CHAPTER VII

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7.1 GENERAL PROBLEMS FACING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

In addition to the specific problems facing the leaders of International school, cited in the earlier section, there are also many general problems that many International Schools have in common.

Most International Schools, especially the ones in developed countries are facing financial difficulties which hinder their operations to their optimum capacity. Some of these schools suffer because although they are dependent on resources from their Governments, these resources are not forthcoming and is burdened with the bureaucracy that goes with it. The schools that are independent of the Government agencies have to depend mainly on the funds raised by fees and occasional grants. The question of sponsorship is strikingly acute for the private independent International schools. Ideally, the fees in such schools must not be too excessive as they are non-profit making institutions according to their charters. Also the clientele that they would want to cater to are the children of Professionals and Public servants whose salaries are not lucrative. Despite this because of the dearth of funds, International Schools throughout the world have have found it necessary to charge high fees compared to the private national schools, in many instances in order to survive.
If and when Government financial aid is offered to some International Schools there is usually strings attached to this offer. The Government would want the school to adhere to its peculiar national curriculum requirements. This may eventually lead to the adoption of the curriculum of the sponsoring Government and it is only a short step before even the teachers and the administrations team are hired primarily from this particular country.

Another very real problem facing International Schools is that there is a periodic conflict between different factions who see the functions of the International School from their own narrow perspective. On the one hand there are those idealist who endeavor to strive to fulfill the objectives and goals of international understanding and world-mindedness. Such persons want to teach students their role as world citizens and to share mutual respect regardless of race, colour or creed. Such idealist are unwilling to compromise their ideals for practical expediencies and immediate exigencies.

On the other hand there are those pragmatic oriented persons who see the International Schools as serving their immediate needs and of providing a sound and specialized education that will get their wards
into reputed Universities in the home country. Such persons are only too willing to sacrifice the ideal for the expedient.

International Schools that have tried to integrate both viewpoints have had to pay the price of rigidity and inflexibility with respect to innovations and experimentations. Once a particular structure is agreed upon it then becomes almost impossible to deviate without upsetting the equilibrium.

Since most International Schools are modeled after their counterparts in Europe or the US, they are not necessarily exactly adapted to meet the local conditions that are in existence in Asia or in Africa. In some countries these International Schools are so different from the educational system available locally that they may just as well have been on a different planet.

Among the many important duties of an International School is the precarious one of keeping the student from becoming a foreigner in his own country. The student should not lose touch with his own culture and his own national heritage. Yet he must be able to view his own culture in the perspective with others, and must be able to envision his relationship
with his fellowman. International Schools have the difficult task of instilling in the student that his allegiance to mankind may be above his allegiance to his own country. He must be made to realize that the persons or the party in power in his country today may not be in power tomorrow. He must realize that the political allegiances of today may no longer exist or be relevant in his own adulthood. Such ideas often run counter to what the student has been taught by his parents or in his former national school system. It is this situation that makes an international school different from the national overseas school. These conditions are often responsible for the apparent reticence national educational authorities have shown to support international schools. It is this problem that has made the national overseas schools more prevalent and acceptable than an international school.

National overseas schools however, while serving a most urgent need and purpose, have had some negative drawbacks. They tend to isolate the foreign community further and also encourage ethnocentricity and thus become deplorable institutions in the eyes of some observers. Some International Schools have been known to cause dissention among the community. The Minister of Education for Tanzania, at the opening ceremony of the International School of Tanganyika had said:
There has been a tendency by foreign communities in many independent countries to form schools designed exclusively for one particular national group of expatriates. These have often fulfilled a useful purpose, but they have tended to divide the community, and they have naturally, at times, been resented by both by the host country and by the expatriates of other nationalities....

7.2 CONTRIBUTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

The international schools are apparently meeting the pressing need and providing positive solutions to the educational needs of their communities. They are also attempting to achieve the larger goals of mutual understanding among the individual nations promoted through a supra-national educational cooperation. It is the cherished wish of the educators involved in these projects that the future maintenance of peace will

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depend to a very large extent upon the manner in which the generations of the future perceive their world role. International Schools achieve a bond and a sense of cooperations between many nations which have been enemies for centuries. This fact is itself quite astounding. The very large number of students applying to enroll in these schools which have been operating for a relatively short time is itself a testimony to the success of the enterprise.

International Schools are pioneers in supra-national education and the schools of the future will be modeled on their relative strengths. These International Schools have succeeded in propagating an International Baccalaureate and this too is to be considered as a major step in the unification and the standardization of a world view on education. These International Schools can also serve as prototypes for the magnet schools that have been envisioned in many National Systems including that of India.

Much work has been done in these International Schools with respect to multi-lingual teaching and the use of an appropriate working language to teach other subjects. The experience gained by these International Schools in this direction can enhance and be adapted to
suit the needs of National systems some of which are also facing the problems of multi-lingual teaching. Many of the administrators of such schools have been invited to serve as consultants for schools that are also trying out this experiment.

The International Schools have also served as testing ground for new educational patterns which can be adapted not only to other International Schools but to National Systems as well. By cooperating with educators from the National Systems and by having conferences to disseminate the results of their experiments, educational authorities can exchange views and learn about the innovations that are taking place in different International Schools. These educational authorities are then in a better position to appraise the suitability of such a venture in their own national educational system.

Another great achievement that the International Schools have accomplished is that they have provided a means by which a mobile population of persons who work for International Organizations will now find some amount of uniformity in the curricular studied by their children as they move from school to school around the globe. Students are thus able to transfer from one International School to another with the minimum amount of dislocation and disorientation.
From the administrative point of view, these International Schools have provided a prototype upon which new schools could be established. The talents and experience of the administrators and the teachers who work in one International School can be made use of in the setting up of a new International School. Transfer of the Principal and the teachers can be arranged without too much difficulty. These persons can step into the new school since the general framework is uniform.

Hon. N. S. Eliufoo, the Tanzanian Minister for Education has indicated his appreciation for the service of International Schools when he said:

What better answer, then, than to have a truly international school which caters both to a cosmopolitan community, and at the same time offers internationally oriented educational facilities to nationals of the host country.¹

International Schools contribute to their host country in the following ways:

¹Eliufoo, loc. cit.
1. The International Schools enhances the communities with cultural enrichment through contact with multinational student body of teachers, students and administrators.

2. The International School relieves the local educational bodies from the responsibility of trying to meet the educational needs of those who desire educational programs that are different to those that are offered by the host nation.

3. In many countries, the International Schools provide the children of the host nation with an opportunity of sharing an international experience, of broadening their horizons, and strengthening their friendships and mastering their foreign language skills.

International Schools also serve the general humanity in the following ways:

International Schools make an effort to instill in their students a sense of their responsibility as world citizens and, at the same time, make them aware of their own national roots through knowledge and
understanding of their own countries. These International Schools continually strive to present the world and its components in their true perspective.

International Schools serve as research laboratories for the study of prejudice and bias, cultural differences, and the intergroup tensions, and the improvement of international and intercultural relationships through knowledge about the former. An example would be the International Schools Association project to promote East-West mutual understanding sponsored by UNESCO.

International Schools serve as testing grounds for experimental ideas in international education. The International Baccalaureate was born in the International Schools where pilot courses and projects were first tried out on an experimental basis. Experimentations continue even to this day. Such pilot courses as "Environmental Systems" was first tried out in the United World College of the Adriatic, and the course "Science, Technology and Social Change" was first tried out at the Kodaikanal International School.

International Schools have displayed the potential for supplying the kind of education needed for more competent world leadership. Students are given a
greater awareness of international affairs in miniature world societies and through first hand participation in cross-cultural experiences.

The Students' United Nations (SUN) in the International School of Geneva, for example, gives the student an understanding of the complicated problems of keeping world peace, and how the United Nations functions. The student is given an awareness of the other person's viewpoint, and has a glimpse of how others perceive his own viewpoint. Thus International Schools provide an excellent training ground for those who might later be in a position to make the world a better place.

International Schools have been serving as models for schools all over the world. When the teachers and administrators who have served in these International Schools return to their own National systems, they are very quick to implement some of the unique features of the International Schools in their own national systems. Also many observers come from all over the world to visit these International Schools so as to get a first hand experience of the educational model offered in these schools.

International Schools serve as training centers for teachers and administrators on a world scale.
Through teacher exchange, and through teacher-in-service programs, the number of more informed international educators is constantly increasing.

International Schools serve as clearing houses for educational ideas gathered through the pooling of knowledge from multinational staff, through the exchange or the return of teachers and educators who bring knowledge and experience they have gained. The activities, conferences, news bulletins, services, and exchanges of the International Schools Association have made possible a medium of world-wide education exchange among schools.

In their supranational approach to teaching (for example in history, geography, civics etc.), International Schools have been discouraging the formation of prejudicial attitudes based upon cultural differences. They have fostered improved cross-cultural relations by providing more unbiased views of the past history. The concentration upon language teaching has also been a factor in paving the way to better multinational communication. Through provision of a meeting ground and a forum for the airing of opinions and disagreements among the various nationalities represented in the International School, they have been exposing their students to a better understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.
International Schools have been serving the cause of mankind by developing and improving teaching materials which emphasize positive values related to national and cultural differences, and present world affairs and world contributions from an international perspective. An earnest attempt is being made to eliminate the breeding ground of belligerent supernaturalism. Special syllabusses, textbooks and other teaching aids are prepared by the staff to present an unbiased reevaluation of historical events, an a better understanding of the motivations behind certain national actions.

International schools have been supplying a much needed service to the children of the world who seek schools in which to continue their education away from home. They provide accommodation for them through special curricular arrangements, receptions classes and individual tutorials when necessary, in an attempt to maintain the student at the level (or above) their peers at home. These students are thus enabled to return home to their own or other universities without loss of time or suffer any disadvantages.

From International Schools may come the future statesman, ambassador, diplomat. From the International School will come the future citizen of the world, who, having honest and unexaggerated pride in his cultural
heritage, may have gained insights into himself through the understanding of others.

The International Schools are making an earnest attempt to contribute to "the increasing ability of Man to live with Men who differ, but are not considered strange, to live with understanding and empathy, to rise above the restricting concepts of nationalism, race or religious orthodoxy.\(^1\) This, alone, is reason enough to justify the existence and support.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS:

This comparison between the quality of education in selected International Schools of India and abroad has taken us to the far corners of the globe. Even at this end of our journey, the word "quality" continues to allude us. However examples of quality abound both in the International Schools in India as well as those abroad. One may not be able to say what is "quality" but one can certainly point to "quality" and recognize "quality" when one sees it.

\(^1\)Frederick L. Redefer, "When is Education International," \textit{The Educational Forum} (West Lafayette, Indiana: March, 1963), p. 263.
The foregoing study has revealed that the International Schools established in India and Abroad have contributed towards the promotion of international and intercultural understanding. Quality of the process has thus been achieved as it is related to the goals of these International Schools.

Today, no one doubts that India is the Leader among the Non-Align Countries, and that it is the major political force among the developing countries. Furthermore all the SAARC countries look to India for leadership in the educational field as well as many other areas. The International Schools established in India thus play a lead role and India should continue to play this lead role in the Sub-continent.

This study has also indicated that these International schools do serve as models of excellence in the quality of education and that there are many educational lessons that can be emulated and transferred to the National system after a suitable modification.
7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS:

The foregoing study has initiated several recommendations, some of which will be applicable to International Schools throughout the globe. Other recommendations will be specifically applicable to the International Schools in India.

One of the most important recommendations concerns the need for official agencies such as the national governments, international organizations and municipal authorities to realize the facts of international life. Unofficial agencies such as foundations, corporations, businesses and individuals too must realize that the world has shrunk far beyond the anticipations of just a decade ago. Such agencies must become increasingly aware that International Schools are very much of a reality, and that probably much of the future educations of children will take place in International Schools. To take an analogous situation, just thirty years ago, how many persons in India would have envisioned the so-called "Central School System" to play such an important role in the education of children of persons with jobs that posted them in different parts of India. School education has always been considered as the prerogative of the State.
Hence such official and unofficial agencies must encourage and support these International Schools so that these schools can carry out their service to the children of the world without being forced to compromise their ideals. This support must come "without strings", making no demands upon the administrators or Board Members to divert the schools' international purpose.

Laws and regulations should be liberalized so that international travel and exchange can be facilitated, and discrimination is removed wherever it exists and wherever it affects students and faculty arrival in certain countries.

Official agencies should cooperate by making possible educational grants and scholarships for children, support for teachers exchange and training programs, supplies books, and equipment for the education of children of parents in foreign service in international schools, where it is not being done at present.

Official and unofficial agencies are urged to cooperate more fully with international educational organizations to make possible more international school conferences, meetings, seminars, workshops and
other exchanges which would encourage and stimulate a free flow of world ideas and knowledge across national frontiers.

The support of the above should also be given to experienced international educators who are invited to attend important international conferences; this should be given in a more efficient and expeditious way, cutting red tape and making funds immediately available and mounds of paper-work unnecessary.

The above agencies should also give their increased cooperation (moral and financial) to the work being done in improving the International Baccalaureate. The availability of this Diploma should be instrumental in breaking through national barriers and facilitate world educational cross-fertilization without complications caused by the need to determine equivalent credits in each country. More Universities both in India as well as in other countries should be willing to accept it as the equivalent of a Pre-University certification.

International schools should give their active support to those organizations which are doing vital and significant work on their behalf, such as the International Schools Association etc. Through the
International Schools Association, schools will be in a better position to be accorded more ready recognition and possible support which is given to larger and more influential bodies. International schools can also profit from the experience, knowledge and advice available to them through membership, media and contact with similar schools.

By supporting the work of the International Baccalaureate, and by helping to build up the experimental syllabusses and by participating in the experimentation through the introduction of the syllabusses in their own schools, International Schools can further their own cause.

Funds should be made available to send experienced international educators as consultants to international schools wherever they are needed, and to assist new schools to start. Many schools are sometimes hastily set up to fill immediate needs, and with inadequate curricula, untrained staff, and very little equipment, particularly in the developing countries. While consultants have been sent by the International Schools Association, their availability is limited by the lack of necessary funds.

Tenure rights of teachers who return to their home
countries after teaching in International Schools should be protected. These teachers bring back with them broader experience based on first-hand observations of many cultures. When they decide to return, they should be encouraged to share their knowledge with national schools.

International Schools in developing countries should receive special attention and the greatest possible sponsorship, since they have been, and will be serving as models for national schools and other schools that may subsequently be opened.

It is recommended that the Government of India takes the initiative to start an International School for the students from SAARC countries on the model of the United World College of the Adriatic.

Changes should be encouraged in the statutes of the universities and local bodies to allow such international schools to become more flexible and thus encourage innovations.

More power should be vested with the administrators of such International Schools concerning change and experimentation within existing framework of
the harmonized curricula. Provisions should be made to give them sufficient leeway to meet their individual community needs.

The Governments of the SAARC countries should be encouraged to support the expansions of schools to allow for greater enrollment of students from among the SAARC countries.

Teaching staff and administrators of International Schools in India should be accorded greater security through longer or permanent appointments. If they are doing a good job, return home should be based upon their choice. Their salaries should be adjusted upon their return, in line with what they have been receiving in International Schools. In this way, with much to contribute to their schools at home, and with their additional experience, they will not be penalized with a lower income after years of service overseas.

The SAARC countries should work together on their special needs. There is a need for producing supranational programs in geography and history.

Teacher in service should be encouraged in International schools. It is also recommended that teachers from the national systems spend some period in serving at an International School on deputation.
International Schools should receive the maximum assistance in initiating such programs.

International Schools should meet more frequently in regional conferences, seminars, workshops to share and exchange knowledge and experience. Sponsorship and support should come from official and unofficial agencies.

National school systems should highlight in their policy directives, existing goals pertaining to citizenship education and to international understanding and awareness.

National School systems should seek to implement these goals as part of a long-term development plan. There should be a gradual development and introduction of an international perspective in schools along with wide participation and consultations. Gradual development is not only desirable but also essential. In the area of international education, sweeping mandates, or large-scale sudden changes may be detrimental because nationalism in education is currently a very sensitive topic.

Teachers in the national systems should be involved in the planning and implementation process.
They should be given adequate time to prepare materials that will enable them to give a global perspective to their teaching.

There should be fundamental changes in the curriculum at the primary, and secondary level of education in the national systems so that an international perspective is presented in each subject area. The national perspective must be given priority but should not be the end of the road.

The teacher education programs should be modified so as to enable teachers-in-training to receive the skills needed, so that they will be competent to provide their students with an international perspective and an international awareness.

7.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is suggested that a follow-up study be made of all graduates of International Schools to see if there is any significant difference between their world-mindedness and that of students coming from national schools.

It is suggested that an evaluation be made of students' attitudes in selected International schools to
determine the effectiveness of educational techniques and programs for developing an international perspective.

It is recommended that a study be made of the University achievement of students who have completed the International Baccalaureate Examinations and compare their results with students who took the national system of examinations.

It is recommended that a feasibility study be made of starting a United World College in India.

It is recommended that a study be made of establishing an international school system exclusively for the students from the SAARC countries.