suggests that the concept may not be appropriate for college settings and that further research is needed to explore its applicability.

Amey (2013) discusses the many applications of distributed leadership in the community college setting. In support of the collaboration found in distributed leadership, Amey (2013) highlights the positive influence of building leadership networks with actors from multiple levels, who position themselves to inform and thus shape and contribute to the community college. Furthermore, Bush (2011) claims that "[D]istributed leadership has become the normatively preferred leadership model in the twenty-first century" (p. 88); thus making it the desired approach. Another positive aspect of distributed leadership is that the concept promotes input from the organizational actors who implement policy and who, therefore, have relevant contributions that can inform college processes (Eddy & Amey, 2014). Applied to the college setting, leadership practice, conceptualized as *distributed*, focuses on the collaboration that

occurs throughout the organizational structure, involving actors from different levels. Each actor contributes by using different forms of communication, by sharing research, by initiating change, by sharing their expertise, and by implementing policy. It is important to note that this decentralized system allows for delegation at the institutional level (Bush, 2010). In Canada, this includes strong participation from stakeholders: “Autonomous schools and colleges may be regarded as potentially more efficient and effective, but much depends on the nature and quality of internal leadership and management if these potential benefits are to be realized” (Bush, 2003, p. 14).

In leadership research, primarily centred on the Australian context, Hempell (2014) investigated what is considered good leadership practice, and what can be done to better prepare actors for leadership roles in community colleges. Hempell’s conclusions confirm that more emphasis on relationship-building skills and distributed leadership is needed in order to make leadership practices more effective, which in turn reinforces the importance of a clear vision and the engagement of others in that vision. Hempell (2014) further concluded that the challenge for 21st century leaders will be to move away from the notion that one person leads. Hempell’s study is important because it places emphasis on how people identify a leadership role, and how the organizational structure supports this leadership and the development of the leader’s particular leadership practice.

Further research, conceptualizing distributed or shared leadership practices, has been conducted by Slantcheva-Durst (2014), who concentrated on collaborative practice and leadership. This work captured perceptions from faculty, staff, and administrators in a community college engaged in the task of changing their decision-making processes over a span of seven months. Slantcheva-Durst (2014) based her study on Rawlings’ (2000) conceptualization of teamwork. The community college in which her research took place set out to develop a shared leadership model to use in decision-making. Slantcheva-Durst (2014) conceptualized this process, using Rawlings’s (2000) two-dimensional model, which is formulated on the premise that collaboration is the interaction between team members in relation to the task and occurs when the members of the organization have established the issue and have committed to a goal.

Rawlings's (2000) model involves three levels:

shared purpose and vision (clarity and commitment); teamwork, characterized by efficient, collaborative work processes and a high degree of trust and participation (practices and participation); and empowerment, defined as the team having the structure, capabilities, resources for collaboration, collective will and confidence in one another that the team will achieve its goals (capabilities and power). (p. 44)

Slantcheva-Durst's (2014) research not only analyzed the outcome of a collaborative project, by a group of college stakeholders, that aimed to develop a collaborative leadership model; but also depicted a journey in which these stakeholders shared information about their leadership and their institution in order to work toward improvement and change. Emphasizing the different roles of the actors in community college, Jones, Harvey, and Lafoe (2014) highlight the overlap of the leadership practices of administrators and academic faculty. They argue that leadership "is about influence, values, vision" (p. 419); and when collaboration requires the proficiency of more than one person, a connection is implied by which distributed leadership occurs. This "third space," as Jones, Harvey, and Lafoe (2014) refer to it, appears to be a connection made among these organizational actors, which again is an exemplar of the concept of collaboration and distributed leadership in community colleges.

2.10 Organizational learning in community colleges

Levitt and March (1988) define organizational learning as the process of learning through direct experience, the experience of others, and the interpretation of experiences and not necessarily as an outcome. The success of the organization is largely dependent on its ability to engage in this learning process, internally and externally, individually and collectively, and make this adaptation (Barette, Lemyre, Corneil, & Beauregard, 2012). Since organizations are built on interdependent hierarchies, the connections within these hierarchies may pose challenges for the process of organizational learning (Kotter, 2001). The interplay of leadership practice and

organizational learning on the path toward change is an important perspective, one that this study reflects.

2.10.1 Creating, sharing and operationalizing knowledge

Involved in the process of organizational learning are effective ways of using knowledge.

Mitchell and Sackney (2011) suggest that learning happens when there is a conscious change in understanding what shapes professional practice and learning, thereby giving individuals a sense of “what they already know and what they want to know. This knowledge empowers [educators] to begin a search for new knowledge and to reconstruct their professional narrative” (p. 16).

Concepts about learning involve the intersection of knowledge management and organizational learning, which suggests the importance of resources that will inform the creation, transfer, and operationalization of knowledge along the way (Barette, Lemyre, Corneil, & Beauregard, 2012).

Nonaka and Toyama (2003) argue that the process of knowledge creation and utilization, and thus knowledge management, is one of “dynamic interactions among individuals, the organization, and the environment” (p. 2); and it is driven by tacit knowledge (which is the perspective that we hold) and explicit knowledge (which can be communicated to others) (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Toyama, 2003). It is the interplay of tacit and explicit knowledge that creates knowledge, which in turn informs the learning in an organization.

Organizational knowledge begins with tacit knowledge and translates to explicit knowledge and returns to tacit knowledge, through a conversion process. According to Nonaka (1994) and Nonaka and Toyama (2003), the first process of knowledge creation is *socialization*, which involves knowledge that is a result of members’ shared experiences (as in an apprenticeship, in which tacit knowledge is acquired). The second process of knowledge creation is *externalization*, which involves the establishment of shared meaning as organizational members use knowledge (such as data, gathered internally and externally); this new explicit knowledge is spread throughout the organization. The third knowledge-creation process is *combination*, in which there is a dialogue that shares knowledge (this can include sharing knowledge in written form). The final process is *internalization*, whereby organizational members learn by performing, thus

using knowledge that has been converted back into tacit knowledge; this becomes the foundation for the mental models and routines that the members have learned (Nonaka & Toyama, 2003). This conceptualization focuses on the organizational learning that is depicted in Slantcheva-Durst's (2014) study, which brought together a diverse team of community college administrators and faculty in a professional development collaboration to develop a model of shared decision-making. Using the work of Nonaka and Toyama (2003) as a guideline, Slantcheva-Durst (2014) conducted a case study in which the members contributed to organizational activity that utilized knowledge of both themselves and the institution in professional development and capacity-building, which resulted in organizational learning. In depicting this learning, Slantcheva-Durst's (2014) case study exemplifies the processes of knowledge-sharing, meaning-sharing, and capacity-building.

With the purpose of further contributing to the understanding of organizational learning, Huber (1991) expands on four concepts related to this process, which he identifies as "knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory" (p. 88). Huber's (1991) conceptualization of these four constructs begins by characterizing the organizational activities that engage individuals in the attainment of knowledge as "knowledge acquisition." He then describes the scope of organizational learning as the activity and engagement whereby knowledge from different sources is shared, leading to a new understanding of concepts. He further describes an added dimension to organizational learning in which knowledge is interpreted in different ways by organizational processes. Finally, Huber (1991) describes the process of storing and retrieving knowledge as a component of organizational learning.

The work of Mitchell and Sackney (2011), Nonaka (1994), Nonaka and Toyama (2003), Barette, Lemyre, Corneil, and Beauregard (2012), and Huber (1991), all contribute to a fundamental understanding of creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge in order to provide context for the interpretation of how this organizational process occurs in community colleges. The literature reviewed above, therefore, is useful in the interpretation of how knowledge is shared in the process of organizational learning that occurs in this Denturism program.

2.10.2 Facilitating organizational learning in community colleges

Colleges have a strong affiliation with employers and use mechanisms, such as the program advisory committee (PAC), interprofessional education, and field education, as approaches to support the connection between the college and the workforce (Skolnik, 2004). Program advisory committees (PACs) can have an impact on organizational learning. As an example, Jimenez-Herranz, Manrique-Arribas, Lopez-Pastor, and Garcia-Bengoechea (2016) conducted a study that sought to transform programming in an educational organization, using the intervention of an advisory committee. The advisory committee was tasked with identifying barriers, strengths, weaknesses, and action plans. The study concluded that the advisory committee was very effective in improving the program and contributed to the empowerment of the stakeholders. In addition to this, the advisory committee contributed to the process by providing diverse views, by promoting continued improvements to the program, and by encouraging feedback and accountability as to whether the changes made were in fact effective (Jimenez-Herranz, Manrique-Arribas, Lopez-Pastor, & Garcia-Bengoechea, 2016).

Krick (2015) conducted further research to explore the purpose of *hybrid advisory committees*. Hybrid, in this case, refers to a committee made up of different representatives, academics, employers, and various societal stakeholders. Krick (2015) notes that, “Accordingly, the advice produced by broadly composed committees is not scientific or academic advice...it is the outcome of a process of negotiation and aggregation of different positions that rests on competing experiences, backgrounds, values, convictions and perspectives” (p. 489). According to Krick (2015), their hybrid nature makes such advisory committees powerful instruments for government in negotiating, implementing policy, and facilitating implementation by virtue of their autonomous nature. When applied to the community college setting, the organizational structure is such that programs and curricular initiatives are all shaped by program advisory committees (George Brown College, 2006; NAIT, 2014; Vancouver Community College, 2016a).

2.10.3 Sharing knowledge about the NCPD in the Denturism program

Ribiere and Sitar (2003) addressed the importance of leadership practices that encourage a continual pattern of organizational learning and that result in the empowerment of organizational members. Their study regarded leadership from a knowledge management perspective, focusing on communication, recognition, and rewards. From this perspective, leadership enables creating, transferring, and operationalizing knowledge through the facilitation of activities that promote knowledge sharing (Ribiere & Sitar, 2003). Further elaborating on the notion of communication in knowledge construction, Sun (2003) attempts to distinguish between *organizational learning* and *learning organizations* and states that in organizational learning there are collaborative activities that emphasize the individual and group learning processes, through interaction, negotiation, exchange, reflection, learning and comparing strategies with colleagues, and knowledge-sharing. The term *learning organization* refers to the journey of learning and the environment in which this takes place within an organization.

2.10.4 Organizational learning and communities of practice in community colleges

Lombardi (2007) describes authentic learning experiences as working in real-world environments, such as case studies and communities of practice. These settings offer learners opportunities to apply their learning in diverse scenarios. Lave and Wenger (1991) and Lombardi (2007) concur that authentic learning, as in a community of practice, offers students a way to learn their chosen profession. Wenger (1998) has identified three dimensions of a community of practice that are relevant to the present study: *Mutual engagement*, which involves actual membership within the group and resembles the partnership between the field placement mentors within the profession and the Denturism program; *joint enterprise*, which involves a common objective amongst community members and resembles the NCPD and the goals of the field placement course; and *shared repertoire*, which involves the resources that assist in achieving these goals and resembles the training and development of the field placement supervisors, who are part of this partnership. Wenger's (1998) work can be used to describe the organizational structures, actors, and practices involved in the implementation of the NCPD in this community

college.

Furco and Morely (2012) conducted a three-year study that investigated a group of service-learning programs across eight campuses. In an effort to improve the service-learning programs and add to the literature, they assessed faculty perceptions of service-learning programming and documented changes in how faculty felt after they had participated in learning communities. In their initial assessment of faculty, Furco and Morely (2012) concluded that very few faculty members even knew what service-learning was and did not place any value on this approach to learning. Their work is of key significance, as it is one of the few studies that has focused on the “effectiveness of service-learning faculty development efforts, either through learning communities or other approaches” (Furco & Morely, 2012, p. 132). The participating institutions in their study established communities of practice to inform the faculty’s knowledge of this pedagogy. Using organizational learning activities and professional development, these institutions built their faculty members’ understanding and appreciation for this approach to learning. Faculty members were involved in their own learning and developed clear goals that were connected to college-wide goals. Further, the learning communities were instrumental in establishing faculty’s involvement in the project (Furco & Morely, 2012).

Another dimension in communities of practice is the evolution to virtual formats. Druckenmiller and Mittleman (2015) explored new technology implemented in the formation of communities of practice and sought to identify the critical elements needed. In their findings, they concluded that new platforms, such as online forums, assist in promoting innovative practices. Their work therefore adds value to the literature on communities of practice.

Seibert (2015) studied the conceptualization of communities of practice from a health care perspective. Her findings indicate that interprofessional education within a community of practice has great potential for professional learning. Vaknin and Bresciani (2013) studied how to implement service-learning programs in community colleges and highlighted the presence of a collaborative partnership and a reflective component, along with feedback and assessment. Reflection provides evidence of the learner connecting to the curriculum. The learner

demonstrates this connection by “combining the academic understanding of theory with its practice” (Vaknin & Bresciani, 2013, p. 986). Their research identified several factors instrumental to the sustainability of an effective service-learning program, including administrative and faculty support; allocation of resources (both financial and human); and mentorship and training for those included in the partnership (Vaknin & Bresciani, 2013).

Courtney-Pratt, Ford, and Marlow (2015) studied nursing education over a period of five years to evaluate clinical placements in Tasmania. The findings from this research note that capacity building, support from management, and recognition from the college were all factors that influenced the quality of the placement experience. The study aimed to find ways of developing the field placement partners’ knowledge and skills in order to better support the learner, as well as to foster the collaborative development of sustainable models of supervision to improve the partnerships (Courtney-Pratt, Ford, & Marlow, 2015).

Ongoing professional development encourages meaningful organizational learning for all members of the community college. Albashiry, Voogt, and Pieters (2015a) examined the effects of professional development practices in a technical community college that attempted to improve its curriculum. Suggestions that resulted from the study include monetary incentives, the need for additional time, and increased administrator involvement in order to gain a sense of understanding of the task of curriculum reform (Albashiry, Voogt, & Pieters, 2015a).

2.11 Conclusions

The literature reviewed in this chapter provides a substantial perspective of how leaders establish goals and purposes for their respective educational institutions, keeping in mind that the influence of imposed government policy can play a critical role in determining these goals and purposes. Leaders are often challenged by these implications. In this context, Bush (2010) supports formal education for educational leaders to help them gain skills for practicing effective leadership. Furthermore, in the context of organizational learning, the reviewed literature is

useful in understanding the leadership practices that support the implementation of policy in community colleges. Within the model of organizational structure that is relevant to this study Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of communities of practice provides a suitable framework to analyze the ways in which faculty members, field placement mentors, and students can collaborate effectively in order to implement the NCPD standards into their own contexts of practice. The reviewed literature describes a community of practice as a crucial component in creating and sharing knowledge in postsecondary environments. Indeed, "[t]wo conditions of a community of practice are crucial in the conventionalization of meaning: shared experience over time, and a commitment to share understanding" (Eckert, 2006, p. 1). The literature points to an interplay among the fundamentals of policy, leadership, and organizational learning in an attempt to understand what factors might influence curricular policy implementation in community colleges.

Chapter 3

3 Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

3.1 The importance of defining a theoretical framework

Although qualitative research is mostly an inductive process, the outcome entails relating data to themes and concepts and then using the perspective provided by a theoretical framework (and its related literature) to review the data and interpret the results (Creswell, 2013). Merriam (2009) states that “a theoretical framework is the underlying structure, the scaffolding or frame of your study” (p. 66). For organizing a case study, Stake (1995) suggests building the conceptual structure of the case, as several issues (such as political, social, historical, and even personal contexts) can be related to the research. Creswell (2013) notes that the qualitative researcher uses theoretical concepts that are known to relate to the phenomenon being studied in order to begin the research. Alongside the literature review, a theoretical lens guides the researcher in shaping the research and determining what needs to be studied (Mears, 2009). It does so by suggesting the questions to be asked and by informing the procedures of data collection and analysis.

A conceptual framework is similar to the researcher’s philosophy or ideology in the ways it shapes and informs the study being conducted (Boudah, 2011). Conceptual/theoretical frameworks can be helpful in explaining alternative ways of viewing the outcomes and implications found in the research and may also aid in interpreting the data and discovering underlying concepts that help the researcher describe the participants’ accounts (Mears, 2009). By breaking down the research questions and relating them to what is being studied, the perspective provided by the framework allows for concepts and theories to be used in the analysis (Mears, 2009). Organizational analysis can move from identifying the relationships to constructing conceptual structures and developing theories that provide an overarching understanding of how the findings are relevant to study the phenomenon under investigation (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Thus, Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) state that we need to “tie the findings of our study to overarching, across-more-than-one-study propositions that can account for the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of the phenomena under study” (p. 292).

The present chapter conceptualizes the community college as the organization by discussing leadership, the behaviours of key players, organizational learning, and communities of practice. Two theoretical frameworks—Eddy’s Holistic Competency Framework (2012) and Bolman and Deal’s Four Frame Model (2013)—are analyzed in order to conceptualize leadership in the community college setting. The next section conceptualizes leadership in the community colleges; significant leadership components; leadership competencies for community college leaders and Eddy’s (2012) framework. As the chapter continues, understanding organizational frames in educational leadership and Bolman and Deal’s (2013) framework are discussed, as well as and the implications of the frameworks for this study. Further in the chapter, several relevant topics are also discussed: such as the overarching concept of the community college, as it is conceptualized as the organization providing the context for this research; organizational learning in the community college; creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge; and finally, communities of practice in the community college and in the Denturism program.

3.2 Conceptualizing leadership in community colleges

Nevarez and Wood (2010) define leadership in community colleges as the process of “influencing and inspiring others beyond desired outcomes” (p. 57). The practice of leaders is framed and further enriched by administrative processes, such as policy implementation and strategic planning. While regulations and protocols tend to incorporate top-down practices, which leaders may use and appear to be controlling, directive and task-oriented leadership, which incorporates collaborative, visionary, inspirational, and transformative principles, results in more effective college leadership practices (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). According to Eddy (2010a), the skills relevant to leadership in community college settings include communication, collaboration, and advocacy. These skills allow leaders to establish relationships with both internal and external partners in order to achieve the desired organizational outcomes.

While many different approaches to leadership exist, the model referred to as “shared leadership”

or “distributed leadership” in the literature is a departure from hierarchical concepts of leadership. The “shared” or “distributed” leadership approach favours the interdependent relationships amongst the organizational actors (Eddy, 2010a) and seeks to motivate people to work collaboratively toward decision-making and organizational goals, with each individual’s opinions being valued, welcomed, and encouraged (Nevarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013). Furthermore, Nevarez, Wood, and Penrose (2013) highlight the democratic potential of shared leadership approaches, arguing that,

dependence on organizational affiliates to take on leadership positions, such as department Chairs, program coordinators, and college Deans is encouraged and welcomed by democratic leaders. The notion of shared leadership becomes central to the shared governance of community colleges in that team leadership becomes paramount in running an institution. (p. 28)

Spillane (2006) explains that, “[i]n a distributed leadership perspective, leadership practice is stretched over multiple leaders” (p. 15). Therefore, leadership is not something that is imposed on members of the team; rather, leadership practice is defined by the interactions between team members. Spillane (2006) also notes that, from the distributed perspective, leadership serves as a design tool that those in leadership positions can use to establish plans, goals, and ideas. This takes place as a process rather than as a single occurrence. The present study considered Spillane’s (2006) conception, alongside Nevarez, Wood, and Penrose’s (2013) interpretation of shared or distributed leadership, in the development of the research questions that investigate the leadership practices that shape and inform the implementation of the NCPD in the Denturism program.

A more participative environment fosters shared governance in community colleges, which is illustrated by the committees and boards that are formed to influence and support curriculum changes (Nevarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013). Following these principles, community college leaders could support faculty with professional development, feedback, and skills development in order to build their capacity to participate in shared governance, thereby meeting

organizational goals as a team (Nevarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013).

3.3 Significant leadership components guiding this study

Bush (2010) identifies the four components of leadership as policy, research, practice, and theory. Of these four components, Bush (2010) argues that theory should be appreciated for the extent to which it informs leadership and directs the resolution of problems in educational institutions: “Its value can only be judged fully when it is deployed alongside policy, research, and practice” (p. 269). With the decentralization of power in educational institutions, leaders are key players in developing and implementing policy, which gives them the further obligation to inform and shape their beliefs and ideologies through training and skills development, in an attempt to translate their perspective and lead effectively (Bush, 2010).

Research findings could inform initiatives that could lead to the formation of policy, thereby creating a connection between research and theory. Bush’s (2010) findings point to the importance of the interplay between policy, research, practice, and theory, suggesting that the relationships between these four components are essential to effective leadership. Bush’s (2010) research stresses the importance of understanding the multifaceted roles within educational leadership, and his findings further acknowledge the process of collaboration that occurs when implementing initiatives in educational institutions, thus emphasizing the importance of all the actors involved.

3.4 Leadership competencies for community college leaders

Research on leadership in community colleges has identified practices that are related to creating a motivating, inspirational, and supportive environment (Nevarez & Wood, 2010). In these environments, leaders set high standards and goals, recruit team players, serve as role models, and maintain high morale by valuing input and endorsing shared decision-making (Nevarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013). In 2001, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)

initiated research to better understand training for community college leadership, which resulted in the formulation of a competency framework for community college leaders (Eddy, 2012). Following extensive data collection, involving input from experts in the field, the AACC published a report titled *Competencies for Community College Leaders* (2005). In 2012, the AACC further revised this document and added real-world examples for both emerging and experienced leaders to draw from in order to inform their leadership practices (AACC, 2013). The competencies identified by the AACC include organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, advocacy, and professionalism. Based on this set of competencies, the AACC (2005) emphasizes that leadership development can occur at all levels in the community college. The AACC (2016) describes each of these leadership competencies as follows:

Organizational Strategy

“An effective community college leader promotes the success of all students, strategically improves the quality of the institution, and sustains the community college mission based on knowledge of the organization, its environment, and future trends” (AACC, Competencies, 2016).

Resource Management

“An effective community college leader equitably and ethically sustains people, processes, and information as well as physical and financial assets to fulfill the mission, vision, and goals of the community college” (AACC, 2016).

Communication

“An effective community college leader uses clear listening, speaking, and writing skills to engage in honest, open dialogue at all levels of the college and its surrounding community; promotes the success of all students; ensures the safety and security of students and the surrounding college community; and sustains the community college mission” (AACC, 2016).

Collaboration

“An effective community college leader develops and maintains responsive, cooperative, mutually beneficial, and ethical internal and external relationships that nurture diversity, promotes the success of all students, and sustains the community college mission” (AACC, 2016).

Advocacy

“An effective community college leader understands, commits to, and advocates for the mission, vision, and goals of the community college on the local, state, and national level” (AACC, 2016).

Professionalism

“An effective community college leader works ethically to set high standards for self and others, continuously improve self and surroundings, demonstrate accountability to and for the institution, and ensure the long-term viability of the college and community” (AACC, 2016).

The leadership practices that influence policy implementation in the community college environment require the interpretation and use of several, if not all, of the six competencies identified by the AACC (2005, 2013, 2016). Ottenritter (2012) describes the list of these competencies as one that “represents a comprehensive core of functions required of community college leaders. However, how they become operationalized, their use, the weighting of one over another, and their relative importance are unique in each situation” (p. 15).

The AACC (2005) leadership competencies serve as a useful framework for providing contextual training and succession planning. Furthermore, Boggs (2012) claims that there are many instances where one or more of the AACC leadership competencies appears to be more important and, therefore, advises that leaders must adapt to the specific context. Boggs (2012) supports Eddy’s (2012) Holistic Competencies model and concurs that community college leaders would benefit from a broader approach to leadership.

3.5 Eddy's (2012) Holistic Competencies Framework

In her extensive work on leadership in the community college context, Eddy (2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2013) and Eddy et al., (2015) has related leadership competencies to collaboration, team-building, and shared governance. Initially, Eddy (2010a) proposed a multidimensional leadership model that illuminates the evolution of leadership approaches, philosophies, and practices, highlighting the leader's individual reflection within each context. Instead of using a static model that views the leader as being central to change, Eddy (2010a) presents a multidimensional model that is flexible and evolves as leadership practices develop and grow within the context: "A multidimensional perspective of leadership provides for a range of ways to operationalize leadership and define success" (p. 139). This multidimensional model of leadership is comprised of five assumptions:

- (1) There is no universal model of leadership;
- (2) multidimensional leadership is necessary in complex organizations;
- (3) leaders rely on their underlying cognitive schema in making leadership decisions;
- (4) leaders often adhere to their core belief structure;
- (5) leaders are learners. (p. 33)

The flexibility of Eddy's (2010a) multidimensional model means that every leader's approach looks different. The leader's understanding of the organizational structure is important because this determines how specific leadership competencies are enacted.

Eddy's (2010a) model incorporates the AACC's six leadership competencies and suggests the addition of another component that she refers to as "cultural competency." Eddy (2010a) elaborates on this concept by describing the importance of leaders knowing and understanding their environment, what is valued in their college culture, and what is significant in their context. The leader's ability to understand history, traditions, past experiences, symbolism, meaning, and environment will ultimately add to their leadership practice. It is within this multidimensional model that Eddy (2010a) introduces the idea of putting leadership competencies into *clusters* and provides a holistic approach for analyzing leadership practices in the community college, with an

emphasis on understanding the college's particular culture and values.

The holistic approach used in Eddy's (2010a) research transforms the AACC (2005) leadership competencies from a static list into a different, multidimensional approach to leadership. Based on her multidimensional model, Eddy (2012) argues that the AACC leadership competencies can serve as a guide for community colleges to focus on leadership training and development. She studied the application of the AACC competencies by reflecting on data collected in her 2010 work on the leadership practices of twelve "case site presidents, members of the leadership team, and faculty leaders for a total of seventy-five interviews" (Eddy, 2012, p. 29), observing that many of the competencies were interconnected and thus appeared together to form several clusters. Eddy (2012) focused on grouping the leadership competencies into clusters in order to use a more holistic approach to view community college leadership, as her results suggested that these competencies rarely appeared alone.

Eddy's (2012) *Holistic Competencies Framework*, first introduced as part of her multidimensional model for leadership (2010a), is one of the conceptual/theoretical frameworks used to understand the interpretation of the results of the present study. The Holistic Competencies Framework (2012) identifies the four competency clusters as: (1) attention to the bottom line; (2) systems thinking; (3) inclusivity; and (4) framing meaning (Eddy, 2012). Eddy argues that each of the clusters contains at least two specific AACC leadership competencies, with an overarching element of cultural competency, which she argues should be called "contextual competency," as being present in all the clusters (Eddy, 2012). Figure 1 provides a visualization of Eddy's framework, showing the AACC leadership competencies that are contained in each cluster. With this framework, Eddy (2012) suggests a new way to think about the leadership competencies identified by the AACC.

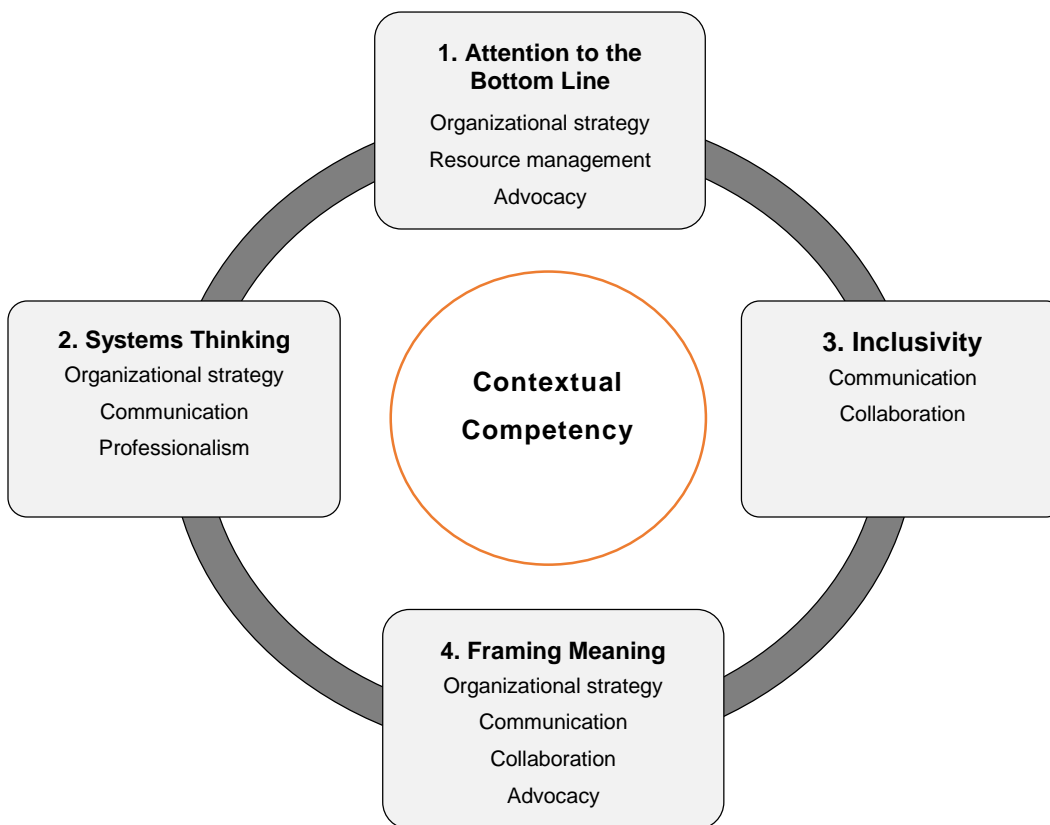


Figure 1. Representation of Eddy’s Holistic Competencies Framework (2012), listing the AACC competencies associated with each of the four clusters. Adapted from “A Holistic Perspective of Leadership Competencies” by P. Eddy, 2012, *Leading for the Future: Alignment of AACC Competencies with Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass A Wiley Imprint.

3.5.1 Attention to the Bottom Line

The first competency cluster consists of three competencies: organizational strategy, resource management, and advocacy (Eddy, 2012). According to Eddy, skills developed in this area contribute to a positive organizational structure by setting goals, planning, implementing policy, and revisiting the plan in order to track progress (Eddy, 2010a). Resource management is aligned with organizational strategy in that it necessitates accountability in managing administrative

priorities, according to policy as well as meeting the operational demands of the college while fulfilling its mission. Community college advocacy is performed by leaders when they convey the college's mission and rally stakeholder support for policy implementation that is beneficial to college initiatives. In doing so, leaders drive policy that is representative of the college; this in turn builds trust in leadership practices. Understanding the importance of balancing the bottom line in terms of costs, while addressing the needs of the college, is at the core of this cluster. Contextual competency, as it relates to this cluster, involves understanding the financial aspect within the existing limitations. Leadership practices that seek and access funding require leadership skills that drive organizational strategy, manage resources effectively, and advocate appropriately on the college's behalf with stakeholders, industry, and the community.

3.5.2 Systems Thinking

The second competency cluster is an organizational perspective that incorporates surface issues along with underlying issues that are causally related. In terms of the AACCC (2005) competencies, systems thinking involves communication, professionalism, and organizational strategy (Eddy, 2012). Eddy (2012) considers both verbal and nonverbal communication and emphasizes the need for leaders to engage in all forms in order to convey the college's mission and in order to receive feedback from stakeholders. Professionalism comprises the ways in which leaders serve as mentors, role models, and representatives of the college in various capacities, for instance as members of professional associations and in terms of accreditation (Eddy, 2010a). The leadership competencies within this cluster promote thinking across multiple levels within the community college, thereby addressing issues using systems thinking approaches.

Eddy (2012) argues that community college leaders strive for continuous education, training, and skills development as they embrace being role models within their institutions. The combination of the aforementioned competencies in this cluster opens dialogue for change and encourages leaders to look for connections between all aspects of the community college. Systems thinking encourages community college leaders to connect curriculum standards with student learning and professional standards and to maintain the college mission. Contextual competency in this case

involves understanding the existing academic environment in the community college and assessing the organizational structure, along with working with others to communicate and implement policy that will contribute to the growth and improvement of the college.

3.5.3 Inclusivity

Eddy's third competency cluster, inclusivity, consists of two AACC competencies: communication and collaboration skills (Eddy, 2012). Collaboration occurs both internally and externally: internal collaboration takes place between key stakeholders within the college community, such as students, faculty, and administrators; external collaboration involves peripheral stakeholders, such as policy makers, community members, other educational institutions, and advisory board members (Eddy, 2010a). The inclusivity cluster builds on a foundation of collaborative exchanges between community college leaders and stakeholders. The partnerships these exchanges create serve as exemplars of shared leadership practices. These collaborations are formed as a result of effective communication skills, underlying motivation, and the establishment of common goals amongst leaders, eventually evolving into partnerships. Collaboration therefore requires influential and supportive leadership practices, such as complementarity and collegiality (Eddy, 2010a). Leaders draw upon their contextual competency and incorporate paradigms of organizational learning with leadership that will engage organizational members to participate in problem-solving and decision-making, while prioritizing the needs of the college (Eddy, 2012).

3.5.4 Framing Meaning

The fourth and final competency cluster consists of four AACC competencies: communication, collaboration, organizational strategy, and advocacy (Eddy, 2012). Eddy (2012) characterizes framing meaning as integrating skills from several of the leadership competencies in order to interpret the organization's situation. As it is with all of Eddy's (2012) competency clusters, cultural competency is fundamental, as it allows leaders to prioritize matters that are of greatest importance and directs the collaborative development of strategy: "[F]raming communicates the overarching organizational strategy to campus members, and the strategy is developed

collaboratively” (p. 34). Understanding the context and sharing a vision are both leadership practices that contribute to building trusting relationships and understanding the culture of the community college (Eddy, 2012).

Using this framework, it is possible to reflect on a broader conceptualization of community college leadership that incorporates connections between the various competencies, instead of viewing each competency in isolation. An integral part of Eddy’s (2012) Holistic Competencies Framework is the recognition of contextual competency as an essential addition to each of the competency clusters. Eddy argues that “[K]nowing more about the campus culture allows for the creation of organizational strategies, aligned with existing frameworks of what works and acknowledges the history of the institution” (p. 32). In addition to this, contextual competency allows leaders to learn how to lead based on their proven successes. For example, if networking skills have proven successful in leadership, the leader may choose this pathway in future leadership initiatives. Others may operate differently. With contextual competency informing each of the clusters, leadership takes on unique forms from leader to leader (Eddy, 2012).

In Eddy’s (2012) view, a college’s educational leadership does not rely on one competency, rather, an interrelationship between the different competency clusters; therefore, making community college leadership multidimensional. Depending on the circumstance, the Holistic Competency Framework (2012) is useful in understanding which leadership practices characterize community college leaders. When considering the implementation of national curriculum standards in a postsecondary program, it is appropriate to examine leadership competencies that may inform what organizational members do and the leadership practices that facilitate the accomplishment of the goal of implementation. This relates to one of the main research questions of this study, namely, “What organizational structures, actors, and leadership practices inform and support curriculum change and instruction across the Denturism program, including the field placement course?” Furthermore, referring to the AACC (2005) leadership competencies and Eddy’s (2010a) multidimensional model provides a foundation for understanding Eddy’s Holistic Competencies Framework (2012). “Preparing to use the competency clusters in practice requires a sense of self-awareness and reflection on which of the

initial six competencies one aligns with” (Eddy, 2012, p. 38). This framework allows for the further exploration of organizational partnerships in order to understand how leadership practices contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD standards in this study.

3.6 Understanding organizational frames in educational leadership

Bolman and Deal (2013, 2014) introduce the concept of *frames* in their work as a way to make sense of organizations: “A frame is a set of beliefs and assumptions that you carry in your head to help you understand and negotiate some part of your world” (Bolman & Deal, 2014, p. 11). Similar to a mental model (Senge, 1990), a paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), or a cognitive lens (Rajagopalan & Spreitzer, 1997; Gasson, 2004), frames provide knowledge for organizational actors to use and allow them to classify information that both informs and influences their practice, as Bolman and Deal (2014) observe, “Like maps, frames are both windows on a territory and tools for navigation” (p. 14). Frames are important because they give us information on how to make decisions based on our mental maps. With time and practice, we can build expertise in leading organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2013, 2014). With enough practice, leaders can become experts at using frames as an organizational method (Eddy & Amey, 2014). In the process of framing, leaders must first understand the issues and context themselves, after which they can use various methods to communicate their interpretation to others (Eddy & Amey, 2014). The act of framing takes an individual paradigm and matches it to the phenomenon being studied.

In the process of *framing*, community college leaders can use different methods of communication to disseminate a message by talking the frame, walking the frame, writing the frame, and symbolizing the frame (Eddy, 2010a, 2010b). *Talking the frame* requires community college leaders to convey their message in settings that use verbal communication, such as meetings, group sessions, and forums. In *walking the frame*, community college leaders convey

their message by acting in ways that support that message. For example, a leader who wants to promote professional development will also participate in professional development events and strive to attain similar goals. *Writing the frame* means that community college leaders convey their message in various written formats, such as emails, blog postings, newsletters, written policy, mission statements, plans, meeting minutes, and memos. *Symbolizing the frame* refers to the ways in which community college leaders convey their message by offering a specific lens for interpreting their organization's vision, mission, or ideas (Eddy, 2010a, 2010b).

3.6.1 Bolman and Deal's (2013) Four Frame Model

Bolman and Deal (2013) also propose the concept of *multiframing*, which involves applying all of the frames in their Four Frame Model to provide an in-depth, multidimensional approach to understanding organizations. Multiframing means rethinking an issue from different perspectives that are represented in each of the leadership frames. Bolman and Deal's (2013) process of understanding frames and reframing organizational issues recognizes both approaches to leadership. The first approach is set, already established with predictable sequences; whereas the second approach (which Bolman and Deal encourage in their work) is one that promotes artistry in the interpretation of ideas, which in turn encourages creativity in leadership practice: "The leader as artist relies on images as well as memos, poetry as well as policy, reflection as well as command, and reframing as well as refitting" (p. 20).

Bolman and Deal (2013) constructed a model, consisting of four frames from different beliefs and practices that can be used as a framework to inform educational leadership. This framework outlines leadership behaviours and is presented in four categories—the structural, human resource, political, and symbolic frames—suggesting typical leadership behaviours that apply to each frame, the use of which distinctly influences leadership practices (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Table 1 lists the concepts, images, and challenges associated with each of the four frames. This theoretical framework is useful in further understanding educational leadership practices in community colleges. Each of the four frames offers context on leadership practices that is helpful in analyzing the problem of practice.

Table 1

Adaptation of Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model (2013)

	Structural Frame	Human Resource Frame	Political Frame	Symbolic Frame
Main Concepts	Roles, goals, policies, technology, and environment	Needs, skills, and relationships	Power, conflict, competition, and politics	Culture, meaning, metaphor, ritual, ceremony, stories, and heroes
Image	Social architecture	Empowerment	Advocacy and political savvy	Inspiration
Challenge	Attune structure to task, technology, and environment	Align organizational and human needs	Develop agenda and power base	Create faith, beauty, and meaning

Note. Adapted from “Artistry, Choice & Leadership: Reframing Organizations”, by L. G. Bolman and T. E. Deal, 2013, p. 19. Copyright 2013 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Bolman & Deal's Four-Frame Model (2013) suggests a multiframe approach, which allows leaders to view the organization from multiple perspectives. In their view, effective leadership

practice calls for a combination of approaches to address the challenges encountered in leadership:

The essence of reframing is examining the same situation from multiple vantage points. The effective leader changes lenses when things don't make sense or aren't working. Reframing offers the promise of powerful new options, but it cannot guarantee that every new strategy will be successful. Each lens offers distinctive advantages, but each lens has its blind spots and shortcomings. (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 333)

Bolman and Gallos (2011) argue that academic leadership in colleges and universities requires specific responsiveness to organizational issues, such as roles, policies, procedures, and resources that will effectively support the goals and purposes of the institution. Multiframing requires leaders to move away from a constricted mindset and reflect on their organization in a multidimensional way (Bolman & Deal, 2014). Multiframing allows community college leaders to view the phenomenon and the challenges presented holistically, thereby encouraging them to make the best use of available resources to meet goals (Bolman & Gallos, 2011).

3.6.1.1 Structural Frame

The characterization of leadership in the structural frame is consistent with the organizational structure and is synchronized with the organization's current circumstances, with the hierarchy as defined by organizational charts; with the roles defined in the division of labour; with the organization's established goals; and with the rules, policies, and standards that are in place to ensure compliance (Bolman & Deal, 2013). The structural frame represents the oldest and most popular form of leadership, in which roles and responsibilities are delegated and a higher level of coordination provides the plan, assigns responsibilities, measures successes and shortcomings, and builds networks of subordinate roles (Bolman & Deal, 2013). As Eddy and Amey (2014) observe, "The structural frame builds on the notion of rationality, rules, and formal roles and responsibilities" (p. 111).

When operating in the structural frame, leaders study the problem by forming committees,

pursuing research before reaching decisions, making connections between the organizational structures, and building a strategy. Structural leaders focus on implementing policy, with special consideration for the appropriate training and resources (Bolman & Deal, 2013). In terms of the Denturism program that provides the specific context for this study, the structural perspective can be used to understand the leadership practices that exist within the college's organizational structure that influence the implementation of the national curriculum standards. This framework is valuable for understanding the roles that different actors (such as the program chair, faculty members, placement supervisors, and other stakeholders) play during the process of implementing the NCPD standards in the field placement course. Bolman and Deal's structural framework also aids in understanding the interactions between the actors that influence policy implementation in the Denturism program, in particular how diverse actors collaborate to accomplish the task of implementing curriculum standards.

3.6.1.2 Human Resource Frame

The way in which leadership is characterized in the human resource frame is consistent with the symbiotic relationship between people and the organization. The individual benefits from the relationship in that the organization creates a highly motivating environment, invests in people, and builds capacity. This, in turn, benefits the organization as a whole by empowering organizational actors and by creating an organization in which leaders are visible and approachable (Bolman & Deal, 2013). This form of leadership attempts to create an energetic, creative, and enjoyable environment, one that promotes diversity and motivates all participants to give their best efforts towards success (Bolman & Deal, 2014).

Eddy and Amey (2014) point out that "A core assumption in this frame is that organizations exist to serve human needs rather than the reverse" (p. 112). Bolman & Deal (2013) state that human resource leaders typically build a social, sensitive, and compassionate environment that motivates and empowers team members. These leaders let their team members know that they believe in them, through both words and actions. Human resource leaders are visible and accessible, and they empower the team by sharing decision-making power. The trust that this

type of organization puts in its members to achieve diverse goals creates a caring, open environment and facilitates motivation (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

The human resource frame relates to the notion of a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991), which also encourages belonging, participation, collaboration, and shared leadership (Andrew, Tolson & Ferguson, 2008). Wenger (2010) states that the organizational culture in a community of practice is characterized by mutual activity, the upholding of standards of practice, and the commitment to collective learning. Li et al. (2009) note that belonging to a community of practice can be an empowering experience. Using this frame makes it apparent that motivation, empowerment, and collaboration are crucial factors for those involved in the implementation of the curriculum standards.

3.6.1.3 Political Frame

The political frame characterizes leadership in a way that considers the organization as a collection of groups, each of whose members hold different values, beliefs, and interests. These groups all compete to accomplish goals and make decisions while managing scarce resources, building alliances, and engaging in persuasion and negotiation (Bolman & Deal, 2013). “The political frame views organizations as the scene of competing interests and conflicts. Assumptions central to this perspective are that organizations are filled with differing coalitions and that these groups have fundamentally different core operating values and worldviews” (Eddy & Amey, 2014, p. 112).

Bolman and Deal characterize political leaders as being clear about their mandates. They assess the people who hold powerful positions and influence and align themselves with these individuals while, at the same time, building collaborative relationships with stakeholders and pursuing the goals and vision of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2013). To this end, political leaders use a specific style of leadership wherein they “persuade first, negotiate second, and coerce only if necessary” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 364). Furthermore, Bolman and Deal (2013) state that political leaders focus on building relationships and networks.

In terms of this particular study, the political frame helps illustrate how leaders, such as the program chair and faculty members, are instrumental in establishing partnerships that provide placement sites for the field placement course. The perspective afforded by the political frame emphasizes the process of establishing these partnerships, as well as the influence these partnerships may have on field placement courses in the community college.

3.6.1.4 Symbolic Frame

The way in which the symbolic frame characterizes leadership considers the integration of assumptions from diverse but complementary sources to create meaning that is relevant to the organization, but also still holds significance for its individual members. This synthesis creates an environment that offers faith, hope, and vision and builds upon this notion, using rituals, ceremonies, and experiences. The result is an organizational culture that is specific to each individual because each individual has a unique interpretation of that culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013). In short, “[t]he symbolic frame focuses on the meanings individuals take from situations versus reality” (Eddy & Amey, 2014, p. 114).

Symbolic leaders offer reassurance and inspiration to their teams and capture team members’ attention with meaningful symbols that can represent the vision of the organization (Bolman and Deal, 2014). These leaders frame the group’s experience and build a shared vision for the future (Bolman & Deal, 2013). To do this, symbolic leaders approach their work with passion, conviction, and courage in shaping the direction of their organization (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Bush (2003) has highlighted the fact that leaders must be selective in their purposes and goals in order to ensure that their personal goals align with the goals of the educational institution and the community. Bush warns that there is a risk involved, as leaders may implement personal objectives that do not necessarily reflect those of the educational institution. Leaders may also influence decisions when they want to fulfill a specific purpose (Bush, 2003). However, Bush (2003) also notes that a leader’s vision could be influenced by imposed government policy.

Bolman & Deal’s Four Frame Model is helpful in developing an understanding of the leadership practices in the context of implementing curriculum standards in the community college field

placement course in the present study. It is also useful for analyzing the leadership practices that emerged during the implementation of curriculum standards in the Denturism program as a whole. The conceptual/theoretical framework discussed guides the interpretation of the data gathered in this study while addressing the main research questions. In addition, the body of literature that explains communities of practice helps create a better understanding of the leadership practices that contribute to the operationalization of knowledge of the national curriculum standards within the field placement course. Learning about the structural elements that comprise communities of practice allows this study to explain the form, function, and characteristics of the practices involved in the implementation of standards. It is important to understand how concepts of educational leadership, organizational learning, and communities of practice relate to one another while influencing instruction in the field placement course.

When considering the implementation of curriculum standards in a postsecondary institution, it is also necessary to examine organizational frames that may inform how leadership practices influence organizational learning. In this particular context, Bolman and Deal's (2013) four frames provide a way to address the third research question, namely, "How do the organizational structures, actors, and practices in the community college contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD standards?"

3.7 Implications of conceptual/theoretical frameworks for this study

The theoretical and conceptual frameworks reviewed in this chapter have informed the formulation of the research questions and the examination of the problem of practice in this study. The AACC (2005) leadership competencies serve as a foundation for Eddy's Holistic Competencies Framework (2012), which aligns these competencies into clusters under the overarching notion of contextual competency. Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model (2013) provides different lenses through which to interpret and understand the findings from this research. The interconnected components of policy implementation, educational leadership

practices, and organizational learning are shown in Figure 2, which illustrates how the frameworks discussed above position the problem of practice within these three areas of study.

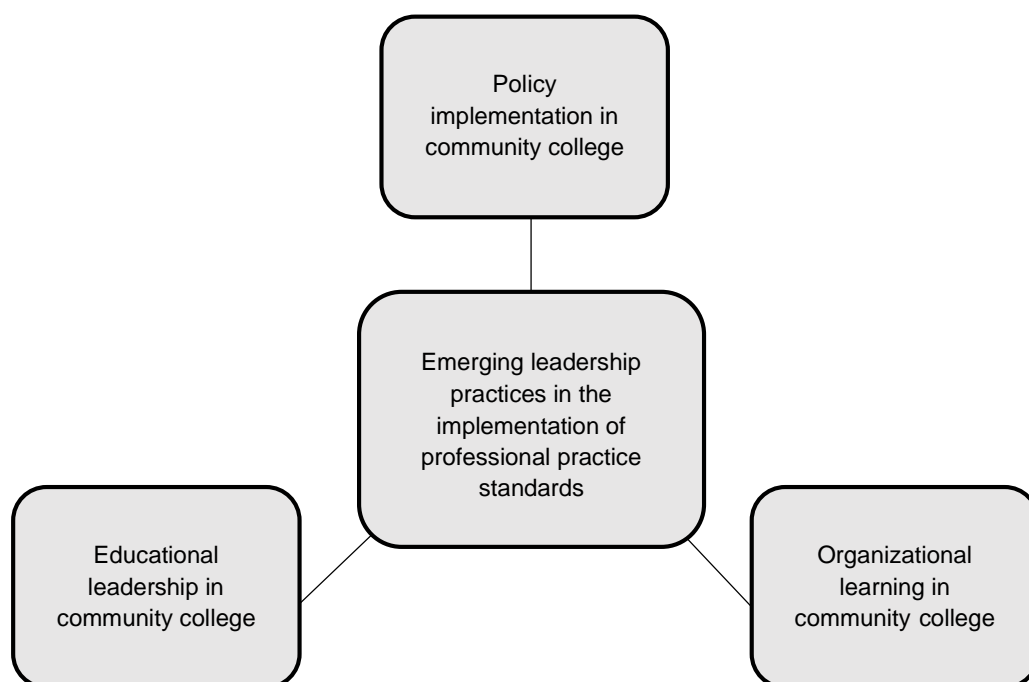


Figure 2. Conceptual depiction of the three research components

Each of the indicators chosen is important in understanding leadership practices in a community college program. The investigation of the implementation of policy in the form of the NCPD standards encourages the exploration of the roles of organizational actors and of how each actor may be influential in implementing these standards in the Denturism program. The theoretical frameworks used provide a foundation to conceptualize the phenomenon being studied. The literature used allows for an analysis of the coordinating activities of each organizational actor that contribute to this curricular policy implementation. Educational leadership is an important factor in the process of making meaningful curricular changes in a community college program. The exploration of organizational learning clarifies how the Denturism program has shared

knowledge of the NCPD standards with internal and external stakeholders. This is also another essential piece of this study, as understanding what strategies promote organizational outcomes in an educational institution can help identify the leadership practices needed for sharing and operationalizing knowledge in this area, thereby influencing curriculum restructuring.

Eddy's Holistic Competency Framework (2012) and Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model (2013) provide important theoretical frameworks that are used as templates for the interpretation of the data gathered in this study. The interplay between the two frameworks helps in recognizing, compartmentalizing, and understanding the educational leadership practices related to the implementation of national curriculum standards in the community college. The combination of the two conceptual/theoretical frameworks offers a multidimensional approach. Eddy's (2012) competency clusters allow for the consideration of more than one leadership competency, while Bolman and Deal's (2013) four frames offer four different perspectives from which to consider leadership practices.

My conceptualization of Eddy's Holistic Competency Framework (2012) builds upon the idea that each context is unique and that an overarching concept of understanding the community college's particular context plays an important role in applying the competency clusters highlighted in this framework. The overall importance of contextual competency in Eddy's (2012) framework allows it to be applied in a context-sensitive way according to the environment. The competency clusters help me to understand *what* leadership practices are relevant and to compartmentalize leadership practices within each competency cluster, in order to illuminate what leadership practices occur in the existing organizational structure, as well as how the competencies are operationalized and being used. Using competency clusters rather than individual competencies in isolation promotes a holistic interpretation of the leadership practices, organizational roles, and structures that emerge from the data gathered in this study. This provides depth and perspective in analyzing the existing leadership practices. Furthermore, I use the competency clusters to offer a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon being studied from a leadership perspective.

As Eddy's Holistic Competency Framework (2012) identifies *what* leadership competencies occur together within the context being studied, Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model (2013) adds to this interpretation by providing leadership approaches showing *how* to lead effectively in organizations. The concepts in Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model (2013) provide ways to look at organizational culture and to develop approaches to leadership that will support and influence organizational change. In addition to providing another angle for the interpretation of data, Bolman and Deal's (2013) model is useful in providing information on four different perspectives that are useful in *guiding* change. By reviewing the study's interpretations, using the concepts represented in each of the four frames, I gain an understanding of the existing situation. The perspectives provided by these frames provide guidance in making decisions and recommendations on how leadership practices can best support change.

The combination of both conceptual/theoretical frameworks illuminate the phenomenon studied and thus provide multiple dimensions for this exploratory study. Also, by using both frameworks, I gain an understanding that could potentially help in planning future strategies, identifying potential challenges, developing resources, and developing mechanisms to implement curricular change that will support the community of practice in adopting the NCPD. As this community of practice is a significant factor in creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge of these standards, it is important to use both frameworks to understand leadership initiatives that inform policy implementation in this unique context.

3.8 Conceptualizing the community college as an organization

The community college serves as the organization explored in this research. Formal mission statements generally state the operational goals and purposes of a college, and the curricula of college programs generally reflect these statements (Meier, 2013). Common organizational practices occur within the learning organization and in collaboration with the professional involvement of faculty members, which in turn affect the college's educational practices and

outcomes: “This substantive mission is reflected in measurable organizational outcomes” (Meier, 2013, p. 6). Thus, organizational concepts provide context for understanding how colleges are structured and how they operate.

To further understand the organizational structure of community colleges, Nevarez, Wood, and Penrose (2013) maintain that community colleges work like a system in which governance structures, such as policies, weave together people and departments in a way that makes them mutually interdependent. As a result, “an organization relies on each unit (e.g., department, college), process, function, and individual to meet organizational goals (e.g., community college mission)” (Nevarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013, p. 11).

3.9 Organizational learning in the community college: Creating, sharing and operationalizing knowledge

With regard to the specific operationalization of knowledge about the national competencies in the Denturism program, the literature suggests that organizations that want communities of practice “to become a pervasive, integrated, and influential force for learning and innovation, will need to measure and manage them” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 166).

However, given the nature of knowledge in this context, “you can’t treat knowledge effectively as if it were a thing or a piece of property. But you can measure and manage the ‘knowledge system’ through which it flows and creates value” (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 166). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) suggest that every organization has its own knowledge system in which interdependent processes are used to apply knowledge, such as the national curriculum standards, in the appropriate context by creating resources: “This means coordinating the activities of a variety of players who help discover, diffuse, or apply knowledge, including teams, staff groups, research centers, communities, suppliers, customers, and other agents inside and outside the organization” (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002, p. 166).

3.10 Communities of practice in the community college

Ideally, a community of practice encourages belonging, participation, collaboration, and shared leadership, not just informal relationships (Andrew, Tolson, & Ferguson, 2008). Wenger (1998) argues that a community of practice is different from a team, in that the former is held together by the commonalities and interests of its members and by the continued value of the community, and not by an institution's agenda. Communities of practice affect educational practices from two perspectives: internally (to create and organize such learning opportunities) and externally (to connect what the learners know to practical experiences) (Wenger, 2007). In this particular study, a perspective centered on the idea of communities of practice offers contextualized insight to appreciate how the NCPD standards are incorporated into the field placement course. "Rather than learning by replicating the performances of others or by acquiring knowledge transmitted in instruction, we suggest that learning occurs through centripetal participation in the learning curriculum of the ambient community" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 100).

In the context of this research, the communities of practice framework is useful to attain a better understanding of the leadership practices that operationalize knowledge of the NCPD within the Denturism program, particularly in the field placement course. By learning about the structural elements that make up communities of practice, the study explains the form, function, and characteristics of the practices involved in the implementation of these standards. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) describe several relationships that communities of practice can have with the organization. As applied to this study, the communities of practice that exist within the field placement course may be defined as "legitimized" and "supported," meaning that these communities are, respectively, "officially sanctioned as a valuable entity" and "provided with direct resources from the organization" (p. 28).

Leadership practices throughout the organization may be influential in cultivating the community of practice alongside their role in shaping the design of the instruction that is part of the field placement course. The implementation of national standards could serve as a guide for this process, which would be supported with additional resources. As Wenger (1998) notes, "Once

learning communities are truly functional and connected to the world in meaningful ways, teaching events can be designed around them as resources to their practices and as opportunities to open up their learning more broadly” (p. 271). Therefore, communities of practice serve multiple purposes, providing a resource for organizational learning as well as a venue for participants to engage in contextual learning (Wenger, 1998).

In higher education, Andrew, Tolson, and Ferguson (2008) have identified an increasing trend for communities of practice to include local, professional, and business stakeholders. However, “[c]ollaboration between practitioners and academics has historically been regarded as difficult” (p. 247), due to the nature of their respective backgrounds; that is, the former group is grounded in practical experience, while the latter specializes in research and theoretical knowledge. Andrew, Tolson and Ferguson (2008) argue that the idea of a community of practice “recognizes the symbiotic relationship of theory and practice” (p. 251). They observe that the nature of working in postsecondary environments is evolving to promote more and more collaborations with the community (Andrew, Tolson, & Ferguson, 2008). Furthermore, a community of practice can serve “as a vehicle for the creation and management of knowledge systems” (Andrew, Tolson, & Ferguson, 2008, p. 251); thus allowing the “sponsoring organization” (p. 251) to disseminate the knowledge it wishes. This finding is relevant, as it provides further reference for how knowledge of the NCPD standards can be shared within a community college setting.

Li et al. (2009) have noted that communities of practice promote self-empowerment and professional development. Linking these two concepts, Hoadley (2012) argues that the role of information and communication technology in supporting the community of practice is essential to the community’s success. Hoadley (2012) proposes a strategy for developing communities of practice that includes “linking others with similar practices, providing access to shared repositories, supporting conversation within a community, and providing awareness of the context of information resources” (p. 296). Using technology to support those involved in a community of practice allows them to interact with and support one another, as well as learn about their role within the community of practice. Wenger (1998) has indicated that the organization can convey the message that it values the work and initiative of those involved in

the community of practice by providing guidance, resources, and assistance to the community to connect its agenda with the organization's policies; by encouraging the community to maintain focus; and by supporting the community of practice in connecting with others. Communities of practice can use leadership, and they flourish when their learning fits within the organizational environment (Wenger, 1998).

3.11 The community of practice in the Denturism program

As noted in the introductory chapter, this study aims to understand the leadership practices that contribute to the implementation of the NCPD standards in a community college's Denturism program, with a special emphasis on the field placement course. For the purpose of this study, the community college is understood as an organization. The field placement course, which consists of faculty members, field placement mentors, and mentees, is regarded as a community of practice within this organization. In the context of this study, it is referred to as the *field placement community of practice*. Wenger (1998, 2007) states that,

the term community of practice was coined to refer to the community that acts as a living curriculum for the apprentice. Once the concept was articulated, [we] started to see these communities everywhere, even when no formal apprenticeship system existed. (Wenger, 2007, p. 4).

Within this framework, learning is characterized as "legitimate peripheral participation," whereby the learner acquires the skill to perform a task by actually engaging in a series of sanctioned and ritualized practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This means that, in this process, social participation is an integral part of learning (Wenger, 1998). According to Lave and Wenger (1991), the collective approach, which is unique to communities of practice, suggests that learning lies within the organization or the group, not within the individual. The expertise of the members involved in communities of practice represents an accumulation of their experience with context-specific problems. The organization assigns responsibility to the members to share

their knowledge in this forum (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). “Most important, communities of practice create value by connecting the personal development and professional identities of practitioners to the strategy of the organization. Successful ones deliver value to their members as well as the organization” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 17). In the context of this study, the idea of communities of practice helps to understand how organizational knowledge about the NCPD is created and shared within the field placement community of practice, constituted by different organizational actors. Thus, it is also beneficial to learn more about the leadership practices that support the field placement community of practice.

Chapter 4

4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction to methodology

The purpose of the study was to characterize the leadership practices that support the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) curriculum standards in the Denturism program of a Canadian post-secondary institution. The goal was to further explore the leadership practices that supported the introduction of the national curriculum standards into the program and, in particular, into the existing field placement course. A qualitative exploratory case study design (Merriam, 2009) was used to analyze the participants' perspectives on leadership and policy processes that occur in the Denturism program. Through their views, I was able to interpret the findings and accomplish my goal of offering insight into the leadership practices that emerged during the implementation of the NCPD. An exploratory case study was the appropriate choice as this offered the opportunity to gather descriptive data in context, as described by Merriam (2009), which enriched my learning concerning the phenomenon under scrutiny and allowed me to present my findings and interpretations in my own unique manner.

4.2 Methodology and research design

The basic principles of qualitative research outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) start by situating qualitative research as a form of naturalistic inquiry. Within the naturalistic paradigm, researchers aim to expand their understanding of the participants and their situation and not to make generalizations. When designing qualitative studies, researchers seek to understand the participants' experiences and incorporate this meaning into their findings, thus gaining an understanding of a situated phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Since this study aimed to explore leadership practices, the interpretation of the findings relied on gathering data from a small purposive sample that would be reflective of their perspectives and experiences, and not on

quantitative methods. I chose a qualitative approach, as this was an initial study with the goal of gathering data to explore the phenomenon and not gathering numerical data to quantify variables.

In the introductory chapter, I stated my positionality within the research by explaining my role, values, and biases. I have continued to position myself within the research as is ultimately evident in both my interpretations and those of the participants. Closely linked to the philosophical approach to a study are the interpretive frameworks. An interpretive framework provides the lens, which the researcher uses to derive meaning from the experiences and views of the research participants (Cresswell, 2013). Amongst the many interpretive frameworks that exist, Patton (2015) describes ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, social constructionism, and constructivism as frameworks that could guide a researcher to interpret the data. Cresswell (2014) identifies constructivism as a perspective that trusts the views and experiences shared by the participants and is “typically seen as an approach to qualitative research” (p. 8). “Thus, constructivist researchers often address the processes of interaction among individuals” (Cresswell, 2014, p. 8). It is important for a constructivist researcher to select an interpretive framework that will guide the research instruments to gather broad, rich, descriptive data that, in turn, will allow her/him to understand the interactions, views, and engagement of the participants within the context being studied. In other words, “researchers make an interpretation of what they find, an interpretation shaped by their own experiences and background. The researcher’s intent then is to make sense of (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world” (Cresswell, 2013, p. 25). Similarly, Stake (1995) argues that the constructivist framework encourages case study researchers to gather information, provide descriptions for the reader, and make interpretations. In this research, the constructivist framework was used to interpret the findings. These conceptual/theoretical frameworks have served to provide the underlying structure of the research and represent the orientation the researcher has brought into the study (See: Merriam, 2009). Derived from the literature reviewed, the themes of policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning were dominant and recurrent areas of investigation.

4.2.1 Ethical Considerations

Another integral component of the research design were the ethical considerations for the study. Patton (2015) and Cresswell (2014) suggest researchers consider ethical issues throughout all phases of their research, including planning and data collection, analysis, reporting, and management. The required ethics approval certificates from the institutional review board (IRB) at Western University and the community college, in which this study was conducted, were obtained prior to data collection and are included in Appendix D.

Administrators and faculty members, who were involved with the implementation of the NCPD in this community college, were invited by email to participate in this study. By inviting potential participants by email, I established a voluntary environment where participants could choose to participate or simply disregard the email (See: Appendix C). As Mears (2009) argues, researchers must ensure participants “understand the voluntary nature of their participation” (p. 40), and that they can withdraw from participating at any time. All participants received a letter of information and consent (See: Appendix A). This letter provided information on the purpose of the study, participant inclusion and exclusion criteria, study procedures, and possible risks and benefits of participation; and emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and informed consent. Participants were also informed that only the investigators of this study would have access to the data collected, thus ensuring confidentiality. As part of my ethical responsibility, I obtained informed consent from each participant before data was collected. In addition, as Miller et al. (2012) suggest, to “ensure that ethical and methodological considerations are continually reassessed” (p. 73), I consistently engaged in reflection on my role as both researcher and insider to the study.

The data collected in this study was kept secure following the ethical protocol. Further, Gay, Mills and Airasian (2012) recommend “[T]he use of anonymity to ensure confidentiality and avoid privacy invasion” (p. 21). In this study, the researcher knew the identity of the participants; therefore, anonymity could not be guaranteed. However pseudonyms were used in the representation of the participants and their perspectives in this thesis, and every effort was made

to maintain their anonymity.

4.3 Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985, 2013) highlighted the importance of trustworthiness in qualitative research studies. They proposed *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* as the criteria that would replace the conventional terms of *internal validity*, *external validity*, *reliability*, and *objectivity* respectively. Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that the conventional criteria are not applicable in qualitative/naturalist inquiry, and have proposed qualitative techniques that the researcher can use: “Chief among these are prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking, to establish credibility; thick description, to facilitate transferability; and auditing, to establish dependability and confirmability” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 219). It is recommended to include procedures, such as maintaining field journals and developing an audit trail. Gathering documents and triangulating data should be scheduled during the research design and implemented during the inquiry to increase the probability that trustworthiness will be established (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In order to operationalize Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) criteria and establish trustworthiness in the research, the study implemented the following strategies.

4.3.1 Credibility

To improve the credibility in the findings and interpretation of the data, member checks and the technique of triangulation was used. Member checking involves engaging the participants to give feedback on the interpretation of their interview (Merriam, 2009). Triangulation involves testing for consistencies as well as inconsistencies in the data, engaging the researcher into a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study. In Patton’s view, “the logic of triangulation is based on the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations” (Patton, 2015, p. 661). This study used two forms of triangulation: data

triangulation and researcher triangulation.

4.3.1.1 Data triangulation

The triangulation of qualitative sources included semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The concept of triangulation was intended to instill confidence in the themes and patterns that were identified. By using the same questions in all the interviews, I was able to compare the perspective of the different actors involved, regardless of their role within the organizational structure. Further, the interview transcripts were supported by documents that inform the policy implementation processes. The documents analyzed in this study were the NCPD (Professional Examination Service, 2013), the leadership competencies from the AACC (2005, 2013, 2016), the PAC documents (George Brown College, 2006; NAIT, 2014; Vancouver Community College, 2016a), and the academic plans (Vancouver Community College, 2015–2016; NAIT, 2015–2019; George Brown College, 2016-2019), from each of the Canadian community colleges that offer the Denturism program.

4.3.1.2 Researcher triangulation

In addition to the data triangulation, this study employed researcher triangulation. This strategy aims to add credibility to the findings by allowing another researcher to review the themes, patterns, and explanations. This was accomplished by asking the supervisor of this study to review the findings in light of the data.

4.3.1.3 Member checks

To further contribute to the credibility of the data, I conducted member checks with each of the participants. Member checks give the participants the opportunity to react, respond, and confirm what has been written and offer the researcher the chance to revise for accuracy. The raw data is then used for the analysis. The participants had the opportunity to review the transcripts of the audio-recorded interviews and confirm that the information constructed from their experiences was in fact representative of their views and conveyed their perspective as they intended. Member checking is directly associated with the overall credibility of the research (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). Both the techniques of triangulation and member checking contributed to establishing the credibility of the findings and interpretations of the data.

4.3.2 Transferability

To improve the transferability in the findings to similar contexts, I started by stating my positionality, which identified my position and connection to the study, so the reader is able to understand my approach and how this may have shaped the interpretation (See: Cresswell, 2013). Moreover, I drew participants from a purposeful sample that was small but representative and knowledgeable of the phenomenon being studied (See: Cresswell, 2013).

In qualitative research a purposeful sample is preferred, as the researcher wants to better understand the phenomenon in depth, not to generalize what might be true of the many (Merriam, 2009). This type of sampling focused on the different actors that are involved in policy implementation in the Denturism program, to gain a better understanding of the context, and provide rich, descriptive data, also known as “thick description” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.3.3 Dependability

In order for the findings of a qualitative study to be considered dependable, the results must prove to be consistent with the data that was collected (Merriam, 2009). Achieving dependability of the findings requires the researcher to be ethical and responsible in conducting an inquiry in which information can be retrievable and everything is documented (Patton, 2015). An inquiry audit is recommended in the literature to address dependability in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). My supervisor audited all the research activities in this study, including the data collection, transcription, and analysis.

4.3.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to validating that the research findings and interpretation are in fact connected to the data collected in the study and that these connections could be easily understood by others (Patton, 2015). Creswell (2013) postulates that “[I]t is not enough to gain perspectives

and terms; ultimately, these ideas are translated into practice as strategies or techniques” (p. 250). Qualitative researchers can use several techniques to establish confirmability and thus refer back to the raw data to validate their interpretations, process, and conclusions. To improve the probability of establishing confirmability in the findings and interpretation of the data, the technique of auditing was used. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that an audit trail should be included in all qualitative studies. First, communications to recruit the participants were stored, and all raw data from the audio-recorded interviews were kept and stored, according to ethical protocols. In addition to this, a compilation of the researcher’s reflections, notes, and records of the data analysis and meanings behind what is being interpreted has been maintained as well.

4.4 Defining the Unit of Analysis

A case study is an inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-world context (Yin, 2014). It is an “all-encompassing method-covering the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis” (Yin, 2014, p. 17). While the case cannot be reproduced, it is usually valued for its contribution to the literature (Stake, 1985). To appropriately use case study methodology, Yin (2014) recommends defining the case and identifying the unit of analysis. To define the case, the researcher must identify what is being studied and narrow down the research questions. Understanding what specifically will be studied, with applicable research questions, will identify the unit of analysis. In this research, the unit of analysis is the leadership practices that support and influence the implementation of national curriculum standards in the Denturism program. This phenomenon is occurring in the bounded system that is the one Canadian community college.

4.5 Data Collection

4.5.1 Sampling

As noted, a purposeful sample was used to recruit participants into the study. All participants were contacted through email. I chose a purposeful sample because I felt the people directly involved with the Denturism program would be representative of the leadership practices and processes that are an integral part of this program and would thus contribute to the relevance of this study.

The logic and power of qualitative purposeful sampling derives from the emphasis on in-depth understanding of specific cases: *information-rich cases*. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful sampling*. (Patton, 2015, p. 53)

The sample size was expected to be between four to ten participants, with the actual number of participants being eight. The relevance of qualitative research has little to do with the size of the sample, but with gathering enough data to develop and support the framework with the findings from the study (Merriam, 2009). The participants included faculty members, a faculty member who leads program review, the program coordinator, and an administrator who is the program Chair; thereby offering diverse perspectives and experiences on the questions asked in the interviews.

Table 2

Study Participants (Names have been changed to protect the anonymity of the participants)

Name	Gender	Position	Context	Years in this Position
Raven	Female	Faculty	Faculty member, teaches in	Approx. 10

			various programs in Health Sciences, including the Denturism program	
Heather	Female	Faculty	Faculty member, teaches in various programs in Health Sciences, including the Denturism program	Approx. 10
Noah	Female	Faculty/ Program Reviewer	Faculty member, conducts the program review and curriculum mapping across the community college	Approx. 10
Aileen	Female	Chair	Administrator, oversees several programs under one of the Health Sciences schools of the community college	Approx. 10
Aedon	Female	Faculty	Faculty member, teaches in various programs in Health Sciences, including the Denturism program and the field placement component of another program	Approx. 10
Pearce	Male	Faculty/ Coordinator	Faculty member and coordinator, teaches in the Denturism program	Approx. 10
Nyome	Female	Faculty	Faculty member, teaches in various programs in Health Sciences, including the Denturism program and the field placement component of another program	Approx. 10
Martha	Female	Faculty	Faculty member, teaches in various programs in Health Sciences, including the Denturism program	Approx. 10

The protocol in qualitative case studies, proposed by Merriam (2009), recommends two levels of sampling. The first level of sampling in this study involved the selection of the case itself, which was accomplished by identifying the bounded system and the unit of analysis; and the second level involved the selection of a sample within the case (See: Merriam, 2009). At this level of sample selection, the criteria established were faculty and administrators who were familiar with the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD).

Along with the email invitation sent were a letter of information and a consent form attached to the email (See: Appendix A). Interested participants replied to the email and a mutually convenient date and time were selected for the interviews. The interviews varied in length, but generally were one to two hours in duration. The interviews took place on campus, in private, in a reserved room. The interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. Each participant was again contacted and given the transcript of their interview to review and ensure that the content was accurate and all the information in fact conveyed the participants' experiences accurately. Participants were given the opportunity to read and review the transcripts, and any noted changes were discussed and modified to meet the final approval of each of the participants before the transcripts were used for data analysis.

4.6 Data Sources

Semi-structured interviews and document analysis were the two main sources of data collected for this study.

4.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

By using a semi-structured interview, I was able to ask planned questions (See: Appendix B). However, this type of interview allowed me the flexibility to ask follow-up questions that would further engage the participants based on their reply. By asking all participants the same initial questions, I was able to compare the data in the analysis stage, but still engage the participants to share their individual views and experiences. Yin (2014) refers to this type of interview as a

“shorter case study interview,” in which the process unfolds in one sitting and lasts approximately one hour (p. 111). Seidman (2013) argues that there are three levels of listening that an interviewer must practice in order to contribute to the data collection process. First, a researcher must focus and comprehend what the participant is saying while ensuring the questions have been answered. Second, researchers should recognize that the responses of the participants are their *outer voice*. It is the researcher’s role to encourage the participants to reveal their *inner voice* and to encourage a level of candidness that will build comfort and trust. Third, the researcher must be conscious of time, and that the interview is progressing forward as it should be. In other words, the participants should remain engaged in the discussion. This active form of listening is essential to the interview process and complements the applicable questions that address the research questions (Seidman, 2013).

The instrument consisted of fourteen questions and potential follow-up questions, if applicable. In some cases, the follow-up questions were asked, and in other cases they were not. Once the participants agreed to participate in the study, the communication was confirmed by email to establish a date, time and location that was mutually suitable. When the participants returned the signed consent form, I kept the original signed document and then personally delivered a prepared folder that consisted of a copy of the signed consent form, the information letter, and the interview questions. I felt that by providing the interview questions in advance, the participants would have the opportunity to become familiar with the terms and the language used in the interview, and this would establish a certain level of ease and comfort and perhaps alleviate a stressful environment in the interview process.

I transcribed each of the interviews, using Dragon Naturally Speaking, by listening to and repeating the interviews. I followed this process with editing for accuracy and thus began the initial phase of data analysis. I indicated themes in my notes to add to the audit trail. Every participant was contacted for a follow-up meeting to review the transcript from the interview. This meeting was again set up individually for a mutually convenient time. Following the transcription process, the member-checking process was completed when all required revisions were completed and the transcripts were approved by the participants.

4.6.2 Document analysis

Documenting what is observed or heard and experienced in field work is one type of documentation. This type of documentation produces texts that are researcher-generated (Merriam, 2009). In addition to this documentation, which creates the audit trail previously discussed, fieldwork also involves finding documents and artifacts that provide information about things that have previously occurred and may prove to be important in the research findings (Patton, 2015). Seeking and examining documents to enhance data collection is similar to other methods of data collection, such as observations and interviews (Stake, 1985). Examples of documents that can deepen qualitative analysis are journals, annual program reports, staff meeting minutes, websites, program implementation documents, legislation documents, reports, planning documents, emails, and virtually any piece of information that would inform the research topic (Patton, 2015; Yin, 2014). Documents support activity that may not have been observed directly. However, if the researcher feels it is relevant to the findings, then the documents that exist, whatever they may be, can support the findings (Stake, 1995; Patton, 2015). Documents carry an added value to case study research, therefore playing an instrumental role in the study (Yin, 2014).

Documents retrieved for use in this research study were both primary- and secondary-source documents, with their authenticity verified to be accurate for use in this research. Primary source documents were considered to be literature that supported the themes emerging from this research, and secondary source documents were considered to be public documents, belonging to post-secondary institutions that also supported emerging themes. The investigation adopted a form of document analysis, in which the documents were reviewed for the terms of the major themes of *policy implementation in community college*, *educational leadership in community college*, and *organizational learning in community college*. The data from the document analysis was then categorized within these major themes to be easily retrievable, using the same initial coding method applied to the interview data. “The data found in the documents can be used in the same manner as data from interviews” (Merriam, 2009, p. 155). The data that emerged from the document analysis were descriptive and supportive of emerging themes from the interview

data, therefore lending themselves to further understanding the emerging themes and their relationships to leadership and community college processes. The use of document analysis in this research added value to the findings, since this was an acceptable method of triangulation. As such, the findings may be more convincing to the reader, and thus credible, if the conclusions are supported by different sources of information (Yin, 2014).

4.7 Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, using the eight interviews and the documents, the analysis and interpretation process began. Yin (2014) suggests developing a case description as an initial strategy, followed by the issues being explored, review of the literature, methods used and then beginning the data analysis and ending with conclusions. The data analysis stage of qualitative research is primarily a journey, beginning with observations, that progresses toward the discovery of general patterns that may represent relevant constructs. This journey is exploratory and is thus referred to as “inductive analysis” (Patton, 2015). “Inductive analysis involves discovering patterns, themes, and categories in one’s data” (Patton, 2015, p. 542). Accordingly, emergent and relevant themes of policy, leadership, and organizational constructs were explored throughout the data analysis. Finding meaning in the data is especially linked to commonalities and connections in the data by using categories and identifying patterns (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012).

Saldana (2013) suggests “first cycle” and “second cycle” methods to analyze the data and explains that each of the coding cycles have different approaches. Of the twenty-five different approaches to first cycle coding described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), this research demonstrated the use of the descriptive coding approach, in which a label or short phrase is used to summarize the topic of the qualitative data. Further, all the data that has the same topic can be extracted and charted under this code to compose a detailed case. To develop these initial codes, the major themes of *policy implementation, leadership, and organizational*

learning were used, and information was gathered from the conceptual/theoretical framework and the research questions (See: Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). As the data collection proceeded, emerging codes were developed based on the data. Second cycle coding is a method that further distinguishes the categories from first cycle coding by grouping according to constructs that characterize emergent (and similar) themes (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

By adopting this coding and classification reference, several themes and concepts became apparent in the data. “First cycle coding is a way to initially summarize segments of data. Pattern coding, as a second cycle method, is a way of grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes or constructs” (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014, p. 86). As the second cycle coding progressed, the pattern-coding method I adopted led me to use more explanatory terms, such as collaboration, communication, and vision. As I continued the data analysis process by gathering the codes to further categorize them, or “pattern” them, I chose to place the codes into roles, challenges, practices, and processes.

4.8 Assumptions

The belief that leadership is essential to policy implementation (Haggard, Moore, Phillips, & Phillips, 2007) guided my analysis in an attempt to better understand the ways in which leadership practices support the implementation of the NCDP standards. Eddy’s (2012) discussion of clusters of leadership competencies further informed the assumption that, in order to develop our knowledge about community college leadership practices, a comprehensive approach toward leadership must be utilized. Thus, it is necessary to investigate the organization from a holistic perspective that focuses on several leadership practices.

This investigation is also based on the assumption that the field placement course gives learners opportunities to engage in communities of practice (See: Smith, 2003, 2009). Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) observe that members of a community of practice,

Over time...develop a unique perspective on their topic as well as a body of common knowledge, practices, and approaches. They also develop personal relationships and established ways of interacting. They may even develop a common sense of identity. They become a community of practice. (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 5)

These assumptions are characteristic of my choice of research method, namely, qualitative case study research. This approach helped me gain a contextual understanding of the organizational structures and leadership practices that support the implementation of the NCDP standards in the community college in this study. My selection of the case study methodology allowed me to describe how the various actors involved in the implementation of these standards in the Denturism program collaborated to accomplish this task.

4.9 Limitations

There are some limitations in the design and analysis phases of this study. First, the data collection was limited to one program and only drew on resources from within this particular Denturism program. While similarities in teaching and learning models exist, no two postsecondary programs are ever exactly identical. Therefore, it may not be possible to transfer the findings of this research, which are specific to one Denturism program, to the context of another such program. If the two contexts are similar, the findings may be transferable, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) note, “The person who wishes to make a judgment of transferability needs information about *both* contexts to make that judgment well” (p. 124). Thus, the research presented here provides a foundation of descriptive, contextual knowledge (also known as a “thick description”) that allows anyone gathering this information to make decisions regarding its transferability (See: Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2009).

The study presented here is also restricted in that the interviews were conducted within a single academic year, limiting the data collection to that specific timeframe. This may have posed a limitation in terms of the amount of data that was collected, which in turn may have affected the

number of themes that were analyzed. One way to counter this possible limitation is to focus the analysis only on the themes that present data saturation (Saumure & Given, 2008); that is, to focus the analysis only on the themes that appear continuously in the data, up to a point where no new data is needed to undertake the analysis of that particular theme. Using this method allowed me to obtain meaningful insights from data collected during a limited amount of time. While my position as an insider to this study may have limited my interpretation of the data, I took steps to increase the credibility of my analysis, using a number of triangulation strategies as discussed.

Chapter 5

5 Analysis: Findings, Discussion and Summary

5.1 Organizational background

The Denturism programs in all Canadian community colleges base their curriculum planning on provincial program standards, established by the ministry that guides post-secondary education for each province. In the particular case of the program investigated through this study, the provincial program standard states that curricula will include *specific vocational training*, *essential skills for the workplace*, and *general education*, as part of the knowledge learners will attain upon graduation. It includes *program vocational learning outcomes* communicated in written statements that describe skills and knowledge specific to this program. The Denturism program lists individual *course learning outcomes* and compiles them into *program learning outcomes*. Thus, the program vocational learning outcomes align with program learning outcomes. Following Ministry guidelines, which state that higher education programming must include outcomes-based education policy and processes that monitor its implementation, this program employs program learning outcomes to guide its curriculum planning. When the NCPD was developed by the Denturism profession's stakeholders, the Chair shared the policy with faculty members, connecting it to the existing curriculum framework that has guided outcomes-based planning.

Curriculum planning and development activities that monitor curricular policy in the Denturism program include: accreditation, program review, and curriculum mapping. These activities were completed before the implementation of the NCPD. Curriculum planning and development activities, including reviewing the implementation of academic and curricular policies, involve the faculty members, the department Chair, and other stakeholders, such as the Curriculum Advisory Committee of the Denturist Association of Canada (the accrediting body), and the program reviewer (a faculty member who specializes in curriculum). These activities are carried out at designated times and facilitate collaboration amongst stakeholders to evaluate the existing structure, to set goals, and to assist in planning for program improvements.

The program's field placement course is a significant component in the successful implementation of the NCPD. Throughout their final academic year, each student engages in developing practical skills under the supervision of Denturism practitioners in surrounding communities, who fulfill the role of *field placement mentors*. Similar to an apprenticeship, field placement mentors guide students in developing practical skills and provide more opportunities for practice in real-world settings. By sharing their experiences in dealing with diverse clinical and laboratory procedures, field placement mentors are significant to the program because they further enrich the learning experience and support learners to achieve competency in their knowledge and skills.

The following analysis takes a comprehensive approach that integrates the interview data and the policy documents. In order to analyze the phenomenon under scrutiny, I considered this implementation from the perspectives used consistently in this study, namely, policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning. By reviewing the interview data, I conceptualized the implementation of this curricular policy, the interactions of the organizational actors that support curricular initiatives, and the ways in which organizational learning occurs throughout the organizational structures of the Denturism program, as well as its field placement component.

5.2 Policy implementation

5.2.1 Implementing policy in the community college context

In this section, I explore what influences the implementation of policy in this community college. I consider the organizational structure of the community college, including the roles and tasks of the different organizational actors. I pay particular attention to the implementation of the NCPD as a curricular policy in the Denturism program, focusing on the curriculum planning process and activities that inform curriculum planning and development.

When a new curricular policy is implemented in the Denturism program, actors strategize to

ensure the adoption of the policy, following up with a structured approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation. The Chair meets with faculty members to introduce the new curricular policy and discuss implementation and timelines. Faculty members then design and plan curricular activities that would enable learners to attain the goals outlined in a new policy. These curricular policy goals and the faculty members' plans are discussed at an annual curriculum review meeting, where faculty members and the Chair may suggest revisions. Faculty members then integrate the policy and curriculum activities into their course outlines. Individual faculty members review each course outline again with the Chair before her final approval. Finally, when the course outlines are adopted within each one of the courses and the learning outcomes are achieved, it could be said that the curriculum policy has been implemented throughout the program.

5.2.2 The role of the Chair

The Chair in her administrative role introduces curricular policy and sets the expectation for faculty members to implement the policy. "I would work with the faculty in the department to ensure that it was being covered at a program level and at a specific course level" (Aileen). The Chair's decision-making is influenced by several factors: information gathering from different stakeholders (professional associations, professional regulatory bodies, administrators, faculty members, and students); consultation with other community college programs; meeting with industry partners to understand innovation and development in all dental professions; and evaluation to learn about developments in the quality of curriculum delivery.

The Chair's role requires understanding, interpreting, and adapting curriculum policy to the college's environment, as well as the ability to determine supports for effective implementation. By overseeing the implementation progress, the Chair assesses whether or not policies are adopted across the program's curriculum.

5.2.2.1 Chair's perception of the NCPD

The Chair did not refer to the NCPD as a curricular policy, rather, she understands it is a

framework used to guide curriculum planning, in other words, as a guide to action. “[W]e are following the national competencies, and we are aligning all our curriculum standards to the [NCPD],¹ no differently than we would be aligning our vocational outcomes at the provincial level.” (Aileen) She perceives the alignment of curriculum to be standard practice.

5.2.2.2 The role of the Chair in the implementation of the NCPD

Aileen’s actions indicate a meticulous approach to the implementation of the NCPD. “It would be up to the faculty to implement the process, and it would be up to me to implement the ability to make sure that this gets carried out” (Aileen). The Chair’s approach is evidenced by her level of planning and accountability, first identifying the need and then assigning work to faculty members to align courses to the NCPD.

Unlike previous preparation for policy implementation at the college, where a plan is laid out by the Chair for faculty members to strategically implement policy in stages, the Chair acknowledged that there has been some unfamiliarity in the initial stages of this implementation, and not a lot of direction on how to implement the NCPD into curriculum. “I’ve already had a conversation with the provincial regulatory body...to ensure that this [implementation] is meeting our needs in terms of...entry to practice requirements” (Aileen). The Chair has exchanged this information with faculty members and plans to make time for “some kind of mapping.” She has also considered accessing more resources, research and curricular guidance from within the community college, including further consultation from the program coordinators and other programs. Given that the Chair’s “previous professional experience has exposed” her to a national competency profile, knowledge of additional resources empowers her to support faculty members in this implementation.

¹ Participants refer to the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) with terms, such as national competency profile, national competencies, competencies, competency, national standards, and standards. Where applicable, to remain consistent these terms will be referenced to with [NCPD]

5.2.2.3 Challenges to the NCPD implementation

The Chair referred to the challenges in understanding and interpreting the NCPD in order to effectively embed the competencies into the curriculum. Understanding the NCPD has implications for all of the program's courses, especially the field placement course, since the field placement mentors are involved in implementing the competencies. However, their understanding and interpretation of the NCPD were not considered when they became field placement mentors.

Aileen shared her concern that incorrect understanding of the NCPD may impact implementation. “[T]he biggest challenge is that I don’t think people really understand what the [NCPD] is.... [W]e have to dissect that first so people understand what it means [and] how that impacts what they do in their own specific course.” (Aileen) The field placement mentors’ understanding of the NCPD as a curricular policy and their ability to translate the competencies into skills, is an essential component to its implementation. “Do I think that the attributes that we’re mapping to the [NCPD] are happening? *Yes*, for some students, and *no* for others.... I don’t think that every field experience at this point is equitable” (Aileen). Aileen conceptualized this challenge in a broader perspective. She identified both the impact on student learning (inconsistent field experiences) and the challenge for experienced professionals to link their skills to itemized competencies

5.2.2.4 The role of the Chair in curriculum planning and development activities

Within the college’s organizational structure, the Chair reports to the Dean on curriculum policy and program alignment with government initiatives, which fulfill various accountability frameworks. Notably, strategic planning and performance reporting is directed by the province. Further to gathering program information to contribute to college wide reporting, the Chair plans and initiates several program-specific activities, such as the *program review* process, where faculty are invited and assigned time to participate. According to Noah, a faculty member in charge of review, the role of the chair in curriculum planning and development activities is

“absolutely critical to the process” (Noah). Each program undergoes review every five to seven years. Recommendations are made and then conveyed to the faculty members. Subsequently, the Chair enacts a plan for change and program development.

Aileen also leads curriculum mapping, which is a curriculum planning and development activity included in the annual curriculum review. For the NCPD, she plans to work with faculty members to align “the framework with our curriculum” (Aileen). “I would guide faculty with the tools, such as the curriculum map, provide a timeline and expectations to have this policy implemented.” (Aileen). She intentionally works with faculty members to set goals and support their work.

5.2.3 The role of the faculty members

Faculty members interpret, implement, and administer the NCPD. They ensure compliance through planning, designing, and developing of curriculum that breaks down the denture fabrication process into smaller learning components. Further to this, it is through the course outlines that faculty members plan and collaborate on the topical outline of a course in order to provide the appropriate time for mastery of competencies. Since the introduction of the NCPD to the Denturism program, some faculty members have occasionally referred to it. For instance, some of the study participants’ comments about the NCPD implementation highlight the value faculty members place on this policy and the challenges they encounter in its implementation.

5.2.3.1 Faculty members’ perception of the NCPD

Many faculty members referred to the NCPD as a framework. Aedon revealed that it is essential to her work, “[S]tudents are getting required knowledge that they need to be competent Denturists. If we didn't have these competencies there would be no guidelines for us. How would we know what we should be teaching our students?” Pearce and Raven agreed. They described their use of the NCPD to guide curriculum planning, “[B]asically, that which is covered in [the NCPD] is something that we look to and try to achieve and teach our students” (Pearce). “[T]his is like a framework. It needs to be in place for certain licensing requirements” (Raven). Faculty

members use the NCPD as a guide to developing curriculum that provides opportunity to practice skills and develop entry to practice competency. Noah described the intended use of the NCPD in field placements, “[P]rofessional standards, such as the competency profile [are] in place to ensure...the student has reached a level of proficiency to...enter into a field.” Noah implied that the purpose of the NCPD is to measure practical skills, evaluate and confirm an acceptable competency demonstrated through practice.

Others did not rely on the NCPD in their curriculum planning. Instead, Martha used a learning outcomes approach for curriculum planning and shared, “I would hope that our course outcomes are addressing the learning outcomes and the [NCPD]”; and established that she would reference the NCPD as part of a curriculum planning and development activity, such as accreditation. In her experience, Nyome also reflected on using a learning outcomes approach to curriculum planning, “Taking a look at the competency areas.... If I were teaching a course...that didn’t involve clinic or lab, I probably would not focus a great deal on those competencies” (Nyome). Some faculty members only rely on the program learning outcomes as established in the course outlines to plan their curriculum, without referencing the NCPD.

5.2.3.2 Faculty participation in the implementation of the NCPD

Some faculty members articulated their participation in implementing the NCPD as designing their curriculum through their professional knowledge of the NCPD. Pearce described his process in the interpretation, shaping, and then implementation of the NCPD. He relies on the expertise of team members, who as professional Denturists and educators complement this process and further shape the implementation. He then concludes with a framework “in the form of a course outline [where the NCPD] is used as a background” (Pearce). In terms of implementing the NCPD, Raven believes that faculty should be knowledgeable: “you have to understand the competencies to fully implement them”; and she does this by learning about “current research and trends.” Heather relies on “self-study” and relates industry trends to the NCPD when designing her curriculum. Similarly, Aedon accesses “textbook research, online research” and attends workshops and seminars that provide information that informs her

knowledge on implementing competencies. To construct meaning of the NCPD, faculty members talk to each other, to the Chair, and gather information from literature, research, industry, and educational resources, as well as review websites from the professional regulatory bodies and associations to inform their interpretation and shape this implementation.

5.2.3.3 Challenges to NCPD implementation

As with any policy implementation, challenges are encountered. “This is relatively new,” Nyome pointed out, “the big challenge is to try and communicate with those...in the field who are proctoring your student, that they understand what these competencies are about” (Nyome). Moreover, faculty members are “relying on the mentors” to interpret “what they are supposed to be focusing on” (Heather). Nyome and Heather identified field mentors’ understanding and interpretation of the NCPD as a challenge to implementation.

Sharing her past experiences of implementing national competencies within another dental program, Martha raised concerns about “different practices that are legal within provinces” and suggested “surveying the field” by consulting the profession and other schools to support interpretation. The NCPD offers a national perspective, interpreted at the institutional level, based on professional legislation that is different in each province.

Aedon expressed her concern that students were unable to recognize the knowledge and skills of the NCPD as applied to her course because they did not connect “which competencies [her] course actually utilizes” (Aedon). Heather and Pearce also acknowledged that they try to teach the students the relevance of the NCPD in their courses.

Both Nyome and Heather indicated that time for curriculum planning is a challenge in this implementation. Heather indicated that content about significant innovations in the industry, such as implants, requires time to be incorporated as curriculum changes. She worries that “adding...is going to be challenging [as] everything relates to time” (Heather). Further to this, Nyome, who has field placement experience in another program, is also concerned. “[T]he challenge would be...when do I have time...to go out there and educate these individuals who

are willing to help with our students, but there is a change that's gone on?" Finding time for curriculum development, to implement the NCPD in courses and the field placement poses a challenge for faculty members.

5.2.3.4 Faculty member's participation in curriculum planning and development activities

Information for curriculum planning and development activities is gathered in meetings and interviews with the program's stakeholders. In her faculty role as program reviewer, Noah also conducts curriculum mapping, reports to the Chair with information on policy implementation, and recommends a plan for change and program development. However, at the time of the last review, the NCPD was not yet finalized. Therefore Noah "used what was available at the time" (Noah). Heather confirmed that the curriculum mapping was "only to the program learning outcomes" and not the NCPD. Heather shared that the courses are thoroughly studied in annual curriculum review meetings, where faculty meet to discuss what is being taught in each course and connect this to the learning outcomes. "[W]e make sure everything that needs to be taught" is indeed taught (Heather). Further to this, Heather feels that the curriculum mapping offers a visualization of curriculum and, therefore, imparts transparency in learning.

Faculty members participate in the accreditation process by reporting to the chair on the teaching and learning that takes place in their individual courses. They aim to "live up to the expectation of the body that is accrediting" (Nyome). Pearce perceives the reflective aspect of accreditation as beneficial because it is derived from peers, who are practicing professionals and not educators, who offer "their view on what is expected" in terms of curricula and infrastructure. This peer review has a strong influence on curriculum planning, and its recommendations are employed as resources to make curricular modifications. The NCPD was not implemented at the time of the last program review, accreditation, or curriculum mapping.

5.2.4 Discussion and summary

The findings provide insight into the organizational structure and the roles of the organizational

actors that inform the implementation of the NCPD.

5.2.4.1 Perceptions of the NCPD

The research findings show that organizational actors value the NCPD differently. This is evidenced in the way the Chair and faculty members approach curriculum planning. This finding is consistent with the research findings of Barman, Bolander-Laksov, and Silen (2014), who studied instructors' enactment of educational policy in post-secondary health sciences education. They found that "teachers approached the same educational policy in different ways" (p. 745). In the context of this study, some faculty members assume the NCPD aligns with the learning outcomes and do not use it, rather, they solely rely on program learning outcomes to plan curriculum for their course. Yet, other faculty members and the Chair use it as a framework to guide curriculum planning. Given that the organizational actors perceive the NCPD differently and use it as such, the end result may also be variable.

The NCPD comprises competencies, not learning outcomes. Cumming and Ross (2007), Morcke, Dornan, and Eika (2013), Frank, et al. (2010), and Werquin (2012) note that there is a difference between learning outcomes and competencies. They argue that learning outcomes are statements that describe specific instances of learning and are attained through formal education, while competencies are skills attained through practice. Learning outcomes and competencies may align in curriculum planning; however, they may be measuring different results. Similarly, demonstrated by the student, these competencies confirm graduates of the program are equipped for practice. It is clear from my findings that faculty members, who rely on the NCPD to align with the learning outcomes, may not be implementing the NCPD. More importantly, since faculty members perceive the NCPD differently, the findings point toward an inconsistent implementation of the NCPD thus far.

5.2.4.2 Implementing the NCPD

Findings show that faculty members who participate in the implementation of the NCPD rely on their knowledge of the Denturism profession and their experience as educators to design

curricula that interprets and shapes the implementation of this policy. Faculty members inform their knowledge by accessing information from literature, research, industry, and educational resources and reviewing websites, associated with their professional regulatory bodies and associations, to build their understanding of the NCPD. This discovery is consistent with research that found that the knowledge each actor brings to the implementation process, informs interpretation and further shapes the adoption of the policy (Higham, 2003; Young & Lewis, 2015). In particular, my analysis confirms Higham's (2003) study, which highlights the importance of bringing together teams, with "existing professional knowledge, experience, and expertise" (p. 347), to train and support curriculum innovation and implementation.

My findings also outline the instrumental role the Chair plays in the implementation of the NCPD, with her guidance to the faculty, her consultation with faculty members, and, in particular, with her resourcefulness to support the faculty members in learning about the NCPD. The analysis shows that the Chair uses different forms of resources. She gathers information on the NCPD from the provincial regulatory body and literature and exchanges this information with the faculty members, as everyone learns more about the NCPD. She consults with other programs, draws from her previous professional experience in implementing professional competencies, and seeks curriculum support from within the community college to help everyone understand the implications of the NCPD on the Denturism program. This finding is consistent with Hill's (2003) study that addresses "implementation resources," indicating that the different forms of these resources, namely, various actors, professional groups, training, and literature provide opportunities to learn about policy. Bearing this in mind, the Chair is the key actor in making such resources available for faculty to learn how to interpret the competencies. By planning time for faculty to engage in curricular activities, such as research, discussions, and mapping, the Chair enables faculty members to access these resources. According to Young and Lewis (2015), the implementer's knowledge is influential in shaping policy implementation.

5.2.4.3 Challenges to implementation

The analysis shows that some participants are unfamiliar with the NCPD and are facing related

challenges, such as understanding and interpreting the policy. This phenomenon has been reported in other studies (Sin, 2014; Dobbins et al., 2016), particularly by Sin (2014), who notes that organizational actors have the ability to shape policy based on their interpretation. Furthermore, Dobbins et al. (2016) argue that academic staff understand and enact curriculum policy in various ways, from their sense of transparency and accountability to conceptualizing the delivery of the course content. One particular concern shared by the Chair and faculty members was the interpretation of the NCPD as curricular policy, its translation into practice and, more importantly, how it links to curricula and the profession.

Additionally, on a national level, one of the participants identified a challenge in the open-ended formulation of the NCPD. The NCPD is a national policy, however, its interpretation in curricula is dictated by provincial regulation, which allows for different skills in each province. For example, in Alberta, legislation permits Denturists to prescribe and take and interpret radiographs, as part of denture fabrication procedures. In British Columbia and Ontario (as in all other provinces in Canada, excluding Alberta), a Denturist is not permitted by law to prescribe and take and interpret radiographs. Provincial legislation dictates that only a Dentist can carry out this procedure, while Denturists collaborate in the referral process. Consequently, in Alberta, the competency of prescribing and taking and interpreting radiographs is addressed in their curricula. However, in British Columbia and Ontario, the competency is interpreted differently and addressed within the curriculum focusing on interprofessional education. The findings suggest that the differences at the provincial level require accessing the professional field for interpretation of the NCPD. My findings coincide with Rekkor, Umarik, and Loogma's (2013) study, in which they examined the implementation of national curricula in vocational settings. They identified that this is not a routine task, rather one that relies on faculty members making sense of the curriculum, with the help of networks from the professional field.

Another challenge identified in my analysis was the faculty members' concern that students experience difficulty in understanding connections between the NCPD and their courses. This is significant, as they are "the ultimate policy recipients" (Sin, 2014, p. 1830). In studying educational policy implementation, Sin (2014) reveals that students lack awareness as to what

they are supposed to know, are able to do, and are expected to achieve upon completion of their program. My findings complement Sin's (2014) work, as she concluded that although educational policy drives teaching, and frameworks are useful tools to design curriculum, "they appear to have little meaning for students" (p. 1833). It is significant for both faculty members and students to make sense of the competencies and connect them to their course learning for an effective implementation.

My findings acknowledge that faculty members perceive time to be a challenge in planning curriculum change and the training of field placement supervisors for the implementation of the NCPD into curriculum. Albashiry, Voogt, and Pieters (2015a, 2015b, 2016) and Otevanger, Van de Grint, and Ana'am (2010) concluded that their participants identified a decreased workload, time to attend training, and time to pursue course developments as required supports in curriculum planning.

5.2.4.4 Curriculum planning and development activities

In terms of supporting faculty in policy implementation, the Chair is influential in organizing accreditation, program review, curriculum review, and curriculum mapping. These activities gather information to assess program strengths, identify areas for improvement, and thus serve as resources for curriculum planning and development. The analysis indicates that program accreditation, which is conducted by professionals from the field of Denturism, is a meaningful activity for faculty members that offers insight to curriculum policy and the workings of this Denturism program's teaching and learning. My analysis indicates, as does Scott's (2014), that a "key feature of program accreditation is the peer review of the program" (p. 58). Faculty benefit from the usefulness of this peer model that pertains to the accreditation process. Analysis of documents from several Canadian community colleges—George Brown College (2016), NAIT (2015-2016), and Vancouver Community College (2016b), —reveals that program reviewers monitor policy; and based on recommendations for change to improve the program, the Chair implements a plan for program development.

The insights offered by the participants confirm the conclusions of Harden (2001), Plaza et al.

(2007), and Britton et al. (2008), who maintain that annual curriculum reviews must reflect what is taught, how it is taught, and when learning will be measured. Together with curriculum mapping, these peer activities are essential to maintaining a professional program. Harden's (2001) argument for the many uses of the curriculum map (i.e., planning curriculum, teaching, learning, assessing, monitoring policy, accrediting, and researching) was also reflected in the views of the participants. More importantly, the analysis supports this position in both earlier and recent literature (Britton, et al., 2008; Lam & Tsui, 2016). Curriculum mapping influences program development, quality improvement, and transparency by targeting competencies and referencing learning outcomes. In this study, the analysis shows that the Chair monitors curriculum policy by participating in curriculum planning and development activities that result in information shared with faculty members to implement change. As such, these findings add to the existing literature on curriculum review and mapping processes in education.

The findings of this study offer an opportunity to conceptualize policy implementation in community colleges. These findings reveal the actors' roles in the implementation of the NCPD, and the challenges they encounter in implementation. The next section explores the theme of educational leadership in the community college context and further analyzes the interactions between the actors that support curriculum instruction across the program.

5.3 Educational Leadership

5.3.1 Conceptualizing leadership in the Denturism program

In this section, I explore how participants conceptualize leadership in the Denturism program and, more specifically, their experiences regarding leadership for curriculum planning and instruction. In addition, I consider how the participants' interactions with internal actors (i.e., the Chair, faculty members, and program reviewer), and external actors (i.e., members of the Program Advisory Committee [PAC], provincial regulatory body, provincial professional association, industry partners, and the field placement community of practice [i.e., mentors,

mentees, faculty members, program coordinator, and the Chair]), influence curriculum planning and instruction.

Leadership in the Denturism program has several dimensions and has more than one interpretation. All organizational actors demonstrate leadership with their participation in curriculum planning committees and by planning curricular initiatives for the courses they teach. As an administrator, the Chair is part of an organizational hierarchy and regularly reports to the Dean. Based on the recommendations of the PAC, the Chair also coordinates curricular initiatives and, subsequently, influences the work of faculty members. In fulfilling these initiatives, faculty members translate curricular goals into curricular activities for student learning, which are enacted in their respective courses. In addition, faculty members collaborate with industry partners and members from the profession to enhance student learning.

5.3.2 Leadership practices that support curriculum change and instruction

In this study, I identify leadership practices as vision sharing, communication, and collaboration, all of which inform and support curriculum planning and instruction in the implementation of curricular initiatives and the NCPD. In leadership practice, organizational actors plan and work, individually and collectively, to achieve curricular goals and, thus, program goals.

5.3.2.1 Vision sharing

Participants conceptualize leadership practice in the Denturism program as “lots of pieces that need to work together” (Aileen). There are interdependent relationships among the Chair and faculty members, the PAC, the provincial regulatory body, the provincial professional association, industry partners, and the field placement community of practice. The Chair does not believe in a hierarchal approach to leadership. She prefers “working beside everybody, as opposed to working in front of and on top of everybody”, illustrating an inclusive, supportive approach to leadership practice. The Chair and faculty members engage in building a vision for program initiatives that emphasizes “growth and opportunity” for their ideas (Raven).

Through their interactions, organizational actors develop a shared vision of the curriculum. Nyome, Raven, and Aedon share ideas and make plans with other stakeholders in meetings throughout the academic year. Pearce found beginning and end of term faculty meetings—where the Chair shares curricular initiatives—to be beneficial in advancing the curriculum. Sharing a vision of the curriculum generates engagement, and encourages faculty members to set goals and work toward fulfilling them. Referencing her leadership role in the introduction of the electronic health record (a digital system to collect, share, and store patient information, which is widespread in Denturism practice) to the program curriculum, Heather reported that she offered context to share the program’s vision amongst her team. Heather believes that leadership is “about teams, and teamwork, and not just forcing what you have on other people”. Similarly, Nyome proposed that a shared vision of the curriculum and buy-in cannot be imposed upon others. Rather, it should, as she suggested, be created with the use of meaningful language in interpersonal interactions, which in turn creates a common purpose and, over time, a shared vision. There is a mutual belief that faculty members can influence each other, rather than enforce a change.

Participants also emphasized the importance of a shared vision amongst the Canadian community colleges. Faculty members believe it is important to share a vision of the NCPD implementation among those who are also adopting the NCPD across the country. Pearce and Nyome’s expectation for sharing the NCPD’s vision is “to really understand” how “people from other jurisdictions” (Nyome) are implementing the NCPD at a national level. Pearce suggested that sharing the vision of the NCPD among faculty members from “different teaching institutions” may inform curriculum planning and influence its implementation.

5.3.2.2 Communication

Nyome and Aileen indicated that encouraging communication amongst faculty members is important, since there is a tendency to work in silos. Heather also emphasized the importance of dialogue amongst faculty members to coordinate “what needs to be taught” and navigate through the curriculum in various stages of the program. Aileen, the Chair, is the point of contact for all

organizational actors and maintains communication throughout the organizational structure. She perceives herself as “a bicycle wheel...in the middle of all those spokes,” interacting with all faculty members and stakeholders to disseminate information. Aileen introduces concepts and new ideas to faculty members through formal interactions, in which she communicates both verbally and in writing, at faculty meetings, task force meetings, and via emails. The interview data suggest that faculty members’ decisions are influenced by their participation and discussions, during task force meetings intended for planning and implementing new curriculum. Similarly, Heather and Aedon engage in discussions, create drafts of curriculum plans, and ensure they have input from different faculty members before implementing curricular changes. As the analysis of the interviews suggests, clear communication through diverse mediums (e.g., written and verbal), which circulates from the Chair to faculty members and amongst each other, influences effective, organized planning.

As program coordinator, Pearce communicates with a variety of stakeholders. Pearce gathers verbal feedback when he meets with faculty members and students to discuss suggestions for improvements to the curriculum, including field placement, thus influencing the implementation of the NCPD. Pearce also discusses patient case studies, which are central to the denture fabrication curriculum, with faculty members to determine desirable curricular outcomes. He does this in designated as well as impromptu meetings and then shares the results of these discussions with students in class to further guide and support their learning. Pearce also gathers student feedback, using college-wide Student Feedback Questionnaires (SFQs) administered by email at the end of each course. SFQs are generic questions that attempt to capture the students’ learning experience and their opinions regarding how useful the course content was. In addition, Pearce engages in discussions with the field mentors of the Denturism field placement community of practice about their experience. The conclusions of these discussions are shared with the Chair in faculty meetings, and are intended to improve the implementation of the NCPD.

The Program Advisory Committee (PAC), which consists of a group of diverse stakeholders (practitioners, students, the provincial regulatory body, the provincial professional association,

and industry partners), whose “role is to advise the program” (Aileen), meets annually to provide input. The PAC is a venue for collective communication amongst stakeholders on curriculum. Members of the PAC “come together and contribute, and we get valuable information that is used in developing the program” (Pearce). The Chair has begun changing the structure of the PAC and increasing its responsibility “to empower the members to advise on curriculum innovation”. The Chair is now organizing two meetings per year, instead of one, and placing more emphasis on how the “PAC can influence the program” (Aileen).

5.3.2.3 Collaboration

Both the Chair and faculty members described leadership as a collaborative process that involves teamwork. Nyome, who is part of the Denturism program team (consisting of faculty members and the Chair), “consults with other members of the faculty” (Nyome) to learn from their expertise and gain confidence in her curricular decisions. Noah, in her role as program reviewer, emphasized the importance of teamwork with faculty members in shaping implementation: “[I]f I can engage and develop relationships...and we are trying for the same thing, I think I can influence [curricular initiatives]” (Noah). Nyome, Heather, and Noah emphasized that the Denturism program team is engaged in a common purpose, and membership on this team provides an opportunity to engage in decision-making. Aileen, the Chair, is supportive of faculty collaboration and provides opportunities to meet and share ideas. She found the collaborations that occur when faculty members meet and interact very exciting to witness. They “start to take over” (Aileen). The Chair offers positive feedback, reinforcement, and acknowledgement to faculty members, as she believes “the accolades...need to come to the team” (Aileen). Similarly, Aileen’s encouragement reinforces team decisions and brings confidence to their collaborations.

Industry collaborations also influence curriculum instruction; for example, Pearce stated that he collaborates with implant manufacturers and takes students to industry training facilities to practice their skills. Pearce also joined forces with a large professional practice, where students observe live implant surgery and practice denture restoration “in collaboration with the professional team” (Pearce). This professional team consists of members representing different

professions (i.e., dentist, denturist, dental hygienist, dental assistant, laboratory technologist, and administrative staff), who collaborate and work interprofessionally on patient cases. Pearce indicated these industry partnerships shape curriculum implementation, enrich learning, and provide students with opportunities to collaborate with a professional team. At this institution, innovations on the subject of implants in Denturism, which are introduced in the NCPD, are included in program curriculum as simulations, offering practical, hands-on learning in a controlled and safe learning environment that imitates real life scenarios. Pearce has collaborated with industry partners to provide students with authentic learning opportunities, where students learn about these innovations and apply their skills in practice.

5.3.3 Discussion and summary

The findings highlight the Denturism team's approaches to leadership, and the leadership practices that inform and support curriculum change and instruction across the program. Three leadership practices emerge from the analysis, as practices that promote organizational curricular outcomes: vision sharing, communication, and collaboration.

5.3.3.1 Vision sharing

Participants conceptualized their leadership practice as inclusive and reliant on interdependent relationships, exemplified when they work together on the development of program initiatives. This form of leadership practice has been described in the literature on distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006; Navarez, Wood, & Penrose, 2013; Eddy et al., 2015). The findings are also consistent with Senge (1990) and Eddy et al. (2015), whose work supports the notion that vision originates from various levels of the organizational structure and, as such, is shared. Collaborative, interdependent relationships have formed internally between the Chair and faculty members and amongst faculty members themselves. They share the common purpose of curriculum development.

Through their interactions, organizational actors develop a shared vision of the curriculum, which over time motivates the faculty to engage in curricular change and policy implementation.

This finding is consistent with Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership model, which characterizes leadership practice as the interactions between individuals when they share ideas and plans and establish goals, rather than the imposition of change on others. Hemsall (2014) further supports the distributed approach, which emphasizes engaging others in a shared vision. In addition, according to Eddy et al. (2015), it is critical to establish affiliations outside of the college in order to advance the institution's vision. This notion is reflected in the participants' belief that sharing their vision of the NCPD with practitioners across the country and other colleges may inform its implementation further.

5.3.3.2 Communication

The communication that influences curriculum development in the Denturism program involves diverse actors within the organizational structure. The analysis indicates that the Chair is the common element in the communication process, disseminating information to both internal and external stakeholders. The wheel network, which Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000), Lunenburg (2010; 2011), and Eddy (2010a, 2010b) identified in their studies of organizational communication, bears resemblance to the ways in which communication occurs within this organizational structure. In this analogy, the Chair is the middle of the wheel, and faculty members and external stakeholders are the spokes. Messages flow back and forth, and faculty members communicate with each other. However, communication always returns to the Chair at the center, whose role is thus the most influential.

Findings also show that communication occurs in diverse interactions: structured meetings, informal conversations, task force meetings, and via email. Mitchell and Sackney (2011) and Senge (1990) view such discussions as different from dialogue. Discussion, they argue, is a gathering of views and opinions to gain a deeper understanding. Dialogue is the exchange of communication to reach a decision. The analysis indicates that the participants engage in both discussions and dialogue with a variety of stakeholders about the NCPD, curricular initiatives, case studies, the sequence of curricula distributed throughout the program, and program effectiveness. Through these discussions they exchange information, which often leads to

dialogue that may influence decisions in curriculum planning.

In terms of collective communication, the Chair and the program coordinator liaise with formal networks, such as the PAC, which is part of this college's organizational structure. This aligns with Eddy and Amey's (2014) arguments, who note that in order for community colleges to be progressive, they must liaise with external partners. According to official documents from community colleges in Canada, PACs inform programs by identifying curriculum development that is relevant to industry demands and trends and review curriculum planning to confirm currency in the vocational program (George Brown College, Program Advisory Committee Guidelines, 2006; NAIT, Academic Program Advisory Committees, 2014; Vancouver Community College, Welcome to Program Advisory Committees at VCC, 2016a). Similar to studies by Jimenez-Herranz (2016) and Krick (2015), the Denturism program PAC consists of internal and external stakeholders, who engage in collective communication, influencing the Chair's curricular decisions. The PAC's influence in this study is comparable to Bush's (2011) description of committees that are part of the organizational structure and hold a lateral position, as opposed to a vertical top-down position. Through their expertise and recommendations, these actors influence curricular decisions.

5.3.3.3 Collaboration

The collaborative engagement at this institution is another example of a distributed approach to leadership (See: Spillane, 2006; Eddy, 2010a, 2010b; Eddy et al., 2015). This is demonstrated in participants' consultations as Denturism program team members, prior to making curricular decisions. Collaboration is dependent on collective reflections and learning (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011). Rawlings (2000) further describes collaboration in terms of understanding teams and team building. She understands collaboration through tasks and relationships, which are dependent on other organizational conditions, such as a shared commitment, participation and practice, capabilities, supportive structures, and resources. Participants in this study, similarly, learn from the expertise of team members, and their work is influenced by this relationship. In addition, the Chair's implementation of supportive conditions allows for effective collaboration that inspires

ideas, innovation, and change in curriculum and requires time and opportunities to meet and work together and foster imaginative perspectives from a diverse group of stakeholders (See: Rawlings, 2000; Slantcheva-Durst, 2014).

In the current study, faculty members engage in industry partnerships that enrich the curriculum with innovation (e.g., access to state-of-the-art clinical and laboratory facilities) and learning opportunities (e.g., opportunities for collaboration with a professional team). These collaborations aim to create authentic learning experiences for students in the Denturism program that focus “on real-world, complex problems and their solutions” (Lombardi, 2007, p. 2). This further supports Eddy et al. (2015), who suggest that external collaboration enriches curriculum and program development by keeping ahead of innovation and providing authentic learning opportunities. Given that the NCPD includes a competency in innovative procedures, such as implants in Denturism (i.e., Professional Examination Services, 2013, National Competency Profile for Denturists, Competency Area 1, Competency Element 1.5, Competency Area 2, Competency Element 2.1), these relationships are valuable for planning, shaping, and implementing the curriculum in this program. Eddy (2010a) and Mitchell and Sackney (2011) confirm that developing relationships with internal and external stakeholders fosters effective collaboration, problem solving, and decision-making. According to Mitchell and Sackney (2011) and Amey (2013), a distributed approach and meaningful relationships are key to effective collaboration.

5.3.3.4 Conceptualizing leadership in the Denturism program using Eddy’s (2012) Holistic Competency Framework

Through the lens of Eddy’s (2012) Holistic Competency Framework, I identified leadership practices in the Denturism program that are consistent with one of the framework’s four competency clusters, which include: (1) attention to the bottom line; (2) systems thinking; (3) inclusivity; and (4) framing meaning. In using this framework, Eddy (2012) recommends reflecting on the existing context of the phenomenon being studied to conceptualize which of the clusters would be most effective as a lens and, subsequently, plan for change.

To select the most appropriate cluster, I drew upon the leadership practices identified in this analysis and selected the cluster in which the leadership competencies occur. The inclusivity competency cluster proposes that communication and collaboration occur together, and that contextual competency must be present. Considering contextual competency as understanding the college environment and what is valued in it (Eddy, 2012), I understand the culture of the Denturism program to be inclusive (i.e., of all stakeholders in curriculum planning and implementation) and transparent (i.e., accountable to all stakeholders). This is evidenced in the communication and collaboration that occurs among the Chair and faculty members, the PAC, the provincial regulatory body, the provincial professional association, the industry partners, and the field placement community of practice.

The Chair seeks interactions, engages all stakeholders, and builds an inclusive environment. Her effort to understand and act on curricular initiatives provides the support for implementation. By considering Eddy's (2012) Holistic Competency Framework applied to this phenomenon, it is apparent that organizational actors engage in leadership practice within the Denturism program team and with external partners, all of whom inform and support their common purpose of curricular planning and instruction and, thus, align with inclusive organizational leadership practice.

5.3.3.5 Conceptualizing leadership in the Denturism program using Bolman and Deal's (2013) Four Frame Model

Leadership practice is manifest throughout the organizational structure by the interactions, relationships, and processes in the Denturism program. In their Four Frame Model, Bolman and Deal (2013) propose structural, human resource, political, and symbolic frames to understand organizational leadership. The characterization of leadership in the structural frame is consistent with formal relationships, responsibilities, goals, and directions. In this research, leadership is both vertical (i.e., in a top down direction) and horizontal (i.e., in a distributed form). The organizational structure is such that the Chair introduces new policies, such as the NCPD in vertical communications. The Denturism program team, the PAC, industry partners, and field

placement community of practice engage in horizontal collaborations that facilitate curricular initiatives. Designated meetings provide the venue to discuss such curricular initiatives. Given that the expertise of the team is a vital component of the structural frame (Bolman & Deal, 2013), this collaboration influences and informs implementation.

The way in which leadership is characterized in the human resource frame is consistent with interdependent relationships, shared values, and skills that individuals bring to the organization. Each member of the group (both external and internal actors) brings a skill set from the profession that is shared in a collegial manner with the group during formal interactions. This finding reflects Bolman and Deal's (2013) suggestion that relationships among the organizational actors are interdependent: the internal actors need ideas, talent, and expertise; and the external actors seek opportunities to participate and contribute. Decisions resulting from such interactions are influenced by the capability of the group as a whole.

The way in which the political frame characterizes leadership considers the networking of key individuals and groups in developing an agenda for change that represents the stakeholders' interests and vision. The Chair supports a collective effort of the Denturism profession to establish a national curriculum by introducing the NCPD to faculty members and has established an agenda for its implementation into the Denturism program. Furthermore, the PAC, and its group of key stakeholders, informs the direction for curriculum planning. The Chair seeks to further empower the PAC to inform curricular innovation and pursues this relationship to further facilitate the NCPD implementation.

The symbolic frame characterizes leadership in a way that considers the adoption of symbols and metaphors that create meaning and purpose. The interpretation of which influences the practices of organizational actors. Viewing the analysis through the symbolic frame allows us to see how the participants understand leadership through the use of metaphors. Metaphors used by the participants suggest that leadership is perceived as many pieces that are part of a whole puzzle. All the pieces need to fit and work together to engage in curricular planning and implementation. Bolman and Deal (2013) imply that metaphors inspire organizational actors to work toward a

vision; and, in this research, planning for the implementation of the NCPD sets the stage in support of this curricular change. The implementation of the NCPD is supported by the collective effort of all stakeholders and reflects the distributed leadership practices of the organizational actors.

In analyzing the data and using the lenses of both Eddy's (2012) and Bolman and Deal's (2013) theoretical frameworks, I have identified vision sharing, communication, and collaboration as leadership practices that influence curriculum planning and instruction in the implementation of the NCPD. In the last section of this analysis, I explore organizational learning in the context of this Denturism program and further study how the organizational structure contributes to the creation, sharing, and operationalization of knowledge about the NCPD.

5.4 Organizational Learning

5.4.1 Conceptualizing organizational learning in the Denturism program

In the analysis so far, I have explored curricular policy implementation and the interactions and engagement of the organizational actors that support curriculum development and instruction. In the last section of this analysis, I explore the ways in which learning occurs within the organizational structures of the Denturism program. To understand how the organizational structures contribute to organizational learning in the Denturism program, I examine the actors' participation in organizational learning practices, including professional development in teaching and learning; professional development in attaining higher education, leading to credentials; and continuing education specific to the Denturism profession. I particularly focus on the field placement community of practice and implementing the NCPD in the Denturism program.

Organizational actors build their knowledge and skills through collaborations within their environment (Sun, 2003). Following this perspective, organizational learning is the process in which actors develop, acquire, interpret, and implement knowledge for use in their practice as the creation, sharing, and operationalization of knowledge in an organizational environment.

Using Nonaka and Toyama's (2003) knowledge creation theory, I understand creating knowledge as establishing new ways to understand the world around us and incorporating these new understandings into relevant experiences; sharing knowledge as familiarizing ourselves and others with this new knowledge; and operationalizing knowledge as collecting knowledge from all sources to implement and use in establishing routines. I also consider Sun's (2003) conceptualization of organizational learning, as a process occurring through participants' interactions, individually and collectively, by exchanging ideas, learning from one other, and engaging in specific training.

Opportunities for organizational learning in the Denturism program occur on three levels: college wide learning (e.g., professional development opportunities, teaching and learning symposiums during intersession periods, workshops on curriculum instruction, and mental health awareness and intervention); program specific learning, central to each school and program (e.g., health and safety instruction that pertain to faculty members' practice and sharing the organizational strategy with the field placement community of practice); as well as individual learning (e.g., professional development pertaining to faculty members' profession and higher learning to attain degrees). By developing resources and building capacity to align program curricula and the college's organizational strategy, the process of organizational learning in this college aims to support actors in creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge.

5.4.2 Organizational learning practices that contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge

In this study, I identify organizational learning practices in the Denturism program as including developing resources, participating in learning opportunities, mentoring within the field placement community of practice, and engaging in professional development. By participating in organizational learning, all actors learn to operationalize curricular and program goals and contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD.

5.4.2.1 Creating knowledge

In the community college context, creating knowledge refers to developing resources intended to be shared amongst organizational actors to support curriculum implementation. In the current process, this occurs college-wide with manuals to inform the mentors of their role in their participation in post-secondary program field placements. Additionally, creating knowledge about the NCPD occurs in the Denturism program by translating the NCPD competencies into program specific curricular activities. Knowledge created is shared with stakeholders throughout this organizational structure, who use this knowledge to operationalize the NCPD in the program. To enhance this knowledge creation, participants suggested the development of additional resources that would guide field mentors with the NCPD implementation at field placement sites, explain their role, and provide initial orientation and continuous support. The creation of knowledge about the NCPD in the Denturism Program is a dynamic process. As findings in the policy section of this chapter show, the Chair and faculty members have consulted with one another to plan and strategize about curriculum and the NCPD.

In relation to the field placement community of practice, developing resources, such as documents that provide direction on what the students will be learning in field placement; supporting field mentors; and raising awareness of mentorships within this profession are central to knowledge creation. Finally, faculty members engage in professional learning opportunities, which are key to building new knowledge and capacity for the implementation of the NCPD, enhancing teaching and learning and improving leadership practice.

5.4.2.2 Knowledge creation in the field placement community of practice

The development of college-wide resources is an example of knowledge creation intended for actors in all programs. Aileen acknowledged the usefulness of a college-wide manual developed by the field education working group to inform field mentors of the organization's strategy and expectations for hosting students in field placements. Recognizing a need for simplifying such resources, she suggested further development of the manual to clarify emergency protocol, roles, and responsibilities and to identify "what we want students to do" in placements.

In addition to providing resources to support field placement mentorships from a college wide perspective, Pearce, Heather, and Aileen expressed the need for the Denturism field placement community of practice to interpret the NCPD and implement the standards into field placement opportunities. Aileen proposed that an additional resource should be created to help the Denturism field placement community of practice clarify this information. For example, an NCPD competency is to “gather and document patient information” (Professional Examination Services, National Competency Profile for Denturists, 2013, Competency Area 1, Competency Element 1.2). In this resource, “[W]e are going to ask our partners to ensure students have the opportunity to either practice or observe the implementation of a patient’s information” (Aileen). Aileen suggested this resource be developed to resemble a “shopping list that students need to know and do,” and to indicate to field mentors that “we have aligned our field placement course to the NCPD”. Aileen also suggested specifying that “we teach the national competencies” and recommending field mentors read the NCPD. Aileen is cognizant of raising awareness amongst the field placement community of practice of “how their contribution can be positive” and clarifying “the expectations”. She suggested field mentors be given information about “how their practice is going to influence how the student learns,” with resources that are explicit about their responsibility and commitment.

Nyome reflected on field placement experiences from other programs, and she too offered suggestions that include resources to create knowledge amongst the field placement community of practice, but in different ways. She suggested that the Denturism program should appoint knowledgeable individuals to assist faculty members in supporting the field placement community of practice with organizing field placements and providing orientation to field mentors in an ongoing consultation. Noah also suggested liaising to “coach when things are going wrong or to try to negotiate more opportunity where it is really restricted” in the field placement.

Noah believes the college is crucial in promoting organizational learning for professionals to improve “the quality of the field placement for the students,” by creating knowledge of field placement mentorship amongst field mentors, as it may not be “part of the skill set that all

professions have”. Noah understands mentorship to be learned and dependent on the organization’s investment “in the ability of those professionals to provide an educational experience, provide feedback, and give incremental opportunities for increasingly difficult skill development”. She reflected on programs, such as “community services and early childhood education,” where practicing professionals “mentor others coming into the profession.” Noah believes a “culture of mentorship” is acknowledged to be their professional responsibility.

The current process of training in the field placement community of practice does not include mentorship skills, rather, training is limited to email communication that welcomes field mentors and informs them of commencement dates, documentation to submit, and field placement deadlines. Part of this documentation process requires students to use the NCPD as their guide to establish goals that shape their field placement experience and then share this information with their field mentor. In the email communication, the field mentors are advised to collaborate with the students in the completion of the noted documentation, including their signatures, verifying students’ attendance and their observation notes, and describing activities and skills students attained in working toward the field placement’s objectives.

Nyome believes the NCPD may be helpful to further train and direct activities in field placements. She suggested presenting it to the field mentors: “here are the things I want you to look at... Were the students able to achieve these things?” By training the field mentors what to observe while they are mentoring the students, the program can develop a method to assess learning in field placement and to provide relevant feedback on the progress of mentorships for faculty members. Nyome believes that while faculty members conceptualize learning, field mentors operationalize learning. That is, faculty members identify the concepts to be learned with the translation of the competencies into curricular activities and methods to evaluate progress. Field mentors, enable students to apply their learning by practicing the competencies in real life settings, in unpredictable and diverse experiences over a period of time, thereby using their expertise to support the implementation of the competencies in practice. Pearce agreed, “training or orientations would give them direction” and inform field mentors on how to operationalize (i.e., use) their expertise. They would learn “what they should do or what they

should not do during field placement” and become aware of “what is expected of students”.

5.4.2.2.1 Professional learning among organizational actors

In the Denturism program, organizational actors engage in a variety of professional learning activities, including, courses, workshops, and seminars on teaching and learning; higher education certificates and degrees, leading to further credentials; and other continuing educational activities specific to the Denturism profession.

Martha deems professional development activities, such as “attending symposiums, conferences [and], personal development,” in addition to pursuing academic degrees, as learning that helps faculty members work together. Similarly, Aileen acknowledged the role of professional development in teaching and learning. For her, attaining further education builds her professional capacity:

I go to a lot of the professional development activities at the college. I also did a Masters in College processes, so I feel that really has helped me a lot in learning...the application of a competency profile...understand[ing] how it needs to tie into a course and that into a program.... Absolutely, it does inform my leadership practice. (Aileen)

Several faculty members engage in professional development to attain higher education, leading to academic degrees. Raven is pursuing a graduate degree and engages in learning skills applicable to her work at the college. Heather too is enrolled in a graduate degree program, in which she is studying issues of leadership, teamwork, working with others, and providing feedback. Martha believes professional learning in higher education is relevant to teaching in the community college and has also pursued a graduate level degree to improve her professional knowledge. Martha values the skills acquired from higher education, including how to conduct a “critical appraisal of the literature,” how to meet and interact with others, and how to learn “about the organizational structure.”

In terms of attaining additional skills to build capacity in their professional expertise, Raven

believes that “through professional development, clinicians could share clinical techniques,” as this in turn “supports the implementation of the [NCPD]”. Heather and Pearce indicated that they attend continuing education activities specific to the Denturism profession that enhance their awareness of related technology that is current in the field. This further enables them to understand private practice, allowing them to share their knowledge with the students. “As far as implants are concerned, I do attend quite a few professional development activities...at the prosthodontics educational facility...and any other implant [industry] partner”. Continuing education in their field builds capacity in their professional skills, specific to practicing the Denturism profession, and contributes to a thorough understanding of the NCPD. “It gives me an idea of where the national competency profile is at an entry level to practice” (Pearce).

Faculty members engage in continuing education specific to the Denturism profession, as part of their professional responsibility to their provincial regulatory body: “you have to make sure you’re up to date...which is part of our continuing education as Denturists...you never really stop learning” (Heather). In this context, acquiring knowledge is demonstrated in seeking the professional expertise of practicing Denturists and industry partners in the field. This practice engages faculty members in building their capacity by continuously learning professional skills.

5.4.2.3 Sharing knowledge

In this context, sharing knowledge refers to the process in which organizational actors learn collectively, for instance, by participating in annual training sessions where important information is circulated amongst the group. Additionally, stakeholders learn about program curricula in specific curriculum presentations organized by the Chair and the Denturism program coordinator. Sharing knowledge amongst organizational actors about pertinent college information and curricula informs their knowledge about the NCPD and its implementation into program curriculum. This section outlines how stakeholders engage in knowledge sharing and learning throughout the organizational structures, and how this sharing is demonstrated in practices of circulating information and learning about the NCPD.

5.4.2.3.1 The Denturism program

Pearce engages in curriculum presentations for both the provincial regulatory body and the provincial professional association. Using the NCPD to guide the content of his presentations, Pearce has shared his knowledge of the program curriculum with these stakeholders and informed them of what the students are learning, specifying materials used as well as clinical and laboratory methods that pertain to Denturism procedures at this college. These presentations may be useful to assist stakeholders in their work, for instance, the provincial regulatory body could benefit from learning about the curriculum in order to align the provincial licensing exam with program curricula. Also, sharing knowledge about the curriculum could inform the efforts of the provincial professional association to support the work of potential field mentors.

5.4.2.3.2 Sharing knowledge with the field placement community of practice

Aileen and Nyome believe in accessing the professional community of Denturists to establish field placements in private professional practice facilities. Aileen suggested the program “liaise with the community,” by consulting with the provincial professional association to find field mentors engaged in learning about field placements. Aileen believes an informational webinar or “online meeting” would encourage field mentors to ask questions. They could “understand more about the [NCPD] and how it influences and connects to field placement”.

Additionally, Nyome recommended enlisting the national professional association to develop a national repository of educators in an online community. She suggested this could be “a resource that can support the implementation [of the NCPD] a lot more effectively,” with opportunities for learning together, by sharing curricular strategies in an online context.

5.4.2.4 Operationalizing knowledge

In this context, operationalizing knowledge refers to interpreting, implementing, and using the knowledge that organizational actors have acquired in organizational learning practices. The creation and sharing of knowledge was conceptualized earlier in this section. I described how

actors acquire and interpret knowledge and then distribute this knowledge in their practice. Findings in the interview data reveal suggestions to engage actors and the field placement community of practice to further operationalize knowledge in the program (i.e., by using knowledge acquired from professional learning and resources, and interpreting and translating this knowledge into their practice).

5.4.2.4.1 The Denturism program

Organizational actors use knowledge about the NCPD, which they acquired by their participation in annual curriculum review meetings where curriculum is discussed and through professional learning. They demonstrate learning by interpreting and translating this knowledge into practice in their course curriculum. Heather described this as a “long and arduous” process to make connections “that are reflected in the national competency profile.” In using the competencies to inform student evaluation, Heather translated the NCPD into practice in clinical evaluations. In these evaluations, students in the clinical component of the program perform work on individual case studies. Their work is observed and evaluated by clinical faculty members. Heather confirms that “knowledge and critical thinking skills” are being evaluated through students’ interactions with individual case studies. Heather noted that evaluation is reflective of “communication, which is strongly put forth in the [NCPD],” and this demonstrates the “implementation of the [NCPD]” (Heather). She is further operationalizing her knowledge of the NCPD in her course, by implementing a simulation component to better prepare students for clinical work. In implementing the NCPD, Heather’s simulation serves as a “building block” and provides students the opportunity to fabricate a denture, using a specific material before actually performing this procedure for a clinical case study. She feels their engagement in this simulation “makes the students more competent as they are along their learning path” (Heather).

5.4.2.4.2 Operationalizing knowledge in the field placement community of practice

Specific to the Denturism program, organizational learning that involves the field placement community of practice is emerging. In the interviews, several organizational actors shared their

suggestions to improve this process. Pearce believes that operationalizing the NCPD into the program (i.e., interpreting it, using it, and translating it into practice), specifically in the field placement course, may influence the national curriculum “in field placements across the country.” In order to “improve each year” and to ensure growth and sustainability for the field placement course, Pearce suggested faculty members should monitor the NCPD implementation and provide feedback to the field placement community of practice as it is implemented. In the future, the field placement community of practice could align their mentorship to the relevant competencies of the NCPD. For example, they could provide students with consistent opportunities in their field experience to practice innovative technology, such as implant work. Martha and Heather believe that to ensure sustainability, additional faculty support will be needed.

Noah emphasized the importance of establishing a process for field mentors to provide “feedback that the student has reached a level of proficiency”. From her current practice of reviewing programs, Noah believes that field mentors are essential in operationalizing the NCPD as well as in “having an authentic assessment of every student’s ability to demonstrate the competencies” in field placement. Noah recommended taking the “competency elements listed in the NCPD “and us[ing] them to describe an emerging skill...or something they have mastered”. She suggested that this “would provide measurement, and help orient field placement supervisors with what is required”. Aileen too suggested collecting feedback reports “as the students go through their field components” as a method of receiving regular feedback.

Nyome also believes students, together with field placement faculty members and field mentors, should have an opportunity to meet and discuss the success of the field placements, to determine if student learning reflects prior academic learning and to apply their learning in real-world practical settings. Prior to the onset of the field experience “you need to bring everyone together that is involved...to have a briefing”. Moreover, this process should be repeated “to debrief,” when placement is completed (Nyome). This method would instill learning to both faculty members and the field mentors, namely, “how we might take a different approach, what went well, what did not go well”, and how both can collaboratively learn, “what could we do to make

the project better” (Nyome). This interaction may facilitate operationalization of knowledge about the NCPD in field placements.

5.4.3 Discussion and summary

The findings highlight several organizational learning practices that contribute to the creation, sharing, and operationalization of knowledge about the NCPD standards.

5.4.3.1 Organizational learning practices that contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge.

It is apparent from the findings that knowledge is created and shared throughout the organizational structure, and this process influences how the NCPD is operationalized in program curricula. In studying this phenomenon, I drew similarities between the findings and the framework depicted by Nonaka (1994) and Nonaka and Toyama (2003), which identifies four stages in knowledge creation within an organization, *socialization*, *externalization*, *combination* and *internalization*. It could be argued that at this point in time, the NCPD implementation in the Denturism program is at the first stage of knowledge creation, *socialization*. At this stage, faculty members seek additional professional expertise, by participating in continuing education specific to the Denturism profession, with practicing professionals and industry partners, and through sharing experiences with each other to promote their understanding of the NCPD and learn professional skills. Creating resources to support the NCPD implementation in the Denturism field placement community of practice would enable knowledge creation in the second stage, *externalization*. At this stage, the interpretation of the NCPD standards into program curriculum would be externalized through the development of curricular activities, such as gathering a patient’s information. Participants suggested that some competency elements from the NCPD could be useful to create a new evaluation resource. This would enable knowledge creation in the third stage, *combination*. By establishing feedback strategies—in which faculty members, field mentors, and students communicate before, during, and after field experiences—all parties would learn together and improve the curriculum. In the final stage of knowledge creation, *internalization*, knowledge that has been learned and shared becomes part of the organization.

This, in turn, would signify the operationalization of knowledge of the NCPD in the program curriculum.

Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) suggest leading the community of practice in order to cultivate the knowledge that flows through this structure. Given that the current process does not train field mentors, participants suggested that the NCPD could be used to guide mentors in their report of the students' learning, so that mentors would understand, interpret, and operationalize the NCPD in the field practice. By providing such training and direction, field mentors would engage in sharing their professional expertise in field placements and would establish clear expectations of the students. Suggestions from the participants regarding training the field placement community of practice complement studies that both emphasize the preparation of field supervisors and underscore the importance of student evaluation in field placements (Seibert, 2015; Vaknin & Bresciani, 2013).

To achieve the NCPD implementation and realize the potential for growth and sustainability in the field placement community of practice, I consider Lave and Wenger's (1991) description of *teaching and learning curriculum*. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), *teaching curriculum* refers to "structuring resources for learning," and *learning curriculum* refers to opportunities for the "development of new practice" (p.97). In the context of the field placement community of practice, it could be argued that for an effective NCPD implementation to occur, there should be a balance between the *teaching* and *learning curriculum*. That is, implementing a balance between structured curricular activities from the interpretation of competencies in the NCPD (e.g., organizing activities involving implant-related clinical and laboratory procedures), with opportunities for repetition and practice in a collaborative, supervised, supportive, and controlled environment (i.e., structuring the *teaching curriculum*). Moreover, a balance should be maintained among opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills in diverse, complex case studies (i.e., engaging in the *learning curriculum*), where practical experiences in the technological advancements, introduced in the NCPD competencies, may involve more challenging experiences (e.g., engaging students in less restrictive supervision in implant-related clinical and laboratory practice, involving procedures with real-world case studies). Given that

the *learning curriculum* “evolves out of participation in a specific community of practice” (p. 97), engaging the students to participate in such learning opportunities would enrich the implementation of specific NCPD competencies related to innovation. According to the interview data, this can be achieved with faculty members appointed to monitoring placement sites in order to minimize restrictions in supervised activities, thus enabling student engagement in the *learning curriculum*. Mentorship opportunities to practice new skills in challenging case studies, using innovative technology listed in the NCPD, would also be encouraged.

In addition, to sustain the implementation of the NCPD in field placements, I consider Wenger’s (1998) reference to the dimensions of a community of practice. Wenger (1998) describes the three characteristics of a community of practice as *mutual engagement*, *joint enterprise*, and *shared repertoire*. In the context of this study, I consider *mutual engagement* to be the inclusion of all stakeholders, including the field placement community of practice, in working towards operationalizing the NCPD into the Denturism program. This can be achieved through what Wenger (1998) refers to as *joint enterprise*, in which actors discuss, build connections, and interpret and share knowledge to shape practice. In this context, I consider *joint enterprise* to be the cooperation between faculty members, who interpret the NCPD into program curricula and provide students with theoretical knowledge; and field mentors, who will operationalize this learning with real-life practice. By engaging in what Wenger (1998) calls *shared repertoire* (i.e., developing and sharing resources that influence practice), as evidenced in the interview data, the participants suggested sharing feedback reports as the students attend their field placement experience and, from these observations, establishing goals for mentorship practice.

5.4.3.2 Conceptualizing organizational learning in the Denturism program using Eddy’s (2012) Holistic Competency Framework.

When using the lens of the Holistic Competency Framework (2012), Eddy advises to begin with connecting the situation to the AACC (2005) leadership competencies (i.e., resource management, organizational strategy, communication, collaboration, professionalism, and advocacy), and aligning the relevant competencies to *one* of the clusters in this framework: (1)

attention to the bottom line; (2) *systems thinking*; (3) *inclusivity*; and (4) *framing meaning*. Eddy (2012) suggests reflecting on the context and using selected clusters, not all four of them, to analyze the situation; that is, selecting the competency cluster containing the identified competencies relevant to the situation. The competency cluster reflective of the organizational learning practices identified in this analysis is *attention to the bottom line*, which includes the following competencies: *organizational strategy*, *allocating resources*, and *advocacy*. Drawing on the findings, it is clear that the Chair has identified a means to support the NCPD implementation, thereby producing an *organizational strategy*. In this organizational strategy, the Chair recommended the program curriculum be structured on the national competencies, and she plans to work with faculty members in translating the NCPD into program specific curricular activities. She then plans to share the revised curriculum with the field mentors and also recommend they read the NCPD. In this strategy, the Chair aims to use the NCPD to guide field placement practice. To further improve the NCPD implementation, she plans on raising awareness amongst the field placement community of practice regarding how their contribution to this mentorship can influence student learning. The Chair proposes this organizational strategy will improve the NCPD implementation. As such, she plans to empower the field placement community of practice with knowledge of the NCPD and its translation into curricular activities and inform them of their responsibility in field practice.

Further support in *allocating resources* for the field placement community of practice was evidenced in the participants' suggestions to appoint knowledgeable organizational actors, who can offer orientation, support, and coaching for field mentors. In the final component of this competency cluster, *advocacy*, Eddy (2012) considers the ways in which organizational actors conduct their practice and promote their beliefs. In this study, participants' *advocacy* was evidenced in their sharing of clinical techniques that support the NCPD implementation, in their recommendations to access the professional community of Denturists, and in their offer of informational sessions for mentors to understand how the NCPD influences the field placement.

Eddy (2012) argues that all competency clusters in her framework require a *contextual competency*. For the Denturism program, this means that organizational actors must understand

the context of the community college and the field placements (i.e., the Denturism program's environment and the relevance of this implementation into this program). Actors can use this framework to build organizational strategy to inform and support this implementation. In terms of Eddy's *contextual competency* (Eddy, 2012), I understand the culture of learning and sharing knowledge in this community college as cultivating learning for growth in the field placement community of practice. As evidenced in the interviews, participants expressed a professional responsibility to engage in professional learning to develop their skills. Their commitment to learning represents their *contextual competency*. By considering Eddy's (2012) Holistic Competency Framework, the organizational learning that participants engage in, becomes evident. Their suggestions may influence the field placement community of practice and could contribute to the operationalization of the NCPD.

5.4.3.3 Conceptualizing organizational learning in the Denturism program, using Bolman and Deal's (2013) Four Frame Model.

Using the lens of Bolman and Deal's Four Frame Model, I explored organizational learning in the Denturism Program by analyzing the adoption of the NCPD by the field placement community of practice. Following Bolman and Deal's (2013) framework it is possible to understand the participation of the actors in the creation and sharing of knowledge in the organization. The structural frame is characterized by the organizational architecture and the roles and functions of the different actors. Currently, the college has a field placement manual that provides organizational guidelines for college-wide field placement supervision. This manual provides support by providing structure to field placement courses. The interview data suggests that simplifying this resource to further clarify roles and emergency protocol would offer clear expectations for all actors involved in field placement activities.

Bolman and Deal's (2013) human resource frame focuses on how the organization invests in its people and how organizational actors build their skills and gain empowerment. This frame is evidenced in this study, when actors take part in *college wide* learning, where they attend symposiums on teaching and learning and annual training sessions. By working in groups, they

share knowledge on curriculum initiatives and learn collectively. The human resource frame is also evidenced in *program specific learning* activities. Organizational actors practice their professional skills during Denturism-related learning activities, enhancing their knowledge of the competencies and raising their awareness of relevant technology and practices. Finally, the human resource framework is evidenced through *individual learning*, when actors pursue higher education, attain degrees, build credentials, and optimize their capacity to operationalize knowledge in their work and thus their leadership as educators. Learning as an organization, as a program, and as an individual, contributes to organizational learning practices, influencing the NCPD implementation.

Bolman and Deal's (2013) political frame focuses on how interest groups act in cooperative alliances within an organization. In this study, I refer to the Denturism program, the provincial regulatory body, and the provincial professional association as interest groups, who have formed positive alliances. This is evidenced in the presentations shared by the program coordinator, who informs stakeholders about program curricula and the NCPD implementation. This practice enlightens the work of all stakeholders and contributes to their cooperative alliance, which consequently fosters student learning. These alliances inform key professional practices in the province, such as the provincial licensing exam, which is conducted by the provincial regulatory body and the consolidation of a network of professional members and is fostered by the provincial professional association.

Bolman and Deal's (2013) symbolic frame focuses on the common meanings that become culture and can be introduced to unite an organization, people, and goals. In this study, the link that occurs amongst the Chair, faculty members, and the field placement community of practice is grounded in a common purpose: to inspire and direct curriculum planning for the Denturism program. Interview data suggest improvements to the quality of field placements. Some of the challenges highlighted by the participants included mentorship skill development and the promotion of the mentorship experience among the members of the profession. By creating knowledge about mentorship in field placements among mentors and sharing institutional knowledge about the NCPD and its implementation in field placement, the Denturism program

promotes a *culture of mentorship* as part of professional practice, where those coming into the profession are mentored by those who are already practicing professionals. Such interactions, which contribute to organizational learning in the field placement community of practice, may influence this *culture of mentorship* throughout the Denturism profession and, as a result, operationalize the NCPD in the program.

This chapter presented the findings from the interview data along with a discussion and summary to analyze the findings in light of the literature and existing theoretical frameworks. The analysis explored three themes, namely, policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning to investigate the implementation of the NCPD in this Denturism program. In the next chapter, I discuss the key findings to address the research questions that guided this study.

Chapter 6

6 Summary of Research Findings, Conclusions and Implications for Practice

In the final chapter of this thesis, I summarize the key research findings, address the research questions, and discuss the implications of this research for practice. Finally, I offer suggestions for further research.

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

In this qualitative, exploratory case study, I examined the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) in the Denturism program in a Canadian community college, with a focus on the implementation of these standards in its field placement course. The recently established NCPD (College of Alberta Denturists, 2013; College of Denturists of British Columbia, 2013; College of Denturists of Ontario, 2013) identifies the standardized skills for graduates as they enter the Denturism profession. It was developed collaboratively by national stakeholders, who are part of the Denturism professional community, including those involved in Denturism education. This study aimed to gain insight into the leadership practices that support the implementation of the NCPD into the existing curriculum in the Denturism program of a community college in Canada. The study demonstrates how certain organizational roles, structures, and practices influence community college programming; and provides an understanding of how these elements contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD within this Denturism program. Following a brief summary of curriculum processes that are relevant to the conclusions, I focus on the three key areas in this research, namely, policy implementation, educational leadership, and organizational learning.

6.1.1 Summary of curriculum processes

The purpose of curriculum planning and development activities is to gather information that identifies strengths and areas for improvement and to monitor policy in the Denturism program. Such activities serve as resources to curriculum planning and development and include *program accreditation*, *program review* and *curriculum mapping*, and *the annual curriculum review*.

In *program accreditation*, which occurs every five years, faculty members participate by reporting on teaching and learning in their individual courses. The accrediting body, comprised of peers from the Denturism profession, reviews the program learning outcomes and the curriculum list from the *Denturist Association of Canada: Guide to Accreditation* (Denturist Association of Canada, n.d.) to ensure that the curriculum content satisfies the required outcomes. In curriculum planning, development, and implementation, faculty members follow this guide. Some faculty members, who have implemented the NCPD into their courses, also use the NCPD to direct their interpretation of these curricular policies into curricular activities for their courses.

In *program review*, which occurs every five to seven years, each college conducts an internal review of the program to ensure both college wide and curricular policy implementation. In this process, the program reviewer, who is a faculty member trained specifically in curriculum development, confirms that program learning outcomes and national competency frameworks are referenced in program curricula. *Curriculum mapping* is part of the process of program review and assists to confirm that the curriculum meets the outcomes and competencies. The Chair plans and initiates such activities and assigns time for faculty members to participate. As a result of each of these curriculum planning and development activities, recommendations on policy implementation are made to the Chair and then conveyed to faculty members, who plan and work collaboratively with the Chair on curriculum development to address the recommendations.

Annual curriculum review involves meetings in which faculty members and the Chair verify that the curriculum of each course addresses what needs to be learned in the program, thus, engaging in curriculum planning and development. When a faculty member actually includes a curricular

initiative in their course outline and implements this learning into their teaching, this is referred to as curriculum implementation. Additionally, the annual curriculum review had previously only included program learning outcomes; however, with the adoption of the NCPD, annual curriculum review discussions have also included the competencies and implementation of the NCPD into program curricula.

6.1.2 Policy implementation

This study identified the NCPD as a curricular policy. The process for its effective implementation is illustrated in the practices of the Denturism Chair and the faculty members. In the Denturism program, the Chair introduces curricular policy to faculty members and ensures it is implemented in the program. Faculty members interpret curricular policies and translate them into curricular activities, which are then implemented in their teaching practice. The Chair and faculty members engage in curriculum planning and development activities, such as accreditation, program review, curriculum mapping, and annual curriculum review meetings to ensure that program learning outcomes are being met. Specifically, in the annual curriculum review meetings, the Chair and faculty members discuss each course and connect course outcomes to the program learning outcomes and the college's policy guides. It should be noted that while the NCPD has been included in recent annual curriculum review discussions among the Chair and faculty members, curriculum mapping has not been completed. The reason for this is that the NCPD was not finalized at the time of the last accreditation and program review.

The Chair perceives the NCPD to be a framework that guides curriculum planning. She has contacted the provincial regulatory body and the provincial professional association to clarify the NCPD standards, as she tries to gain an understanding of how the NCPD would impact the program's curriculum. She plans to share this information with faculty members. The Chair also relies on her previous experience in implementing national standards in other programs to support faculty members in interpreting the NCPD. Some faculty members refer to the NCPD in their course planning. Others assume that the NCPD is equivalent to the program's vocational standards listed in their course outlines and, thus, have not yet referred to the NCPD. As

such, the NCPD is not yet consistently implemented in the program curriculum. Program vocational standards represent the program's learning outcomes and define the skills learners should attain through their education. Competencies, as listed in the NCPD, represent what skills and qualities professionals need once they have graduated from the program and are entering the profession as practitioners. The difference between program vocational standards and competencies is that the former represent the learning that occurs in an entire program upon graduation, while the latter are demonstrated by the learner upon graduation (that is, the skills they have mastered). Therefore, a combination of program learning outcomes and competencies would inform curriculum planning and instruction.

Participants indicated that finding time for curriculum planning and implementing the NCPD in their courses is challenging. They also identified the field mentors' understanding, interpretation, and application of the NCPD in field placement activities to be a challenge to the implementation process. The Chair recommended that the NCPD implementation begin with curriculum mapping. She plans to work with faculty members in creating a curriculum map that specifically outlines the competencies listed in the NCPD to the Denturism program curriculum.

The annual curriculum review in the Denturism program is a reflective activity that considers what is being taught and how. Similar activities have been reported by Britton et.al. (2008), Lam and Tsui (2016), Harden (2001), and Plaza et al. (2007), who describe such activities as essential to maintaining a professional program. Curriculum review activities contribute to the process of monitoring curricular policy and may assist faculty members in the interpretation of the NCPD into program curricula. This follows Harden's (2001) argument regarding the many uses of the curriculum map, including planning curriculum, teaching, assessments, monitoring policy, and accreditation. Similarly, Britton et al. (2008), as well as Lam and Tsui (2016), favour the use of curriculum mapping in program development.

6.1.3 Educational leadership

The findings demonstrated that both the Chair and faculty members are leaders in curriculum planning and instruction. They engage in educational leadership practices, including *vision*

sharing, communication, and collaboration throughout the organizational structure. Their educational leadership practices inform curriculum instruction across the Denturism program and the field placement course through curricular initiatives and change. The interactions among the program Chair, faculty members, the program advisory committee (PAC), the provincial regulatory body, the provincial professional association, industry partners, and the field placement community of practice resemble Spillane's (2006) distributed leadership model, where leadership practice is portrayed as working interdependently to achieve goals, rather than imposing change on others.

As part of the organizational structure of the community college, the PAC informs the Denturism program by verifying that the existing curriculum is current with the industry demands and identifying future curriculum development that relates to industry trends. As such, the members of the PAC, who are both internal and external stakeholders, participate in collective discussions and dialogue that inform the Chair and program coordinator and, therefore, influence policy implementation and curriculum planning. Utilizing input from the experience of the diverse PAC membership, the Chair informs faculty members of the PAC's recommendations and interactions with industry partnerships, which influence and support curriculum planning and instruction across the Denturism program.

Vision sharing about the curriculum and among stakeholders throughout the organizational structure is demonstrated through participant interactions, such as meetings in which they share ideas about their interpretations of the NCPD competencies and their application to curriculum development. Over time, stakeholders influence each other and create further faculty engagement to advance curricular initiatives. Faculty members suggested engaging in the practice of sharing vision with other colleges to gain a national perspective on the NCPD implementation. Sharing vision in working to develop the program curriculum aligns with concepts of distributed leadership and bears similarities to Bolman and Deal's (2013) view of leadership through the lens of their political frame. In this frame, organizational actors develop a shared vision with key individuals and groups, who develop an agenda for change. This is parallel to the Chair's leadership practice, through which she has established an agenda to support curriculum change

and instruction, reflective of the NCPD in this program.

The Chair is central to all *communication* and is the most influential organizational actor in effective curriculum planning. As the point of contact for all faculty members and other stakeholders, the Chair maintains communication, while it circulates throughout the organizational structure. The Chair disseminates information to all organizational actors and engages in coordinated forms of communications, including structured meetings among the program coordinator, faculty members, and the PAC. Dialogue on curricular activities flows through the organizational structures and back to the Chair. Communication occurs between faculty members, external stakeholders, and the Chair; however, the Chair always disseminates the information to everyone and makes the most influential decisions. The *communication* between the Chair and all organizational actors about the curriculum is analogous to a bicycle wheel and demonstrates Lunenburg and Ornstein (2000), Lunenburg (2010, 2011), and Eddy's (2010a, 2010b) description of the *Wheel Network*, in which the way organizational communication occurs, resembles traveling along the spokes of the wheel. In this analogy, communication flows back and forth along the spokes but always returns to the middle of the wheel, the most influential part, and is disseminated from the middle. In this context, the Chair positioned in the middle of the wheel, communicates with all organizational actors and is the most influential in making decisions.

The Chair also encourages *collaboration* and supports relationships and teamwork amongst stakeholders, again encouraging distributed leadership practice by providing time to meet, learn from each other's expertise, and gain confidence in their curricular decisions. The Chair's leadership practice, which enables collaboration, is consistent with Rawling's (2000) study of collaboration through the interactions of teams and teamwork. Her findings propose collaboration to be dependent on shared vision and commitment shown by team members in their participation and relationships, as well as through empowering the team with supportive structures and resources, where collaboration inspires attainment of goals. Additionally, the program coordinator engages in collaborations with industry partners to enhance learning experiences with curricular innovation, which is consistent with Eddy et al.'s (2015) suggestion

that external collaborations enrich curriculum and program development.

6.1.4 Organizational learning

The study findings reveal organizational learning as a process where participants develop, acquire, interpret, and implement knowledge into their practice. Participants identified developing resources and engaging in professional learning as central to their ability to create and share knowledge about the NCPD and to operationalize its implementation into program curricula. As evidenced in the findings, there is a belief that faculty members *conceptualize* learning and field mentors *operationalize* learning. This concept is reflected in the participants' suggestion that the field placement mentors should share their mentorship expertise with the faculty, and that those mentors should be more involved in operationalizing the NCPD.

Cultivating the knowledge that flows through the field placement community of practice reflects the work of Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002), who advocate nurturing a community of practice for learning. In their research, they suggest goal setting, coordinating activities, and developing resources as ways to cultivate the community of practice in which knowledge is created and used. Similar to the argument of Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002), developing resources and professional development were evidenced to be central in the context of the NCPD implementation. As such, setting goals and coordinating activities of the organizational actors suggest cultivating the field placement community of practice.

The following suggestions were made by the Chair and faculty members to facilitate knowledge creation for the NCPD implementation, with particular focus on the field placement community of practice: 1) to clarify existing resources and to develop new resources that itemize the NCPD competencies, including a list of relevant curricular activities; 2) to appoint liaisons for orientation and ongoing support for field placement mentors, and to offer mentors training and guidance in teaching and learning, so they can provide students with opportunities for learning increasingly difficult tasks; 3) to create presentations to share curriculum with stakeholders in order to work collaboratively to shape the national curriculum and to foster a culture of mentorship in the profession; 4) to develop methods to engage in continuous feedback with field

placement mentors and to circulate this knowledge amongst stakeholders.

Findings also position professional learning as central to the NCPD implementation. Participants learn by exchanging curricular initiatives. They seek the professional expertise of practicing Denturists and industry partners to build their professional skills and become knowledgeable in innovation and technology. They also pursue degrees in higher education, building their capacity in working together. The creation of knowledge empowers the members of the Denturism program to interpret the NCPD into relevant curriculum activities to promote the NCPD implementation further. This key finding reflects Bolman and Deal's (2013) human resource frame, where they characterize how actors access learning to acquire knowledge that they then use in their work.

6.2 The Research Questions

In this section, I address each research question based on the findings.

6.2.1 Research Question 1.

What leadership practices in the existing organizational structure inform the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists (NCPD) standards in the Denturism program?

In this organizational structure, the leadership practices of several organizational actors, namely the Chair, the faculty members, and the program reviewer, inform the implementation of the NCPD in the Denturism program in a distributed way, consistent with Spillane (2006), Navarez, Wood, and Penrose (2013) and Eddy et al.'s (2015) descriptions of distributed leadership practice. Acting within their roles, these organizational actors demonstrate leadership practices in working interdependently, discussing curricular policy, sharing and planning ideas for curriculum, supporting one another, and working collaboratively toward their goals.

In her leadership position, the Chair's organizational role requires her to understand, interpret,

and adapt curriculum policy, such as the NCPD, for the Denturism program, as well as to oversee its implementation to ensure that the curriculum outcomes reflect policy guidelines. As part of the organizational role of the Chair, she also initiates curriculum planning and development activities that can be influential in measuring program outcomes and monitoring curricular policy. The Chair has advised faculty members about the need to engage in the NCPD implementation, and she is currently planning time for this process.

In their organizational role, faculty members also engage in leadership practice by designing and developing curricular initiatives and, through their course outlines, allotting time for students to achieve the curricular goals. They construct meaning about the NCPD by consulting with the Chair, and one another, and by designing the curriculum by relying on their professional knowledge to interpret the NCPD. However, some faculty members have yet to use the NCPD for curriculum planning, while others use the NCPD as a framework to ensure students are given learning opportunities to attain entry-to-practice competency as defined by the NCPD. Given that faculty members perceive the NCPD differently, they approach curriculum planning in different ways. This is consistent with the study by Barman, Bolander-Laksov and Silen (2014), who conclude that faculty approach educational policy in different ways and, thus, implement policy differently.

Given that the Chair is planning to support the NCPD implementation with mapping the competencies into the program curriculum, faculty members can work together with the Chair and the program reviewer to share leadership roles in the accomplishment of this activity and inform policy implementation. A new curriculum mapping activity structured to focus on the implementation of the NCPD in the program curriculum and the field placement course will identify strengths as well as areas in need of further attention and program development. Some areas of need include: opportunities to practice innovations regarding implants in Denturism in real life scenarios, providing care to remote communities, and professional learning through mentorship.

6.2.2 Research Question 2.

With the implementation of the NCPD, what organizational structures, actors, and leadership practices inform and support curriculum change and instruction across the Denturism program, including the field placement course?

The relationships among the organizational actors (i.e., the Chair, faculty members, and the program reviewer) and their interactions throughout the organizational structures (with the PAC, provincial regulatory body, provincial professional association, industry partners, and the field placement community of practice) are demonstrated by their leadership practices. In particular, this research highlights the organizational actors' distributed leadership practice, specifically in sharing vision, communication, and collaboration in supporting the implementation of curricular initiatives and change.

Leadership practice that engages stakeholders in communication and collaboration shapes the curriculum in this program. The Chair fulfills a leadership role in formal communication for planning and implementing new curriculum; and faculty members engage in discussions, planning, and the implementation of curricular changes. Additionally, communication amongst a variety of stakeholders influences discussions for improvements to the field placement curriculum and, thus, can further influence the NCPD implementation. Leadership practice is further highlighted in the teamwork that occurs in the Denturism program. In this study, the Chair and faculty members collaborate to learn from one another's expertise. As such, this leadership practice will support curricular change and support faculty members who have yet to implement the NCPD in their course curriculum. Also, collaborations with industry increase opportunities for students to engage in curriculum that is inspired by the NCPD competencies.

Communication and collaboration when viewed together characterize leadership as depicted in Eddy's (2012) Holistic Competency Framework, in which the *inclusivity competency cluster*, which aligns with both communication and collaboration, is believed to influence practice. Therefore, communication and collaboration among the Denturism team and with industry partners inform and support curriculum change and instruction. Additionally, these leadership

practices may improve the effectiveness of the NCPD implementation.

The PAC is a formal network that engages its members in sharing vision. It communicates with the Chair and the program coordinator on identifying curricula relevant to industry trends. It also seeks to inspire members to support the common purpose of excellence in curricular initiatives. This collaboration shows leadership practice among stakeholders in the collective communication exchanged in this formal network and the resulting influence this exchange has on making curricular changes. Such collaboration facilitates an inclusive environment, engaging stakeholders in a culture, similar to Eddy's (2012) depiction of contextual competency, where the membership works toward a shared vision of the curriculum. Given that this is supportive of curriculum planning, the Chair would like to increase interactions with the PAC and seek their input on innovation and connections to community and field placement opportunities, thereby empowering the PAC to further inform and support curriculum change and instruction.

The PAC is a significant part of the organizational structure that informs curricular initiatives based on industry trends, and with its diverse experience it can further enrich the interpretation of the NCPD for program curricula. The collaborative interaction that occurs between the Denturism program and the PAC bears similarities to Rawlings' (2000) study, which highlights teams and teamwork, emphasizes sharing vision amongst the team, and stresses the confidence professional experience brings to the team. The findings of this research evidenced the PAC's role in informing the direction of the profession, by advising on curriculum planning and its implementation.

6.2.3 Research Question 3.

How do the organizational structures, actors, and practices in the community college contribute to creating, sharing, and operationalizing knowledge about the NCPD standards?

As part of their organizational learning practices, the Chair and faculty members build a context for learning, sharing, and implementing knowledge about the NCPD in this college.

Organizational actors develop, acquire, interpret, and implement knowledge for use in their

practice throughout the organizational structure. In particular, organizational learning is evolving in the field placement component of the Denturism program.

The participants offered suggestions for enhancing the field placement curriculum. They highlighted sharing of knowledge of the NCPD with the field placement mentors as a key practice to facilitate its operationalization. In order to expedite the implementation of the NCPD in the field placement component, the Chair is planning an organizational strategy that will include developing resources for field placement and training the field mentors. For example, the Chair suggested the development of a “shopping list,” resembling a simplified list of the national competencies (e.g., “gather and document patient information,” as listed in Competency Area 1, Competency Element 1.2 in the NCPD, would be further simplified) to guide the field mentors in understanding and interpreting the NCPD competencies into learning opportunities that ensure students practice or observe the competency.

Providing orientation and consultation on the application of the NCPD in field mentorship can be inspiring to the field placement community of practice. Furthermore, learning about the role mentors and mentees play in the implementation of the NCPD can promote a “culture of mentorship” as part of the Denturism profession. Highlighting the meaning and significance of mentoring in this profession is consistent with the lens of Bolman and Deal’s (2013) symbolic frame, where the importance of symbols, traditions, and meaning are significant to an organization. A “culture of mentorship” can create shared meaning amongst the college, the Denturism program, and the Denturism profession.

Organizational actors in the Denturism program engage in professional learning throughout the organizational structure, in 1) college wide learning opportunities; 2) learning specific to the Denturism program; and 3) learning at the individual level to fulfill academic and professional goals. By engaging in organizational learning, actors build their capacity and knowledge, which benefits their work and contributes to their understanding and application of the NCPD competencies into the Denturism program curriculum. Similarly, in Bolman and Deal’s (2013) human resource frame, actors build skills and are empowered to do their work. The participants’

professional knowledge contributes to the creation and sharing of knowledge about the NCPD and influences its operationalization in the Denturism program and in the field placement component.

6.3 Recommendations for Practice

In conducting this research, I aimed to add to the literature on educational leadership for implementing national standards in post-secondary environments. I have organized the recommendations for practice in the form of guidelines for the implementation of the NCPD in Denturism program curricula, and particularly field placement courses.

6.3.1 Proposed guidelines for the implementation of the NCPD

1. Acknowledge the current phase of implementation

Engage stakeholders in sharing vision. Aligned with distributed leadership practice, this would create awareness of the NCPD as a curricular policy, promote sharing interpretations of the NCPD and confirm understanding amongst stakeholders, and encourage inclusivity to collectively share vision and build a strategy. Provide educational opportunities to establish awareness of both the process of implementing curricular policy and the organizational structures that support this policy implementation. This includes identifying and sharing information about the program curriculum, course outlines, evaluation practices, learning outcomes, professional competencies, professional practice standards, and a national curriculum. It is important to share vision as a team to establish the value of the NCPD as a curricular policy and clarify the implications of its implementation amongst all stakeholders.

2. Create support systems

Support both internal actors (i.e., the Chair, the faculty members, and the program reviewer) and external actors (i.e., members of the PAC and the community of practice), with resources and training opportunities to implement the NCPD into program curricula. Create effective teams that aim to work together in gaining knowledge, training, and expertise and influence each other to shape their leadership practice. Develop support systems that foster learning, nurture

communication skills, and promote feedback among stakeholders. Provide time for stakeholders to participate in learning practices and establish recognition for those who participate. It is important to prepare, support, and recognize the leadership practice of stakeholders who contribute to the NCPD implementation.

3. Apply learning

Design a strategy to train organizational actors to interpret a competency profile, so they can interpret the NCPD and share and use their knowledge in the program. Promote a “culture of mentorship” amongst the profession, the Denturism program, and all stakeholders to encourage field mentorship. Collaboration with the professional associations can be instrumental in promoting mentorship opportunities. Prepare the Denturism profession’s community of practice to be a part of the mentorship experience. Provide orientations and training on the knowledge required to participate in field placement mentorship, share leadership practices, and shadow field mentors in placement sites. It is important to build the capacity of field placement mentors, so that they can apply their learning in the NCPD implementation.

4. Operationalize knowledge

Engage program leaders in interpreting the NCPD into curricular initiatives, documenting proposals, and planning for practical learning. Promote collaboration between field placement faculty members and field placement mentors to operationalize the NCPD. It is important to engage these particular stakeholders in collaboration to shape the interpretation, application, and thus the effective implementation of the NCPD. These recommendations are significant for operationalizing knowledge of the NCPD into program curriculum, and in particular the field placement community of practice.

5. Monitor success, plan for growth and sustainability

Utilize curriculum planning and development activities, such as curriculum review and mapping, to monitor the implementation of the NCPD into the program curriculum. Encourage distributed leadership practice where everyone engages in creating a feedback system for all courses in the program, and specifically for the field placement community of practice, on the NCPD

implementation, its use, and applicability to learning. Use the NCPD as the road map to guide training, evaluations, and feedback systems. Encourage communication through activities amongst stakeholders to plan for consistent field placement experiences in which students can be exposed to the same curriculum standards. It is important to monitor success, identify strengths, mitigate weaknesses, and plan for growth and sustainability in the field placement, as it is central to the NCPD implementation.

These guidelines suggest engaging in leadership practices from a distributive perspective that encourages organizational learning to support the interpretation and implementation of the NCPD into college programs.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Research

I conducted a comprehensive study of the leadership practices that support and influence the implementation of the NCPD into the Denturism program in a community college. Since this is an initial, qualitative exploratory case study, more research is required to learn about the phenomenon of implementing national curriculum standards into community college programming. Given that the NCPD implementation is currently in progress at the college in this study, follow-up research is recommended to explore the implications of the NCPD implementation two years after the completion of this study. The rationale for this time frame is to allow a sufficient interval for the Chair to implement the recommendations of this study and for completion of tasks. If a decision were made to adopt a recommendation, such as the completion of curriculum mapping, it should be organized to take place during the time of annual curriculum review, which is at the end of each academic year. Given the time frame for the completion of this study, a two-year time frame seems appropriate. Further, given that this is a single case study, a multiple case analysis comparing the NCPD implementation into the program curriculum in several Canadian community colleges would offer valuable information.

Additional research should also be undertaken to investigate educational leadership and

organizational practices in the field placement community of practice. Learning about the experiences of mentors, how they build capacity for teaching and learning, and the challenges they face in mentorship may be valuable in developing leadership practice to support the development of mentorship as a learning approach in this environment. Of particular interest for further research are the perspectives of the learners in the Denturism program's field placement community of practice on how this curricular policy is being enacted. Gathering the learners' perspective to explore concepts of leadership, through the interactions between members in the field placement community of practice, would provide insight on their leadership practices.

I conducted this study with the intention of learning more about the implementation of curricular policy in a community college and aimed to gain more insight into the influence of such an implementation on program curricula. The findings this study has provided on policy implementation, leadership, and organizational processes may inspire future researchers to consider similar multidimensional approaches to study issues that influence and support leadership practices in community colleges.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of Information and Consent Form



Project Title: Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards

Principal Investigator: Dr. Augusto Riveros, Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher: Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

Letter of Information

1. Invitation to Participate

Our names are Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas, doctoral student at Western University and Augusto Riveros, faculty member at Western University. We are writing to you to invite you to participate in a research study about the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards in the field placement course in the Denturism Program. You have been invited to participate in this study because of your affiliation with the Denturism program, which places you in an unparalleled position to offer meaningful insights about the process in which national curriculum standards are implemented in the field placement course of this program.

2. Purpose of the Letter

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research.

3. Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to characterize the leadership practices that support the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards in a field placement course in the denturism program in a post-secondary institution in Ontario. By exploring the leadership practices involved in the implementation of the national curriculum standards through a field placement course, we would like to contribute to the literature on the process of policy implementation in community colleges.

4. Inclusion Criteria

Faculty members and administrators, who are involved in the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists in the community college, are eligible to participate in this study. Only potential participants who give consent to be audio recorded will be included in this study.

5. Exclusion Criteria

The following criteria will be used to exclude participants:

1. Faculty members who are not involved in the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists in the community college will not be invited to participate in this study.
2. Administrators who are not involved in the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists in the community college will not be invited to participate in this study.
3. Potential participants who do not agree to be audio recorded will not be included in the study

4. This study does not include students.

6. Study Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to join me in a face-to-face interview. You will be asked questions about the process of implementing the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards in the field placement course. We are interested in your opinions about what may influence and support the implementation of the national curriculum standards in the field placement course. It is anticipated that the entire task will take approximately one hour, and will be completed in one session. The interview will be conducted in private, on the college premises at a time and location that is convenient for you. The interview will be audio recorded. If you do not wish to be audio recorded, you will not be allowed to participate in this study. This interview will be transcribed and all names and/or personal identifiers will be removed to guarantee confidentiality and anonymity.

7. Possible Risks and Harms

There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. The interview can be stopped at any time should you experience any discomfort or fatigue.

8. Possible Benefits

Participants will benefit in that they will engage in discussion about the implementation of the national curriculum standards in the field placement course and reflect on this process. The possible benefits to society may be sharing knowledge of leadership practices that influence and support policy implementation through practical curriculum. The information gathered will add to the existing literature on the leadership processes involved in the implementation of national curriculum standards in community college field placement courses.

9. Compensation

You will not be compensated for your participation in this research.

10. Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your professional career.

11. Confidentiality

All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to the investigators of this study. If the results are published, your name will not be used. If you choose to withdraw from this study, your data will be removed and destroyed from our database. While we will do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. Representatives of The University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may contact you or require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

12. Contacts for Further Information

If you require any further information regarding this research project or your participation in the study you may contact Dr. Augusto Riveros, [REDACTED] or Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas, [REDACTED]. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics [REDACTED].

13. Publication

If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please provide your name and contact number on a piece of paper separate from the Consent Form.

14. Consent

A consent form is included with this letter. If you wish to participate in this study, please sign it and return it to Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas, email: [REDACTED].

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Consent Form

You do not waive any legal rights by signing this consent form.

Project Title: Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards

Principal Investigator: Dr. Augusto Riveros, Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher: Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate.

All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Participant's Name (please print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Confirm consent for Audio recording: YES_____

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Project Title: Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gus Riveros, PhD, Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher: Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

Interview Questions

- 1) Describe your role with regard to policy implementation in the college.
- 2) What is your role with regard to implementation of policy such as the National Denturist Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards, specifically in the denturism program?
- 3) What challenges would you identify with implementing the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards in the field placement course?
- 4) To the best of your knowledge, what resources are in place to support faculty and placement supervisors involved in the denturism field placement course?
- 5) How do you inform others within the denturism program of your vision and goals for the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards?
- 6) What resources do you access to attain skills needed within your role that will support policy implementation, such as the National Denturist Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards?

- 7) Describe what college initiatives are in place to ensure that the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards have been implemented in the field placement course.
- 8) Indicate the collaborations with stakeholders that are a part of the denturism field placement course.
- 9) In your own opinion, how does each of the collaborations influence the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards in the denturism field placement course?
- 10) To the best of your knowledge, what activities or interactions connect faculty, students and placement supervisors to share their experiences and measure success in the denturism field placement course?
- 11) Do you think that the National Competency Profile for Denturists curriculum standards are being implemented consistently across all placement sites that are participating in the denturism field placement course? Please explain.
- 12) List your experiences gained through professional development activities that you feel would help support the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturist curriculum standards in the denturism field placement course.
- 13) What would you identify as external factors that influence the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturist curriculum standards in the dentursim field placement course.
- 14) What would you identify as the achievements of implementing the National Competency Profile for Denturist curriculum standards in the field placement course?

Appendix C: Email Script for Recruitment

Project Title: Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards

Principal Investigator: Dr. Gus Riveros, Ph.D., Faculty of Education, Western University

Student Researcher: Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

Email Script for Recruitment

Subject Line: Invitation to participate in research

Hi _____,

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas and Dr Gus Riveros are conducting. Briefly, the study involves a personal interview consisting of fifteen questions focused on the implementation of the National Competency Profile for Denturists in the field placement course of the denturism program. You have been invited to participate because of your role in the implementation of these standards.

The interview will take approximately one hour, and will be held in a location and time that is convenient for you. Please be advised that the interview will be audio-recorded for further data analysis. Potential participants who do not agree to be audio recorded will not be included in the study.

If you would like to participate, please reply to this email. I look forward to establishing a date, time and location that would be suitable for you.

Please review the letter of information attached to this email.

Thank you,

Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

EdD Candidate at Western University

Gus Riveros, Ph.D.

Western University Version Date: 10/10/2015

Appendix D: Ethics Approvals



Applied and Institutional Research

Research Ethics Board

September 8, 2015

Ref# 6004135

Dear Dr. Barrera,

RE: REB File # 6004135 Title: **Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards**

Ethics Approval

Original Approval Date: September 8, 2015.

Expiry Date: September 8, 2016.

We are writing to advise you that the Research Ethics Board (REB) has granted full approval to the above-named research study, for a period of **one year**, under the REB's expedited review process. Please note that approval is based on the following:

- a) The REB must be informed of any protocol modifications as they arise.
- b) Any unanticipated problems that increase risk to the participants must be reported to the REB immediately.
- c) The study is approved for one year: if needed, apply for a renewal before the expiry date.
- d) A study completion form must be submitted to the REB upon completion of the project.


The following documents have been approved for use in this study: the information letter/consent attachment, email recruitment letter and interview questions. Please insert the ethics approval number (6004135) into these documents. Each participant should receive a copy of his or her consent form.

Please quote your REB file number (6004135) on future correspondence.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your study.

Yours sincerely,




Chair, Research Ethics Board

cc: Applied and Institutional Research, 



Research Ethics

Western University Health Science Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Augusto Riveros Barrera
Department & Institution: Education, Western University

NMREB File Number: 106746
Study Title: Emerging Leadership Practices for the Implementation of Professional Practice Standards
Sponsor:

NMREB Initial Approval Date: June 19, 2015
NMREB Expiry Date: June 19, 2016

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	Interview Questions	2015/05/07
Recruitment Items	Email Script	2015/05/07
Western University Protocol		2015/05/13
Revised Letter of Information & Consent		2015/06/05

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.



Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information



This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Georgia Lampracos-Gionnas

Post-secondary Education and Degrees: George Brown College of Applied Arts and Technology
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1983-1986 DD

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1986-1991 B.A.

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Related Work Experience: Community College Faculty Member
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