

# **FORMAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: The Problem and an Emerging Solution in International Schools**

(R S Punia)

**This paper first defines the concept of international education and then sheds light on the work of international schools currently engaged in developing formal international education. The content of the paper is based mainly on literature review and reports of practitioners at the university of Bath. Two independent persons with international experience have read and commented on the content. The work of international schools presented in this paper might be useful to other schools aspiring to introduce a degree of international-mindedness in their formal curriculum.**

## **Introduction**

I first became aware of the concept of formal international education during a formal study of international education at the University of Bath in the UK as a taught unit for the EdD awards. This unit focuses mainly on international education in international schools. Most of the participants and the lecturers on this unit of the EdD programme had first-hand experience of formal international education in international schools found all over the world to educate the children of expatriates. I was an exception amongst them. I have moved around in several countries including India, U.K. Singapore, Hong Kong, Fiji, Western Samoa, Mauritius assisting in the development of vocational and technical education in the Further and Higher Education Sector as a teacher, teacher trainer, administrator, and a consultant over a period of 30 years. I mostly worked through international aid agencies engaged in technical cooperation amongst developed and developing countries and I was unaware of the concept of formal international education, particularly in the context of international schools even though my daughter had attended the Island Schools in Hong Kong for ten years amongst international students engaged in obtaining internationally recognised qualifications. The following accounts present my knowledge acquired from learning at the university of Bath with the above background.

This form of education has assumed special importance as the world has begun to shrink due to improved means of communication, faster means of travel, lifting of trade barriers and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Formal international education has the potential to capitalise on the opportunity to develop both technical cooperation and cultural understanding necessary to work and live together in the world.

According to Pasternak (1998) Informal international education brought about by media is already there, but response from formal education to promote international education has been slow and fragmentary. He proposed a conceptual model presented later in this paper.

At present there is no generally accepted definition of formal international education. There are several forms of formal and informal education aimed at promoting international understanding. For example, there is spiritual education, global education, multicultural education, moral education, education in human values, environmental education, comparative education, international education and so on. Many aid agencies are engaged in the promoting international cooperation and understanding e.g. UNESCO, ILO, international universities, schools, spiritual organisations such as Saii Foundation in India, Bahaii faith and some national schools and universities without a common understanding of the goal of international education. In this paper I first define the concept of international education but the focus of the paper is to provide the work of international schools engaged in developing formal international education in schools.

### **Part 1: International Education as A Concept**

There is no general understanding of the aims of international education. For instance, according to Connell 1984, “ Central to education for international life is a recognition of the unity of mankind in a commonly shared world” (p. 81). But Spring (1998) suggests that the goal of international education is to meet the needs of global economy dominated by the powerful nations. It would seem that Connell (1984) expresses an aspiration for the future while Spring (1998) draws on his observations of the current practices in the developed world. The following analysis provides further examples of both views. This section draws on a literature review, study of a committee of enquiry, my experience as an international educator and international education as a field of study (Watson 1996). Essentially it is based on reports from those engaged in this form of education.

#### **Literature on international Education**

Husen and Postlethwaite (1985) regard “**all educative effort** that aims at fostering an international orientation in knowledge and attitude” is international education. According to Fraser and Brickman (1968) international education “connotes the various kinds of **relationships** - intellectual, cultural and educational among individuals and groups from two or more nations including the various methods of international co-operation, understanding and exchange. Thus, the exchange of teachers and students, aid to underdeveloped countries, and teaching about foreign education systems fall within the scope of this term. Hayden and Thompson (1996) regard international education as a process. According to them

international education is **movement of people and ideas** across frontiers. According to them:

**The essence of international education lies not so much in its association with a particular location, but rather in an association with the crossing of frontiers, be they physical or intellectual (Hayden and Thompson 1998, p. 51).**

Pasternak (1998) conceptualised international education as intercultural **competence**. Fisher (1998) and Barber (1997) perceived it as education for **global issues** such as living in harmony and living in a pollution free environment. International organisations such as UNESCO, ILO and UNICEF regard international education as a means of international **co-operation and support**. Robert Blackburn (1991) during an interview about international education in international schools expresses it thus:

**It is so difficult to define. I put it, I think, that the purpose of international education is to teach our kids how to welcome diversity, not just to tolerate it (World Yearbook 1991: International Schools and International Education, (p. 222).**

According to Mackenzie (1998), the combination of world-mindedness and open-mindedness describe **international attitudes**. The former promotes global consciousness; the later ensures a conscience appropriate to this. These are the twin towers between which pan-national bridge is hung. Wilkinson (1998) quotes Kurt Kahn who conceived such an education as a means of transferring the love of liberty and love of country into **a common love of mankind**.

According to my interpretations the above quotations provide a variety of images of the aims, content and methods of formal and informal international education. According to these images international education has two main forms: global education dealing with international issues of global importance and multicultural education to promote cultural understanding. The general educational goal of formal international education is to develop world-mindedness and open-mindedness. These personal views of international educators mostly from international schools are valuable guides for those aspiring to develop a degree of formal international education in their schools.

The next paragraph presents the views of members of an inquiry team consisting mostly of teachers from international schools. The team, including myself as a member of the team, used brain storming to generate knowledge in three groups and formal interviews with

experienced practitioners in international education who were also the lecturers on the unit on international education. This inquiry method provided a system to generate collective knowledge in that situation but the content may have a low validity and reliability.

#### **A Committee of Enquiry Perspective of International Education In International Schools**

I found that the EdD programme included an interesting strategy to extend the learning experiences of the participants beyond formal lectures. A committee of enquiry had been set up during the one-week EdD unit on international education in 1998. The aim of the enquiry team fully **detailed in the appendix** was to develop an understanding of what the term international means in the context of education generally. The members of the enquiry panel were the EdD students with a considerable experience of international education in international schools. The various reports on the definition of international education from individuals are listed below without any frequency accounts. According to them international education is:

- A set of values such as, international co-operation, cultural understanding, and unity in diversity.
- International and intercultural audience including students, teachers and administrators working together.
- The use of enquiry-based teaching and learning to develop critical thinking and open-mindedness amongst students.
- Learning several languages to become mobile in several countries and to develop the capacity to understand and enjoy a variety of cultures.
- A new ideology used by powerful groups of people in the world to safeguard their self-interests.
- A response to clear student need for internationally accepted qualifications.
- Awareness of issues of international importance.
- A marketing slogan of international schools.
- A complete system of formal education including inputs, processes, output, quality assurance mechanism and the context aimed at educating international students to prepare them for international living e.g. international schools.

The committee strongly believed in celebrating diversity in unity to cater for varying contextual needs. They strongly opposed a single model for all international schools. Although the findings of inquiry are based on personal opinions, they present a fairly balanced view of international education in international schools from teacher perspective.

The emergent views present international education as both a response to global need for international understanding and cooperation and international education as a tool in the hands of the powerful people to promote their self-interests. The members of the inquiry team also interviewed the prominent educators in international schools who were also involved in teaching the unit on international education. The next paragraph presents their views as I understood as a member of the inquiry team.

#### **Views of the Prominent Educators on International Education in International Schools**

Positive views of the academics from international schools have already been presented under the literature review. Witnesses to the inquiry varied in their understanding of international education. Generally they agreed with the views of the inquiry team presented above but they expressed some doubts about the presence of formal international education in all international schools. Some witnesses considered international education in international schools as a mere slogan adopted to gather additional resources in the current competitive market. Another witness called international education an ideology in the hands of the powerful people. He admitted that international schools were excellent academic institutions tending to propagate some international-mindedness amongst its students and teachers through informal contacts. Another witness suggested that the concept of international education was simply the colonisation of North American and the European ideas. One witness believed that international education in international schools did not exist at all.

Again there was no consensus on the goals of international education in international schools. According to my interpretation the witnesses expressed their personal views on international education, often without defining the concept of international education. These views made sense to me when I learnt that only the World Colleges aimed to promote international education and the rest of the international schools had adopted their ideology to various degrees and for a variety of reasons.

I learnt that international education in international schools is an evolving concept designed to promote international-mindedness amongst its students through formal education but the concept is open to misuse in the hands of unethical people. The following case from my personal experience to solve a specific attitude problem in a specific context as an international consultant sheds further light on the evolving nature of international education.

### **A Personal Experience of International Education in the work of Aid Agencies**

The following incident based on my reflections-on-action occurred when I was employed by an aid agency as a consultant in vocational and technical education. At that time I was not familiar with the concept of international education. Although I acted intuitively, my strategy produced the desired effects. It seems in hindsight that, with an intuitive belief in international education as exchange of cultures and attitudes using the 'Greenhouse ideology' of Neal and Nolan (1978), I had set up a learning situation/curriculum for the people involved in this experiment. The outcome was surprising and educative indeed.

**Some years ago while serving as a consultant in curriculum and staff development in one of the technical institutes in the South Pacific I had a unique problem requiring an unusual solution. According to local authorities this institute had a serious discipline problem. The local teachers taught whatever they liked, they often came late and finished early and they used their students and the school workshops for their personal benefit. The ministry of education paid little attention to these matters due to lack of experience and people in handling such matters at that level. As a consultant I was asked to solve this problem. The institute had a few expatriate teachers from developed countries. They also wished to improve the local situation. Formal curriculum and staff development had no place in this situation. A sudden flash of insight came to my rescue. I remembered the value of Informal learning in families to acquire values and attitudes.**

Fortunately I had the authority to take the next action. I decided to create a learning situation based on Greenhouse effect ideology (Deal and Nolan 1978). To create an international environment I gradually increased the number of expatriate teachers to create the ratio of expatriates to locals of 50 / 50. I was hoping that the local teachers would catch the positive attitude of the expatriates from the international environment without my direct intervention from me. The strategy worked like magic. Most of the problems cited earlier disappeared in a few years. The local teachers adopted the high working culture of the expatriates. In this situation two-way learning also occurred.

The expatriates were also learning from the locals. For instance, one young Peace Corpse volunteer from the U.S.A. had himself tatoood all over his backside and thighs, a local custom amongst the local male to display their manhood. This young American came to show it to me in excitement but was rather disappointed when I reminded him of what might happen when he undresses himself in front of his wife in the U.S.A.

In the light of the above incident and my recent study of international education I understand that exchange of knowledge, skills and attitudes does take place in an international environment. This is probably true of international schools as well. International education is

caught, not taught. Educators do not know enough about international education as a planned curriculum but they have made a useful start to promote international understanding through formal education.

#### **A Glimpse of International Education in Higher Education**

Badley (1998) provides the following guidelines for Total Quality Management (TQM) in promoting internationalisation for the Higher Education Sector. I believe it is also useful for other institutions aspiring to introduce international education.

1. Express belief in internationalisation in the institution's mission statement.
2. Make internationalisation policy explicit in the form of curriculum development, staff development and research.
3. Use a focused approach to specific regions, projects and links likely to be more successful.
4. Create general international milieu in learning organisations.
5. Specify clear learning objectives.
6. Make available proper induction programmes for international students and scholars.
7. Adopt a flexible, modular, credit-rated curriculum system.
8. Improve international education through formative evaluation.

The term International education is also used in the contexts of a specific field of study in education as follows.

#### **International Education as a Field of Study**

During my formal study of literature on international education I learnt for the first time that International education was not just a practical solution to emerging practical problems: it was also an academic field of study. Drawing mainly on academic literature and my personal experience I now explore international education as a field of study divided in comparative and international education. Watson (1996) and Lowe (1998) distinguish comparative education from international education. According to them Comparative Education is the academic study of educational issues in more than one country and in this sense it is an academic field of study located mainly in universities. The term International education is mostly associated with practical involvement of aid agencies in education in developing countries. I was sad to find that I had spent my life as an international educator without this knowledge. However, I also realised that action is possible without theoretical knowledge.

My practical experience as an international experience has shown that the above theoretical and practical orientation of the two fields is not fruitful to develop international education in

the future. From my own work as an international consultant and formal study at the university of Bath I have learnt that theory without practice, practice without theory and sensitivity to contexts professional educators cannot solve genuine educational problems effectively and use their experience to learn and create new knowledge (see more in Punia 1992 & 2004). At best they can offer ready-made solutions to poorly defined problems. I have also learnt that collaborative Action research is a useful research methodology to develop both theory and practice in international education through the work of aid agencies in the future.

### **Research on International Education**

From the preceding analysis of the problem of international education it should be evident that our understanding of international education as a controlled learning experience is inadequate. We need more research to make up this deficiency. Connell (1984) wrote:

**Research remains limited on the processes by which students actually learn about international life in different situations, and many questions remain unanswered.....there is scope for schools to plan modest action research programmes to elucidate some of the issues in their own context (p. 86).**

This situation has not improved significantly. The University of Bath has commenced empirical research to understand the nature of international education in international schools. In addition to this work we need Action Research (see Elliott 1998) in international aid projects to improve practice and practitioners, case studies of international education in international schools (see Mores 1998) and biographies of international persons including consultants, students, teachers and parents. International education is an exciting area for research, which might be encouraged by the aid agencies in future. I have learnt that my MPhil dissertation (Punia 1992) and the EdD thesis (Punia 2004) are useful contributions towards the knowledge base in international education in the context of the work of aid agencies.

### **An Analysis of the Present Context of International Education**

Historically all education is an open system in societies created and dominated by those elements in power positions in order to perpetuate their own values and interests (Pasternak 198, - p.257). There seems to be a contradiction in the policies and actions of powerful nations of the world. They claim to promote formal international mindedness through international aid agencies when they are promoting formal education as an economic commodity to be bought and sold in the free world market like any other goods. It means that their policies

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emphasise economic interests at the expense of human interests. Sadly the developing countries seem to take their lead with flawed educational provisions. In this context international education to promote international attitude becomes a daunting task. Grant (1997) on multicultural education in the U.K shares his experience thus.

**All that one can say is that it may help if all forces are pulling in the same way and at the same time. Education has to be broad-based, working together with social and political policies. Then something might be achieved, but it will be an uncertain process. Anti- racist, multicultural education cannot work as a mere addition to curriculum (p. 188).**

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### **Personal View On International Education**

Finally I would like to share my personal view apparent in my work (Punia (2004) as an international educator working for aid agencies. I have learnt that we need to become more universal and less individualistic in outlook on life at a time when world is coming closer with technological advances, which are open to human development as well as to human destruction. Our educational institutions ought to provide education for holistic human development. Without these fundamental changes, formal international education will remain a slogan in the hands of the powerful people who wish to advance their own economic ends cloaked under the guise of globalisation and internationalism. This is part of human nature. In my view Krishnamurti 19986, chopra 1996, Senge 1990, Covey 1992& 2004, Macniff and Whitehead 2000, 2006 provide examples of educational work done in this direction.

### **Conclusion**

It may not be inappropriate for me to conclude that there is more general awareness of the need for formal international education to generate international cooperation, but there is no shared vision of its goals and means amongst educators. As for me as a practitioner, I have learnt much about the theory through a formal study of international education at the university of Bath shared in this paper. I have made a useful professional contribution to the knowledge base in international education in the context of the work of aid agencies (see Punia 2004).

Many formal and informal agencies are engaged in meeting this need and one such organisation is international schools. The remaining paper presents the experience of international schools in promoting international education in international schools. Their experience is a useful guide for national and international schools aspiring to introduce an element of formal international education.

## **Part Two**

### **International Education in International Schools A Case Report**

This section presents what I have learnt about the work international schools in developing formal international education in the school sector. Generally International education in international schools is work in progress (Jenkins 1998). Coherence, system or planning and above all inclusiveness and comprehensiveness in tackling the issue, has to come in the future. Formal international education seems to have originated from United World Colleges. At present the international Baccalaureate (I.B.) is engaged in developing its own model. This paper focuses mainly on the work of IB work in international schools. This following narrative is derived from the literature, opinions of experienced practitioners, the experience of some schools engaged in promoting this kind of education and research carried out at the university of Bath, department of education.

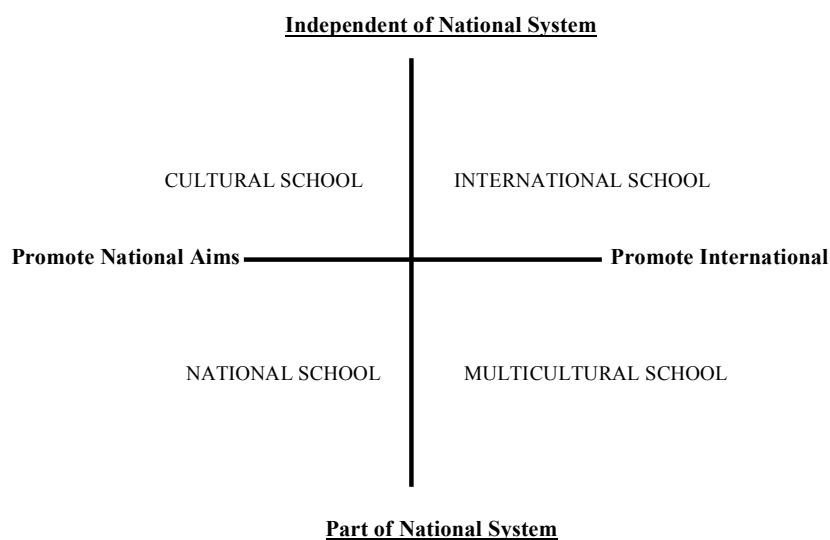
#### **International Schools**

The international schools found all over the world were first established for the education of children of expatriate professionals working abroad over long periods. How these schools came to be known as international schools remains unknown. The international school of Geneva (ISG) is the oldest institution of this kind. With increasing global mobility of professionals the numbers of these schools have increased from mere 50 in 1964 to over 1000 in thirty years. The demand for international schools is increasing rapidly. According to the needs of their clients and geographical conditions these institutions vary in offering formal international education as such. There is no single determinant of the educational philosophy in international schools. For instance, different educators describe one or more features of international schools as educational institutions as follows.

According to Leach (1969) an international school has students from several nationalities, serving expatriate community of one or more origin and preparing young people for international living. Terwilliger (1972) noted the following features of an international school:

1. Its' enrolment consists of expatriate children;
2. Highly experienced teachers are hired;
3. Its' board of directors consists of locals and expatriates in the ratio of 50/50;
4. The school offers the best content and teaching-learning methodology leading to universities.

According to Gellar (1993) international schools promote international understanding. Any school in the world, private or public can become international. Wilkinson (1998) writes: “The key elements are exposure in schools to a curriculum that is consciously international in content and students with wide diversity of cultural background.”(p.227). However, according to Findlay (1997), the curriculum of international schools is usually not international. It is based on the curriculum of a country other than of the host country. Thompson (1998) neatly defines an international school in relation to other types of schools as follows:



Generally international schools are independent of the national systems and they claim to promote international aims. It raises an interesting question.

Several attempts have been made to categorise international schools. Mathew (1988) and others divided these schools into “**ideology-driven**” and “**market-driven**” schools. Ideology driven schools are those found for the express purpose of furthering international understanding and co-operation. UNIS, the international school of Washington and four of the six United World Colleges belong to this category. The rest of the schools are called market driven in that they arose from the needs of particular communities and run by individuals, community groups, and delegates of multinational companies or government agencies. Leggate and Thompson (1997) report that attempts to categorise such schools have failed to

produce a singular taxonomy, which accounts for the range of institutional variations involved. The committee of enquiry comprised of teachers from international schools seemed to summarise the situation well. According to them there is unity in diversity based on intention to promote international understanding amongst students and the staff and to respond to the market conditions.

According to my interpretation of the above accounts it seems that originally international schools met the academic needs of their international students only. With the current global conditions some of them may also have become market and ideology driven. It seems to me generally international schools are reputed for the quality of education. For instance, during my recent visit to India I found many national schools called international schools.

### **Students at International Schools.**

The international schools cater for the children of expatriate communities. In the literature these children have been called 'global nomads', 'third culture children, and 'translanguage children, transculturals or transnationals and so on. They represent a privileged elite for whom international education plays a pivotal role in personal development. As the father of two of two children who attended international schools I agree with Langford (1998) when he describes international students as follows:

**As a silent minority who possess unique characteristics distinct from those children who grow up in a native culture: these include superior diplomacy, flexibility, linguist ability, patience, and sophistication. On the other hand they experience insecurity in relationships, unresolved grief stemming from constantly leaving friends (p. 30).**

According to one of the witnesses to the committee of inquiry the product of international schools was more confident, possessed breadth of knowledge, independent study habits and middle-class values. These students have easy transition from school life into university life.

Only the children of middle class families enter international schools, as they are costly. Mrs. Desai, the chairperson of the Universities Grant Commission in India remarked in march (1996) that International Baccalaureate (I B) schools largely represent multinational elite and that they need to develop a knowledge base which gives them potential to influence decisions to create a more equitable world. Given the relatively high socio-economic background of many international students, 95% of the students graduating from these schools enter Higher Education.

The students and their parent share a common goal in ensuring access into university education. International schools seem to have achieved high success rate towards this end. This might be one of the reasons for their current popularity. The demand for international schools is increasing rapidly with the growth of middle class and international mobility of people and ideas. Halsey et al (1997) write: *“As the new middle class has increased exponentially in the era of economic nationalism, so aspirations have been raised for their children”*(p.15).

According my interpretation of the above accounts international schools have students from middle-class and wealthy families with middle-class values. It makes teaching and learning more meaningful to teachers and students. Thus these schools are able to provide high quality education. Majority of national schools do not have students and parents with clear goals and values e.g. Willis 1977 reported that working class students and parents often did not see any relevance in school education. Lauder et al 1999 explored the quality of education in various schools. According to their research differences in the performance of schools can be explained by several factors such as the students' prior achievement, mix in population, stability of the school and by the quality of teachers and the management. However, the single most important factor was the students' prior achievement. In the light of this research, the students in international schools are perhaps the most important factor for the quality of education in international schools.

#### **Teachers in the System**

According to Badley (1998) a cornerstone of internationalisation is undoubtedly staff development and exchange. There is a dearth of literature on teachers and their professional development including recruitment, preparation, placement, induction, performance appraisal and motivation in international schools. According to Richards (1998):

**Further investigation into the composition of staff in international schools and the way in which administrators take cognisance of and respond to diversity of educational background of teachers is in urgent need (P. 180).**

According to Findlay (1997) inservice training opportunities are available within these schools, locally and overseas. Fisher (1998), one of the witnesses to the committee of inquiry, mentioned various opportunities in his school including an induction program and teacher evaluation by the heads through inspection of student's work. Thompson (1998) reports on excellent work of teachers to improve their classrooms, subject areas, departments and whole school system. Other opportunities for professional development exist through membership of

consortia, working parties, E.C.I.S. and research work available in universities such as the University of Bath.

In my experience, good quality teachers in these schools come mostly from the developed world. Like their students they tend to be mobile and feel comfortable in international and intercultural settings. They enjoy much better conditions of service as compared to those of their local counterparts.

According to one of the witnesses to the committee of inquiry, management courses do not match the needs of managers from these schools as there is no single management style in international schools. Management style of international schools depends largely on the ownership of schools, long term planning and independence of school management.

Development in international schools has been spasmodic due to mobility of students and staff (Leggate and Thompson 1997). Under such circumstances it might be difficult to install an integrated Human Resource Development system comprised of recruitment, placement, ongoing support, appraisal, training and motivation. On the whole international schools recruit good quality teachers matching the needs of good quality students. These schools use interesting curriculum for the development of international-mindedness.

#### **The Planned Curriculum in International Education**

There are several so-called international curricula in the market. For instance, other curricula are International GCSE at 16+ (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate), the newly developed Advanced International Placement Certificate offered in the United States of America. The most popular international curriculum is from I.B. In (1994) 77 countries offered the I.B. programme to students of 16-19 years of age. Recently the age range has been expanded with the development of I.B. Middle Years (MYP) for 11-16 age and (PYP) for 3-12 years of age. The following I.B. statement is a good indicator of I.B. policy on international Education.

**Through comprehensive and balanced curricula, coupled with challenging assessments the IB organisation aims to assist schools in their endeavours to develop the individual talent of young people and to teach them to relate the experience of classroom to the realities of the world outside. Beyond intellectual rigour and high academic standards, the emphasis is placed on the ideals of international understanding and responsible citizenship, to the end that IB students may become critical and compassionate thinkers and life-long learners and informed participants in the local and world affairs, conscious of the shared humanity that binds all people together while**

respecting the variety of cultures and attitudes that make for the richness of life (Jenkins, 1998, p. 94).

Fox (1998) reported the four fundamental educational criteria used in I.B. curricula as follows:

1. Priority of personal reflection over more accumulation of knowledge;
2. Training for independent work and the practical application of knowledge;
3. An international perspective in the approach to human problems;
4. A link between academic and extra-curricular activities- the concept of educating the whole person.

According to Drennen (1998), I.B. director of academic affairs, Globalisation has led to the current rapid development of the three I.B. programmes. According to her, **I.B. Diploma** is thirty years old and its growth rate is 15% per annum. **Programme philosophy includes knowledge to apply, and will to act to improve the human condition on this planet.** I.B. diploma is considered as a total, integrated curriculum with varied modes of assessment consistent with the educational values derived from a coherent statement of philosophy. However, it is essentially an academic programme lacking vocational element and it is suitable only for hard-working university-bound students. The program has the following content to match its laudable philosophy.

The programme includes six subject groups: experimental Science, Mathematics, individuals and society, Language (1), Language (2), Art and electives, with Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) and extended Essay integrating the curriculum. Language has special importance in the I.B. programmes. At present the languages of delivery in the I.B. curriculum are French, English and Spanish only. This restricted use of languages might open the programme for criticism.

According to Drennen, a common course in the Theory of Knowledge (**TOK**), an independent Extended Essay and participation in Creative and Social Service activities (**CAS**) designed to promote international understanding are distinguishing features of this programme. However, The participants of the module on international education with first-hand experience of teaching in international schools did not support this claim. Probably there is usual inconsistency in planned and implemented curriculum.

Basically middle years programme (**MYP**) contains eight groups: two additional groups are physical science and technology. Subject disciplines are still visible in the (MYP). However, the Primary Years programme (**PYP**) is inquiry-based with the following questions to explore.

1. Who are we?
2. Where are we in time and space?
3. How do we express?
4. How does the world work?
5. How do we organise?
6. How do we share our planet?

One of most engaging aspects of the PYP is the ways in which internationalism is defined explicitly as a series of desired student attributes and dispositions or outcomes, which form the stated aims of the programme. Both PYP and MYP are for all children in their age range and are assessed within schools. According to Drennen (1998) the three programmes share the following features.

- 1. Development of languages.**
- 1 Inquiry- based learning.**
- 2 Similarity in pedagogical base.**
- 3 Shared aims in developing international outlook.**

According to my interpretation generally the planned curriculum matches the mission statement and the criteria presented above. IB curriculum development exercise is not yet complete. At present the emphasis is on the planned curriculum in which the logic of progression from one programme to another is also difficult to understand. For instance, how will the primary school children adjust from inquiry-based programmes to discipline-based programmes? Furthermore, the depth and breadth of learning is not clear to me. Consistency in the aims, content, teaching methodology and student assessment was not clearly visible. There seemed to be a little information and research on the operational curriculum.

Apparently there are some unresolved issues with the IB curricula. According to Thompson (1999) the three programmes originated from three different sources, causing some difficulties in establishing coherence in the IB programmes. Generally the planned content of these programmes meets the IB policy statement and the philosophy.



### **Effects of IB programmes**

Limited research at the University of Bath and the available literature provides some insight into the effectiveness of the IB diploma. For instance, according to Fox (1998),

**There was overwhelming information that the programme had satisfied the expectations with regards to vigour, challenge and academic excellence. In addition, internationality, philosophy and structure of the programme emerged as important factors in its success (p. 73).**

However, Peterson (1987) reported that in terms of ideological basis, I.B. programme was inadequate and that I.B. incorporated international dimension only as a means of catering pragmatically of students of different nationalities. Furthermore, this type of international education is only informative for international living.

Hayden and Wong (1997) reported: *“our overall conclusion is that I.B. is perceived as a successful academic programme, which clearly contributes to the development of international outlook.”* (359). In the same study the students referred to numerous factors influencing international-mindedness, but, the most distinctive feature was living and mixing with students of other nationalities. The emphasis on the importance of the informal dimension of education in the development of international-mindedness reinforces the views of Gellar (1993), Bartlett (1993), Cole-Baker Hill (1994), Hayden and Thompson (1995). According to Drake (1998), a significant aim of pastoral care is to foster international understanding. Pastoral care is that part of school life, which covers all aspects of work with pupils other than academic teaching.

I suspect that parents and the wider international context also play a significant part in promoting international attitude amongst students. It means that formal curriculum is only a small part of a wider context in which informal and personal interactions play a major role. Two useful models for curriculum planning in International Education have emerged (Thompson 1998 & Pasternak 1998).

### **The Pasternak Model**

The Pasternak (1998) model is based on four human values including global education (knowledge of international issues), multicultural education, Journey inwards (self knowledge) and Journey outwards (development of social skills and attitudes). The model is designed to prepare students for international living. The holistic school experience with school teachers as models of international-mindedness are important features to impart such a curriculum.

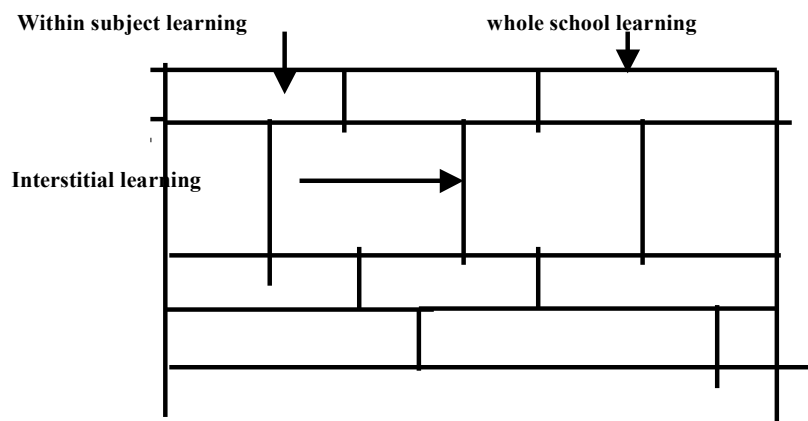
According to Pasternak (1998), all schools are not likely to offer all components of this model. It is difficult to envisage the degree of international-mindedness expected from a particular model of practice. For instance, inclusion of multi-cultural education in national schools is not likely to be sufficient to achieve the goals of international education presented in the IB mission statement. The model as a whole is based on sound thinking and it might be a useful guide for those aspiring to integrate elements of formal international education in their school curriculum.

**The Thompson Model**

Thompson (1998) model is based on empirical research conducted in the university of bath. According to Thompson (1998) International Education will mostly be caught not taught. The task of those directly responsible for planning and the organisation of schools will be to arrange a learning environment made of (1) cultural diversity, (2) a balanced curriculum and (3) an administrative style conducive to the promotion of international education. He calls it **ABC curriculum**. Both models are useful guides to integrate several elements of international education.

However, Thompson (1998), like Pasternak (1998), also expects that no single school is likely to follow this model as a whole. Different schools may adopt different features according to their needs. It is difficult for me to envisage how international mindedness will emerge without adopting these models holistically. Thompson 1998 also offers the following guideline to introduce international mindedness in existing curriculum.

Thompson (1998) used brick wall metaphor to indicate how the various elements of international education might be built into an existing programme as illustrated below:



According to Thompson (1998) it is likely that process of learning will be characterised by inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approaches, extracurricular as well as formal curricular activities and long-term learning. Furthermore, it is likely to be theme oriented and person-centred, and will be closely linked with social learning. It will permeate every aspect of school environment and beyond.

#### **Personal Suggestions for Curriculum Development for the Future**

To judge the effectiveness of any planned educational programme, it is essential that its goals, content, teaching-learning methodology and student assessment interrelate. Frequently the planned and the operational curriculum do not show consistency. The gap between the two has to be carefully monitored to achieve the planned goals. Planned curriculum is merely a proposal to be tested in practice (Stenhouse 1975).

From the past thirty years of history in curriculum development in the U.K. and the U.S.A. educators have learnt much about curriculum development in various disciplines. Early efforts in curriculum development were focused mainly on improving the quality of the planned curriculum in the form of better quality teaching materials. Later this led to the improvement of the operational curriculum in the form of teacher development in schools. Now the focus has shifted to whole school improvement and development. For the full development of IB curricula, much work needs to be done to realise the dream of curriculum planners in the present curriculum, particularly in PYP and MYP.

#### **Action Research as another Model for Curriculum Development In International Education**

This model is useful to link the planned curriculum with the operational curriculum and integrated staff development with opportunities for further research and development work. According to this model, the curriculum as content is a hypothetical and a provisional specification in the process of being continuously tested and reconstructed by teachers and students at the local level. This pedagogical approach combined with action research may provide further insights into the learning processes involved in promoting international education through planned curriculum at various levels. Elliott (1998) offers a useful example of the application of this model in Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI) project carried out by OECD (CERI) to impart environment education in schools. My work in the Fiji Institute of technology presented in Punia (1992) provides an example of this kind of model used by a consultant to link the planned curriculum with the operational one in the context of institution-based curriculum development.

### **International Education in International Schools: The Progress**

This part of the paper traces the development of international education in international schools. The progress varies from no international education in some schools to the production of useful guides for the development of international education elsewhere. Some educators in international schools believe that there is insufficient evidence of the presence of international education in international schools. For example, according to Gellar (1998):

**The term international education gained currency-a term that meant all things to some people and meant little to many-an example of Wittgenstein's bewitchment of intelligence by means of language.**

International school whose diploma serves as a passport for admission to universities and colleges at large does not necessarily provide an international education (Bell 1986). One witness to the Committee of Enquiry (1998) set up at the university of Bath believed that international schools and international education were different and that International education in international schools was a utopia. Hayden and Thompson (1995) reported:

**In the context of international schools, the word international might tell us something about the student population, but that is all; the rest is anyone's guess ( p. 15).**

In spite of these opinions of the professional educators in international schools, there is some research evidence to indicate the presence of international education in international schools.

### **Research**

The centre for the study of education in international context (CEIC) at the university of Bath has conducted several studies to capture participant perception of international education in international schools. It is, however, important to realise that these studies provide only the perception of opportunity samples of students and teachers from international schools. In one study Undergraduates at the University of Bath reported that exposure to cultures other than one's own through personal contacts helped them to develop an international attitude (Hayden and Thompson 1995). In the second study Hayden and Thompson 1998, reported on teacher and student perceptions of international education in international schools. They reported on the teacher perception of international education as international-mindedness in international schools as follows.

- 1. Exposure to students within school of different nationalities and cultures.**
- 2. Teacher factors such as teachers being exemplars.**

3. **Formal curriculum including planned teaching and learning activities in classrooms.**
4. **Local community links and informal but organised activities such as clubs and societies within school.**

Interestingly undergraduates reported the following factors:

1. Exposure to students within school;
2. Exposure to students outside school;
3. Informal aspects;
4. Teacher factors and curriculum.

Thompson (1998) has developed a useful model for curriculum development presented above based on the following factors derived from these studies.

1. Exposure to others of different cultures within the school.
2. Teachers as examples of international-mindedness.
3. Exposure to others cultures outside the school.
4. A balanced formal curriculum.
5. A management regime, which is value consistent with an international philosophy.

#### **The ISG Experience of International Education**

The International School of Geneva is the pioneer in the development of International education in schools. They report their experience as follows. Walker et al. (1994) at the International school of Geneva (ISG) offer the following goals for providing international education in international schools. They aim to:

1. Encourage important international values.
2. Support the student's language development.
3. Ensure an international dimension to the curriculum.
4. Recognise the importance of global issues.
5. Provide breadth and balance to education experience.
6. Adopt an innovative approach to learning and teaching.
7. Provide appropriate student services.
8. Show respect for and integration with the host country.

Walker (1995) offered the following suggestions for **knowledge, skills and attitudes** for the development of international education amongst students:

1. Use of communication technology to access information.
2. Development of negotiating skills.
3. Understanding of other nations' priorities.
4. Awareness of different mindsets.
5. Study crosses national frontiers.
6. Ability to perceive distinction between truth and falsehood.

From the above evidence it would seem that international educators have clear goals and content to promote international-minded. Formal international education has commenced in international schools but its development varies from school to school and remains incomplete. Bartlett 1997 expresses the situation as follows.

**A system of international education as defined by the central question 'what do students learn in international schools' does not yet exist. It is the principal belief that it should. It is an abiding irony that many of our clients, the parents who choose our schools for their children, believe it does (Bartlett 1997, P. 56).**

### **Quality Assurance in International Schools**

International schools are supported and controlled by European Council of International Schools (ECIS) with a useful programme for evaluation and accreditation of IB programmes. Quality can be controlled at three levels: quality of the student leaning through assessment in relation to planned goals; Quality Assurance through the introduction of correct processes related to defined goals and Total Quality Management (TQM) aimed at total control over the processes, product and client satisfaction as an integrated system. According to Bartlett (1997), the present weakness of the accreditation process is that it evaluates processes, not the outcome. According to him work was in progress to eliminate this flaw.

The centre for the study of education in an international context (CEIC) at the university of Bath is engaged in staff development and in the promotion of research in international schools. The International school at Geneva is engaged in innovatory work in developing principles and objectives for the development of international education. IB is involved in curriculum development. According to Thompson (1998), there is considerable contribution from groups and individuals of teachers from international schools. According to him international schools are well organised to maintain quality.

### **My Understanding of International Education in International Schools**

In addition to academic achievement of international repute, the new goal of international schools is to promote international-mindedness amongst middle class children of the expatriate parents working overseas through formal curriculum. Already there is evidence to show that already children from these schools possess a degree of international-mindedness and they find it easy to adjust to university life, their primary goal.

At present some international schools are pursuing an active policy to formalise international education through formal IB curriculum made of three programmes. Although excellent work in planned curriculum has already been done, it will take some time to achieve the anticipated goals by linking the planned curriculum with the operational one and linking planned curriculum to student achievement.

International education in international schools is not a pipe dream of some educators engaged in this project. A degree of progress has been made. Much work remains to achieve the ambitious goals of the planned curriculum; to cope with increasing demands for these schools and to research work required to better understand the nature of international education and to link the planned curriculum with the operational one through action research in these schools. The main challenge of these schools is likely to maintain balance in international education with the excellent academic achievements of its students in the past.

Some academics, including my self, find that the planned curriculum presented above is biased towards promoting European culture amongst the international elite. Further more, International schools have been known for remaining aloof from national schools of their host countries. In future international schools may further promote international-mindedness by being models of international mindedness to national schools. They can do so by becoming more accessible and supportive towards the host countries; establish networks amongst themselves and with the schools of their host countries.

### **Summary**

At present technological advances have brought the world together but international cooperation to match technical advances is lacking. Several international and national agencies are engaged in promoting a degree of international-minded through formal and informal education without a clear definition of the problem and its solution. There is lack of coordination to tackle this problem through concerted efforts and to tackle this problem through formal education. International schools are engaged in promoting a degree of international-mindedness amongst school children through formal education. They have

begun the difficult task of developing formal curriculum to offer planned international education with clear goals and means.

Development of international education to create international-mindedness is a complex problem to solve. It transcends the introduction of formal education, demanding continuous learning from formal and informal experiences with a collaborative vision of life. For instance, according to Barber (1997): “We don’t regard education and schooling as synonymous. Home, school and outside learning are three strands for learning. Leaders with vision and networking are the means”..

This paper shows that international education is work in progress in international schools. According to my personal experience as an international educator, international aid agencies also have a unique opportunity of integrating international mindedness with technical cooperation. Action research is a useful strategy available to take positive action in the future. My work in Punia (1992, 2004) shows how this opportunity might be put in practice.

This paper provides useful information to raise the awareness of the need for international-mindedness to match technological advances and offers examples of how some organisations are attempting to achieve such a goal through formal education. Some suggestions have been made to pursue this goal in the future. This work may be useful to those currently engaged in this project or wishing to pursue this goal in the future.

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