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The ‘Yew Chung model’ of international education: The scope for investigation and research

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Abstract

The Yew Chung Educational Foundation operates a network of five International Schools in China, plus one in California, serving in total 5,500 children. This paper investigates the aims and philosophy of a ‘model’ of international education which aims to not only educate children but also bring about an inner-transformation of their worldview whereby they are both ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’. However, the Yew Chung ‘model’ to date stands untested. There is much scope for investigation and research.

Key words: China, international schools, international education, bilingualism, cosmopolitanism, community.

Introduction and historical context

The ‘entry’ of the ‘Yew Chung model’

This paper is concerned with a largely over-looked experiment in international education. The ‘Yew Chung model’ is operating largely in China (but with a school in California), and emerging from within China, offered by the Hong Kong-based Yew Chung Education Foundation (YCEF). The year 2014 had marked the 10th Anniversary of what might be considered its entry into the ‘public domain’ of this model following the keynote speech titled ‘Educating the twenty-first century child: a new approach to international education’ (available at <http://www.ycef.com>) delivered by the YCEF Director Dr. Betty Chan Po-King at the Alliance for International Education’s *Conference on Education for International Mindedness* held at the International School of Düsseldorf, 2nd October 2004.

This conference was an important one. It was the second in a series to create an ‘alliance’, offering a platform for stability after Hayden and Thompson (2000 p.48) had made reference to the ‘rapid and largely uncontrolled expansion in numbers’ of international schools. It had brought together a diverse set of 300 educators forging an historic event: ‘Düsseldorf October 2004 may well prove to be for international education what Kyoto is for climate change and Maastricht for the European Union’ (Roberts, 2005 p.8). The enormous impact and effect of the occasion was to lead to the YCEF hosting the next, and third, Alliance for International Education conference in Shanghai, 27th-29th October 2006 (see Bunnell, 2006, in this journal). The eighth Alliance conference will be held in in Bangkok in February 2016, hosted by NIST International School.

The speech in Düsseldorf was for many delegates probably a startlingly original one. Dr. Chan (2004 p.1) had introduced to many delegates a whole new dimension of education in China; she had spoken about the aims and philosophy of the ‘Yew Chung model’, calling it a ‘new kind of international education’, involving ‘new ways of thinking, new approaches to educating the young, a new concept of world citizenship, a paradigm shift from narrow thinking to world mindedness’ (Po-King, 2004 p.2). Delegates were informed about how the model involved a ‘process of education that leads our students to an inner transformation whereby they are both Eastern and Western’ (Chan, 2004 p.6). In the words of Chan (2004 p.3) it was ‘a brand new model of international education’ and ‘one that merges the essence of the world’s major civilizations and brings together the East and the West, preparing students for world citizenship.’

The ‘timing’ of the ‘Yew Chung model’

The speech by Chan was not only visionary, but timely. The ‘Yew Chung model’ seemed to fit nicely with the emerging concept of ‘cosmopolitanism’ (Gunesch, 2004), a seemingly deeper experience than that normally delivered by ‘international schools’ (to be defined later), where a disparaging discourse had recently emerged about the mere ‘rubbing of shoulders’ between children of different cultures (Walker, 2000 p.11). International educators had begun at this point to move away from discussing what international education *is* to what it *does*, especially in terms of ‘international mindedness’. Furthermore, as noted at the time in this journal (James, 2005), ‘alliances’ were being made across the field of international education.

It was seemingly the case that the ‘Yew Chung model’ is attempting to create a ‘real

community', based on every-day contact, rather than what the Irish political scientist Benedict Anderson (1983) called an 'imaginary community'. Overall, the rhetoric of the 'Yew Chung model' caught the prevailing mood, and seemingly offered a fresh approach. As noted by Chan (2003 p.2): 'From our perspective, the so-called 'international education' in the 150 years of colonial rule was actually just mono-cultural western national education.' By contrast, the 'Yew Chung model' seemingly offered a truly 'international' model, beyond the more typical 'elitist ex-pat model' usually found in China (Lo, 2012).

The 'Yew Chung model' is a relatively 'complex' model of leadership, management and teaching. Beyond the dual-cultural 'inner transformational' aspect, the 'model' at an operational level implements a bilingual and co-cultural programme through a Co-Principal and Co-Teaching model. Each school has two Co-Principals, one Western and one Chinese, plus there are two fully qualified Co-Teachers, one Western and one Chinese, who serve as teaching partners in each of the Early Childhood and Primary classrooms. In this context the model aims for equal authority, accountability and status between the Chinese and Western aspects of each school.

In the context of international schooling, this is arguably unique. Here lays a useful initial research path; does the 'model' really promote equal status between its Western and Chinese domains? Moreover, the essence of the 'model' is to create a sense of 'community'. It is not clear, though, to what extent this is meant to happen. The seminal work of McMillan and Chavis (1986), which had identified four elements which create a 'sense of community', might be useful here; is the ultimate aim of the dual-cultural dimension merely 'membership' or is it aimed at a higher-level such as 'shared emotional connection'? This latter element is seen by McMillan and Chavis (1986 p.14) as being the 'definitive element for true community'.

Beyond this, there also exists a Christian ethos, adding a twist to the philosophy of dual-culturism and arguably at odds with the more-traditional secular operation of ‘international schools’, although some schools e.g. the grouping of 19 ‘Marymount’ schools worldwide, are also Catholic in ethos and heritage. It is arguably the case that this ‘complexity’ of geographical context (involving schools in mainland China, Hong Kong and California), dual-cultural approach, idealistic philosophy and religious beliefs has led to a subsequent absence of theoretical conceptualization, discussion or research.

However, as my paper will show, the underpinning philosophy is partly a belief in ‘harmony’ and the ‘Yew Chung model’ is holistically easier to conceptualize than is perhaps first thought. Here lays a further useful research path; does the ‘model’ really lead to ‘harmony’, in its numerous dimensions? Previously discussed (Carless and Dimmock, 2012) had been the leadership of a primary school in Hong Kong where below the surface of harmony there were tensions among the teachers. Would we also likely see this in the YCIS setting?

The aims of this paper

In spite of the short-lived success and glare of attention attained in 2004, the ‘Yew Chung model’ has been little discussed over the last decade. This paper aims to resurrect it from the academic ‘grave’ in the hope that it might spur further interest. What Dr. Chan had presented was not mere national education in an international context, nor was it Western/English-language education in a global setting. It seemed truly radical and apparently unique. On the other hand, it seemed hyperbole and perhaps exaggeration; the claims of the ‘model’ still in

2015 stand untested. The claims are not necessarily reality.

The first children to experience this ‘model’ in its modern context, in 1987, are probably in 2015 reaching their mid-30s and it may thus be too soon to pass judgment on the success of the model. However, the wider field of international schooling, largely emergent from the peak of the cold war in the early 1960s, has definitely reached maturity and can now be viewed much more critically, yet objectively. My paper is intended as part of that on-going process. As posited by Pearce (2013 p.viii) ‘we need to look harder at international schools and to have more comprehensive ways of looking.’

It was reported in 2012, within a broad and contestable definition, that the field of ‘international schools’ had hit the 6,000-school mark (Keeling, 2012: and Paton, 2012) and was serving three million children (Dixon, 2012). Whilst acknowledging that questions have been raised about the accuracy of such data, there is no denying the fact that this is no longer a peripheral dimension of education. The field of international schooling has not only substantially grown in *scale* but it has fundamentally begun to change in terms of its *nature* and *purpose*. The demographics, geography and clientele of international schooling have changed substantially. It is time for a new approach to analysis, critically questioning the role and need of the growing ‘players’ in the field. The YCIS stand out as being arguably one of the most rhetorically idealistic and adventurous of these ‘players’ alongside maybe the network of United World Colleges (UWCs).

Having explained the context of study, and offered a brief introduction to the ‘model’, this paper will next present it in much greater detail. Its history, philosophy and aims will be explored. The scant literature will then be presented, showing the dearth of research activity that the ‘model’ has thus far attracted. Then, the paper will attempt to categorize the YCIS in

the light of a relatively new typology of international schooling (Hayden and Thompson, 2013) in the eventual hope that this might allow a research framework to appear. Finally, this paper will explore the numerous potential research and investigation ‘avenues’ that arguably exist.

The ‘Yew Chung model’ explored

An overview of the history

The history of the ‘Yew Chung model’ (see website at <http://www.ycef.com>) can be divided into two distinct phases; 1927-72 and 1972 onwards. The ‘model’ had emerged out of the turbulence of the Chinese Civil War. This offers vital clues as to why ‘harmony’ forms the centre-piece of the Yew Chung philosophy. It traces its roots back to 1927 when Dr. Chan’s mother, 16-years old Tsang Chor-hang, started a small school with her friends, teaching Chinese poetry and gospel music at the corner of Bute Street and Nathan Road in Hong Kong. The school was named Yew Wah (meaning ‘bringing glory to China’). This was the year that saw the beginning of the Civil War between forces loyal to the Republic of China led by the Kuomintang (KMT) and the opposing Communist Party of China. The war lasted from August 1927 until 1937 and continued intermittently until about 1950, resulting in the establishment of the Republic of China (in Taiwan), and the mainland People’s Republic of China (Fung, 2006).

Tsang became principal of Yew Wah when she was just 19. In 1932, the Yew Wah classroom was replaced by Yew Chung, with its first campus in Sai Yee Street; its motto was ‘Diligence, thrift, modesty and honesty’, reflecting traditional Confucian Values. This was the year (1932) that saw the ‘fourth campaign’ of the Central Plains War, following internal conflict within the

KMT (Eastman, 1991). This school was closed-down in 1939 and re-opened after the War. Tsang retired after four decades and closed her school.

The ‘modern’ era of the ‘Yew Chung model’ began in 1972. This second era of existence has involved consolidation, followed by expansion and then ‘impact’ at an international schooling level. After finishing her postgraduate studies in the United States, Dr. Chan had returned to Hong Kong to succeed her mother and take on her commitment to education, introducing the concept of early childhood education to that country. Dr. Chan had trained as a kindergarten teacher in the United States. She was critical of kindergarten methods and opened her own school in a nursery in Kent Road, Kowloon Tong in 1972. She re-named it Yew Chung; ‘My first degree is in primary education, so I thought I could try starting an international primary school’ (see interview with Chan by Lee, 2013).

The official YCEF website (at ycef.com) reveals that a primary section was opened in 1985 and the secondary section appeared in 1992. The school adopted a bilingual policy, so Chinese and English could have the same status, plus two principals, one representing the Western culture and the other one Chinese; ‘Sometimes I feel a lot of pressure as this style of education is my own invention’ (Chan talking to Lee, 2013). In Hong Kong in 1989, Yew Chung convened an international conference on ‘Childhood in the 21st Century’ at which Dr. Chan presented several papers. This was seemingly the first event at which the ‘Yew Chung model’ was presented to a wider audience, although as remarked already the speech by Dr. Chan in Dusseldorf fifteen years later was arguably a bigger milestone. YCIS Shanghai was established in 1993, and YCIS Beijing opened in the 1995-1996 school year. A further two YCIS were opened in Chongqing and Qingdao in 2002, and 2006. A branch opened in Silicon Valley in California in 2002.

The philosophy discussed

The Yew Chung philosophy derives from the basis of dual-culturalism; ‘Our vision was to create a new type of citizen for the 21st century where acquisition of the two dominant cultures, Western and Eastern, was essential’ (Chan, 2004 p.3). The ‘model’ is a deliberately transformative one, aiming to directly affect the character formation of the child. The YCIS websites each contain (see www.ycis-hk.com for example) notes on the ‘Philosophy and Objectives’, and information about the ‘YCIS Unique Model’. It is stated that ‘Yew Chung has pioneered a new paradigm in international education’, whereby such an education is defined by ‘what goes on inside the student’ i.e. it involves the internal transformation of the child. This is seen as a process affected by the YCIS culture, which is a combination of the teaching and learning environment, the school administration plus the curriculum. This all leads in theory to the ‘character formation of the child.’

Underpinning this ‘process’ is a Christian-ethos. The YCEF website (12 September 2012) had remarked upon how the inaugural Founder’s Day, celebrating 80 years since Madame Tsang Chor-hang had started her school in 1932, had a keynote speech by Dr Chan in which she had said that the main mission of her mother had been to place ‘great importance on whole person education’ and that she had ‘insisted on education on fundamentals, and tried to send the most precious message to our children, so that they understand the fragility of human and the great love of God.’ This was a rare direct reference to the Christian-ethos underpinnings.

At the heart of this ‘process’ is the concept of ‘Harmony’. A significant exposition of the Yew Chung philosophy (by Po-King, Choy and Lee, 2009) had explained how the ‘model’ embraces

the Chinese value of ‘He’, or Harmony as an ‘integrated approach on education for sustainable development in early childhood’. It was also explained that ‘He’ encompasses both the relationships between human and nature (termed ‘ecological sustainability’), and between human and human (termed ‘social and economic sustainability’). It was explained how this interconnectedness with the ‘other’ has its historical roots in ancient Chinese philosophy.

‘Harmony’ is identified in literature as being a very important aspect of Chinese culture (see e.g. Bond, 1993; Lau et al, 1990). It is arguably the case that the focus on ‘harmony’ imbalances the ‘Yew Chung model’ towards the ‘East’. It has previously been noted (Bush and Haiyan, 2010) that Chinese culture expresses itself in education through continued respect for authority, collectivism and harmony. At the same time, the emphasis on ‘harmony’ can be construed as a discrete and clever method of integrating a Christian-ethos into a Chinese educational setting. The concept of ‘harmony’ satisfies both Chinese and Western cultural demands; it is a sensible and pragmatic compromise. Indeed, one is struck by how much the entire ‘model’ is a fundamental compromise between its Christian ethos and its Chinese context.

‘Harmony’ can be conceptualized in a number of different ways within the ‘model’. The following framework, designed by myself, shows the extent to which the inter-linked four-dimensions of the ‘model’ can be seen as helping to create a harmonious environment.

- a) The co-principalship dimension
 - Creates harmony between the school management and Faculty, creating a harmonious leadership environment.
 - Harmony between Chinese laws and Western traditions, creating a harmonious operational environment.

b) The co-teacher dimension

- Creates harmony between the diversity of children, creating a harmonious class-room environment.
- Creates harmony between ‘local hire’ (Chinese) Faculty and foreign Faculty, creating a harmonious teaching environment.

c) The dual-cultural dimension

- Creates harmony between ‘local’ children and foreign children, creating a harmonious friendship environment.
- Creates harmony between the school and its Chinese environment/locality creating a harmonious working environment.
- Creates harmony between Christian values and Confucian values, creating a harmonious learning environment.

d) The bi-lingual dimension

- Creates harmony between the language of instruction and the host-country language, creating a harmonious linguistic environment.
- Creates harmony between children of Eastern and Western cultural backgrounds, creating a harmonious political and cultural environment.

Combined, these four dimension arguably create a powerful framework for creating ‘harmony’ in a dual-cultural educational setting.

The ‘model’ is not totally ‘unique’ as a bilingual/dual-cultural experiment. One such

experiment has celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2015. The ‘St. Lambert Experiment’ in 1965 had emerged out of the growing importance of French as the main working language of Quebec, and a group of English-speaking parents near Montreal getting the school district to set up an experimental kindergarten class (Lambert and Tucker, 1972). The aim was to involve children speaking both French and English, plus learning about each other’s culture. This may offer a viable comparative research avenue.

The aims discussed

Yew Chung’s educational objectives are to ‘Provide a holistic education that nurtures the whole person’ and to ‘Nurture in each student an open outlook in life, respect for cultural diversity and the beliefs and values of all people, and a sense of commitment and social responsibility.’ Each YCIS website has a section titled ‘Global Education in YCIS’. This is reinforced by the ‘Director’s Message’. Here, Dr. Chan announces how the Yew Chung model ‘recognises the necessity for thinking and acting from insular to universal’. The YCEF has strived to ‘reshape the path of education according to our ever-changing world.’ The YCIS see themselves as offering students a ‘unique education journey’, one that is ‘immersed in the Eastern and Western cultures.’ Consequently, students are expected to acquire a high level of proficiency in both English and Chinese language; ‘YCIS students achieve a natural ability to successfully respond and communicate, effortlessly moving between Eastern and Western styles.’ This ambitious claim offers an obvious research agenda.

Alongside having bi-lingual skills, the Yew Chung student is expected to ‘gain a new and profoundly deep appreciation of the two spectrums.’ This seems the essence of the commitment

to a 'global education', rather than the more usual 'Western education' prevalent in international schools. Dr. Chan seemingly sees the YCIS as being the 'authentic' or 'proper' model of international schooling; dual-cultural and bi-lingual, an immersion of both 'Western and 'local' culture.

Also, the YCIS offers a 'broad and meaningful international curriculum content, commencing in early childhood.' This comment explains the YCEF commitment to the Geneva-registered International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), which promotes a broad and balanced curriculum. Furthermore, it is stated that 'International education should be based on building multiple skills, over and above just acquired knowledge of facts, for future implementation'. The family and teacher is given a key role within the 'Yew Chung model': 'A child is a true creation from influences both of the home and learning environment; teachers play a key role, as do parents.'

At the same time, it is debatable as to what extent the IBDP is the 'right choice' for a model of education wishing to promote dual-culturism. The IBDP may be 'international' but it is still based upon 'Western' liberal-humanist thinking (Van Oord, 2007). Poonoosamy (2010) had discussed how the IBDP in a Mauritius/African context introduces a problematic and dominant Westernized knowledge-base.

However, the IB Learner Profile (a 10-point listing of 'attributes' and 'outcomes') contains 'balance', and this fits well with the notion of 'harmony'. Furthermore, the IB Mission involves a commitment to the facilitation of intercultural understanding and global peace, which again fits well with the notion of 'harmony'. In this respect the IB Mission fits well with the Yew Chung mission. The programmes of the IB are not necessarily the only curricula that promote

‘harmony’ yet the question to ask then is ‘why does the ‘Yew Chung model’ only embrace the IBDP and not all four IB programmes offering a continuum of education from k-12?’

Alongside the pedagogical goals stands an overtly political and ideological one; the goal to ‘promote the inner moral compass’ in order to ‘enable tomorrow’s generation to take the helm and steer their way through human complexities, enabling them to exhibit goodness, honesty and compassion with confidence.’ The ultimate goal is that a Yew Chung education will ‘lead to a more stable world in the future.’ Again, this fits well with the IB Mission. This commitment, to transforming not only the child’s worldview but the future of the world itself, reveals an idealistic model of global citizenship; ‘YCIS acknowledges our human obligation to cultivate a new generation that will take care of the environmental, social and economic challenges ahead.’

The literature explored

Much literature about international schooling in ‘China’ is actually about Hong Kong (e.g. Bray and Yamato, 2002; and Yamato and Bray, 2003), although Shanghai has been targeted as a distinctive market (e.g. Yamato and Bray, 2006, writing in this journal). There is a definite dearth of research material focused specifically on the YCIS and the wider ‘Yew Chung model’, which seems strange given its potential attraction to researchers. Yet, it remains largely ‘hidden’ by research and scholarly discussion.

The IB-hosted International Education Research Database (IERD) in July 2014 had contained 5,722 references, of which a solitary one (Bunnell, 2008a) was specifically about the YCIS and that had focused on a case study in Shanghai of the co-principalship dimension in practice. The

Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the US Department of Education contained just two references to YCIS (including the aforementioned IERD one). This journal (JRIE) has published only four papers that make reference to the YCIS. The WorldCat database (www.worldcat.org) itemizes material from 72,000 libraries in 172 countries and contains just two papers on the ‘Yew Chung model’ (the same two as found by the ERIC search). In summary, there are seemingly only a couple of research papers specifically on the ‘Yew Chung model’, most notably the one from 2008 and another from 2009 (and co-authored by the YCEF Director).

In conclusion, the ‘Yew Chung model’ has largely escaped research analysis or discussion. The ‘model’ had appeared at the Hong Kong conference in 1989 but there is seemingly now no record of this event in the public domain. The YCIS had first appeared in literature in 2002 and 2003, shortly before Dr. Chan’s important speech in Dusseldorf. Only one research paper has seemingly ever been published and even that did not really touch upon the philosophy and aims of the ‘Yew Chung model’. That paper had reported on the leadership model and was not intended as a critical examination of the broader model. Subsequently, the academic researcher in 2015 is left largely with direct publications from the YCEF itself, most specifically the 2004 speech, the co-authored paper from 2009 and material from the YCIS websites, or press releases (e.g. Lam, 2013). Therefore, there is little (if any) impartial or critical analysis in the public domain. That all adds impetus to the need for further investigation and research. An external perspective is arguably needed, to give the rhetoric of the YCEF greater legitimacy.

The Yew Chung schools categorized

The ‘Type A’ and Type B’ models

Defining the YCIS is not an easy task. Sylvester (2003 p.6) had remarked that international schooling ‘as a potential field of research ... suffers primarily from a lack of definition.’ The ‘Traditional’ (Hayden and Thompson, 2008 p.23) international school had appeared as ‘a response to the demands of a growing market of globally mobile workers’ (Cambridge, 2013 p.187). Jonietz (1991 p.54) had described how the ‘biggest growth area is seen in the number of independent, community-based, English-language of instruction schools offering education to third-culture students.’

This profile forms the essence of what is now termed the ‘Type A’ ‘Traditional’ international schools (Hayden and Thompson, 2013 p.6). Since the YCIS cater partly for a diversity of nationality and the expatriated community they can be conceived as being a ‘Type A’ ‘Traditional’ model. However, the dual-cultural and bi-lingual dimensions are clearly out of line with this typology. Thus, for research purposes the YCIS cannot be viewed as being purely ‘Traditional’.

The idealism of the ‘Yew Chung model’ further complicates this assessment. The first ‘Type B’ ‘Ideological’ (Hayden and Thompson, 2013 p.6) international schools had appeared in 1924 in the form of the International School of Geneva, the creation of a body of parents and progressive educators linked with the Geneva-based League of Nations and the International Labour Office (see Dugonjić, 2014). Hence, they tend to be identified with the rhetoric of peace advocacy. The ‘Yew Chung model’ arguably fits within this historical line of educational thinking and thus can be viewed for research purposes as a model of ‘progressive education’, a dimension of education that defies (a bit like ‘international education’) precise definition (Kohn, 2008).

Hill (2014 p.177), writing in this journal, had painted a usual picture of a ‘Type A Traditional’ school when saying that: ‘An international school is one established to offer education to the children of globally mobile parents usually working for the United Nations or its agencies, embassies and multinational companies’. However, Hill (2014 p.177) adds to this picture by saying that: ‘If an international school ensures an international perspective for its students as outlined in the preceding paragraph, then it is an internationally minded school’. What seems to be implied here is that as the YCIS offer the IBDP, they should (since the IB programmes explicitly advocate the promotion of international mindedness) be viewed for research purposes as ‘internationally minded schools’. This seems less clumsy than saying they are a ‘hybrid of Type A and Type B models’.

The ‘Type C’ model

To add to a complicated picture, the YCIS can perhaps also be viewed as being part of the rapidly growing ‘Type C’ ‘Non-traditional’ model which has appeared for complex reasons such as an attempt to promote economic development (e.g. seven schools will appear by 2015 on the Jeju Island Global Education City, South Korea) and to replicate elite private schooling overseas (e.g. London’s Dulwich College opened a branch in Phuket, Thailand in 1996).

Largely, this ‘new’ model is a branded, commercially-based for-profit model aimed at educating the emerging middle-class who seek an elite and economically advantageous English-language education in a localized setting. However, the Yew Chung model stands out as unusual in being both bi-lingual and dual-cultural (i.e. it rejects the traditional ‘mono-Western’ or ‘mono-cultural’ model) and is thus also operating in a ‘non-traditional’ setting,

even though it arguably has elements of the more traditional ‘Type A’ and ‘Type B’ models.

In short, the ‘Yew Chung model’ does not fit easily into the normal typology of international schooling, and this in itself requires further research and investigation. Should a ‘Type D’ be added to Hayden and Thompson’s (2013) typology? The ‘Type C’ model in particular stands largely under-theorized even though it has become the ‘normal’ type in modern growth contexts. Here stands an example of how the literature on international schooling is becoming outdated, and is in need of constant refreshment.

Conclusions and suggestions for further research

A topical subject for study

The ‘Yew Chung model’ is a topical subject for study for a number of reasons. As explained, the 10th Anniversary of its ‘first’ formal appearance has recently been passed and it seems timely to re-address the aims and philosophy. Secondly, the field of international schooling has grown in general to reach a scale where it warrants closer investigation. It has been argued by at least two writers (e.g. Resnik, 2012; and Dolby, 2012) that international schooling should be viewed as an emerging and promising ‘new field’ of sociological enquiry.

There is little research evidence with respect to how and to what extent the ‘Yew Chung model’ has fulfilled its mission of the inner-transformation of the child’s worldview. It would be interesting to see in practice what ‘Western’ view the Chinese children adopt. The political scientist John McCormick (2010) has identified ‘Europeanism’, a body of norms and values held by Europeans. Is this the ‘other culture’ the children adopt?

The 'Yew Chung model' and its ultimate goal of transforming the child and ultimately the world can be viewed through two lenses. On the one hand, the model can be viewed positively as an 'ideal' one, encapsulating a sense of idealism and transformational purpose that the field of international schooling has largely abandoned or now simply ignores. International schools have been described, in this journal, as 'the supposed microcosms of the new world order' (Poore, 2005 p.352) and the YCIS could be viewed within this political lens.

On the other hand, the 'model' can be viewed cynically as a manifestation of the idealistic rhetoric that epitomizes much of the mission of international schooling. Put bluntly, the 'Yew Chung model' might be viewed by some people as simply yet another elitist model of schooling that claims to do a lot but largely under-achieves in its aims and objectives. It has been said, for instance, that the IBDP transcends national boundaries and 'offers an advantage to participants in the competition for places in the world order' (Bagnall, 2010 p.14). Such claims remain untested, however, and significantly under-researched.

The United World Colleges account for many notable alumni, but they are truly exceptional institutions with a highly selective entry (Tsumagari, 2010). It has been said that: 'As yet it seems that no world statesmen or women came from International Schools because the routes to the top table are through success on national ladders' (Pearce, 2013 p.xv). This comment is important in that it asserts that global leaders are educated at a national not international level. How much access to the future leaders does Yew Chung, or any other model of international schooling, actually have in practice? Given that the 'Yew Chung model' is largely untested and unexplored, both 'views' (the optimistic and cynical) currently stand untested. Cynically, one might argue the Yew Chung model is merely another vehicle for creating a network or class-

in-itself that can act as a class-for-itself. As argued by McMillan (1996), all communities aim to reward themselves. It would certainly be interesting to get an insight into the activities and networking of the global Yew Chung alumni.

An important subject for study

The ‘Yew Chung model’ is undeniably ambitious, and potentially important. It is worthy of much more attention that has hitherto been the case. Perhaps excitingly, the ‘model’ has the potential to act as a precursor to a bigger globalized educational model of practice. One can easily visualize it in an Indian setting, or even a Middle East one, the emergent epicentre of international schooling. The GD Goenka World School in India, which became an ‘IB World’ school in March 2005 claims to offer a version of ‘holistic’ education, embracing Indian and Western values, as does the Chinmaya International Residential School in Siruvani, India. These models also need investigating. Alternatively, a dual-culture model could have value in Spain (Basque Region, Catalonia), or Northern Ireland. As Chan (2004) said when signing off her speech, the ‘model’ is intended ‘for every school’ not just those in China. It is intended for the wider ‘global community’ (Chan, 2004 p.7) to create a ‘future world society’.

Chan (2004 p.6) claimed to have created an ‘effective model’ which has ‘successfully implemented’ language and cultural integration. These claims currently stand apparently untested. Chan (2004 p.6) also claimed to have created in the YCIS a ‘set of successful experiences that allow our students to move freely in and out of Eastern and Western cultures’. This all requires further study, involving at least five key areas of inquiry;

1. An investigation into the YCIS culture and environment. At the heart of this would be

an investigation into ‘harmony’ in practice. Also, does the co-teaching model created a situation where the teachers act as ‘models of two styles’ (Chan, 2004)? Furthermore, have the YCIS moved beyond being ‘Westernized’ international schools?

2. An investigation into the YCEF philosophy. At the heart of this would be dual-cultural learning in practice. Does the child really undergo an ‘internal transformation’?
3. An investigation into YCIS teaching. Is language acquisition the ‘key factor’ (Chan, 2004 p.3), acting as the ‘tool to open up a culture’. In practice, can students switch between English and Chinese language? Are YCIS children truly fluent in both languages?
4. An investigation into the Christian-ethos. Does this aspect come through in learning and cultural practice? Does it complement the Confucian cultural traits?
5. An investigation into the YCEF aims. Is the model capable of creating a new style of global citizen? Is it capable of fulfilling its mission to ‘nurture global children who will eventually be the cream of both cultures’ (Chan, 2004 p.7)?

For research purposes, the model is probably best broken-down into two separate yet inter-linked dimensions. The ‘YCEF strand’ is involved with research into the history, philosophy, aims and objectives of the model. This has roots going back to the beginning of the Chinese Civil War in 1927, and has ‘harmony’ (‘He’ in Chinese) as its core mission, alongside Christian values such as ‘charity’ and ‘hope’. The ‘YCIS strand’ is involved with the operational side of the model: the inner-transformation of the child’s worldview, holistic education, bicultural

education, dual-language learning and co-principal leadership.

No research has as yet apparently been done into what the model actually *does*, only what it says it *ought* to do. Yet, the model could be investigated, for example, in terms of to what extent it reduces prejudice as articulated by Gordon Allport's (1954) Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination, or by the extent to which it reduces 'differences' as identified by Milton Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (i.e. the 'Bennett scale'). As the model aims for the attainment of *allophilia*, identified by Harvard Professor Todd L. Pittinsky (2009) as having a positive attitude for a group that is not one's own, the model could be investigated via the Allophilia Index. Does it lead to 'comfort' between two cultures (the 'lowest' attitude) or 'kinship' (the highest)?

Alternatively, the 'Yew Chung model' could be viewed through an acculturation lens. Within John W. Berry's (1997) Fourfold Model, the 'model' seems to be aiming for 'integration', as this occurs when individuals are able to adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture while maintaining their culture of origin. By contrast, some children in 'Traditional' international schools may possibly undergo a process of 'marginalization', which occurs when individuals reject both their culture of origin and the dominant host culture. Researching into this would require an examination of the child's view of each culture before acculturation, as argued by Kramer and Ikeda's (1998) theory of Dimensional Accrual and Dissociation. The type of 'community' created by the model also requires critical investigation. Does it promote a sense of 'pseudocommunity' or 'real community' (Peck, 1987), where true respect is nurtured?

The 'Yew Chung model' has seemingly not undergone any serious research or analysis attempts. This obviously needs attention since the 'Yew Chung model' at present arguably has a difficulty in justifying its own rhetoric, or become a model for further implementation in

other cultural contexts, which is arguably where its main strength lies as the wider field of international schooling comes under more critical scrutiny in terms of its intentions, role, effects and purpose.

The ‘Yew Chung model’ offers a firm base for critically exploring the reality of the wider rhetoric of international schooling. At the same time, it offers an opportunity for the field to present itself in a more idealistic context, counteracting the growing cynicism about the ‘role’ of international schooling. As the ‘Type C’ model continues to move down its for-profit and exclusive educational path, especially in the Asia Pacific region and the Middle East, the ‘Yew Chung model’, perhaps closer to the more-traditional ‘Type B’ ‘Ideological’ model, offers another perspective. The ‘Yew Chung’ schools might be relatively elitist, like many ‘international schools’, yet they are also experimental and idealistic. This surely has to be the main research approach, one of objectivity and optimism. The ‘Yew Chung model’ surely warrants closer attention if for no other reason than it *might* actually do what it claims to do.

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