

【研究ノート】

Perspectives on the Formation of Values, Attitudes, and International Mindedness Insights from the Christian-based Educational Philosophy of Seirei Gakuen

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価値観・姿勢・国際的視野の形成のための捉え方について
— キリスト教主義に基づく聖隷学園の教育理念からの考察 —

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Abstract

This research note focuses on the formation of values, attitudes, and an international mindset in an educational philosophy based on Christianity at Seirei Gakuen, specifically in relation to the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) . The concept of International Mindedness (IM) within the IB framework is explored, emphasizing its multifaceted nature and the importance of engaging in discussions rather than seeking a fixed definition. A particular framework is presented as a valuable tool for assessing IM, encompassing cognitive, affective, and active dimensions. The research note highlights the significance of the IB Learner Profile in fostering global awareness and intercultural understanding, as well as the role of IM in the PYP curriculum. Furthermore, the research note discusses the ongoing efforts at Seirei Gakuen to implement their interpretation of IM, with a focus on the values, attitudes, and behaviors that contribute to its cultivation within the school community. The research note emphasizes the need for tangible behavioral models, reflection, and active engagement to inspire children to take action and become agents of positive change in the world.

Introduction

In 2023, Japan accomplished and surpasses its goal of implementing 200 International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes throughout the country.¹ The significance of cultivating International Mindedness (IM) is emphasized in the IB program guidelines. This research note aims to explore the following aspects: (1) providing an overview of the intricate nature of the concept of 'International Mindedness' and our ongoing efforts to implement our own interpretation at Seirei Gakuen, and (2) examining the interconnectedness between the development of IM with universal values of Christianity at Seirei Gakuen

1. The Complexity of IM

According to the International Baccalaureate (IB), IM is described as “a multifaceted concept that captures a way of thinking, being and acting characterized by an openness to the world and a recognition of our deep interconnectedness to others”². Defining IM poses challenges due to the intricate nature of cultural groups. These groups comprise individuals with diverse beliefs and practices, and their core cultural aspects constantly evolve over time. While establishing clear-cut definitions may prove difficult, the IB places importance on engaging in discussions about IM rather than striving for a fixed definition. This approach recognizes the dynamic nature of IM and encourages exploration of its various dimensions and interpretations. By fostering inclusive discussions, a shared understanding can be developed, encouraging active

participation and creating a collaborative environment that nurtures the growth of IM.

While IM is subjective and influenced by individual contexts, schools can utilize different frameworks or rubrics to shape their understanding of IM. One such approach is the 'Head, Heart, Hand' framework introduced by Orr (1992) and expanded on by Sipos, Battisti, and Grimm (2008), which provides an analytical tool for assessing transformational experiences. This approach focuses on three dimensions—Head, Heart, and Hand—which can be valuable for exploring IM within the specific learning context of a school. By applying this framework, schools can gain insights into the cognitive, affective, and active aspects of IM, facilitating a comprehensive exploration and development of the concept.

- 1) Cognitive Dimension (Head) : This dimension of International Mindedness (IM) focuses on expanding cognitive perception. It involves developing knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking skills related to global issues, intercultural communication, and international perspectives. It emphasizes acquiring factual knowledge, analyzing complex concepts, and nurturing a global mindset.
- 2) Affective Dimension (Heart) : The Heart dimension of IM emphasizes expanded affective value. It involves fostering empathy, open-mindedness, and a sense of care and respect for diverse cultures and perspectives. This dimension encourages

the development of attitudes such as tolerance, compassion, and appreciation for cultural differences. It aims to build positive attitudes and values related to global citizenship and intercultural understanding.

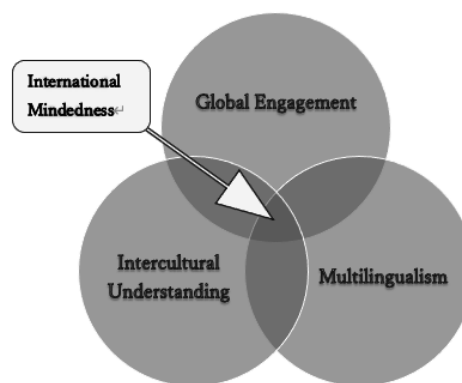
- 3) Active Dimension (Hands) : The Hands dimension of IM focuses on practical application. It involves taking action, engaging in service learning, and contributing to local and global communities. Students are encouraged to actively participate in addressing global challenges, promoting sustainability, and making a positive difference through impactful projects and initiatives.

The "Head, Heart, Hands" rubric provides a holistic approach to understanding and assessing IM by considering these cognitive, affective, and active dimensions of IM. It offers a framework for schools to evaluate and develop these aspects within their curriculum, teaching practices, and student experiences. By incorporating this rubric, schools can provide a comprehensive approach to fostering IM in their educational settings.

Other potential frameworks include the three pillars of IM (Singh and Qi, 2013) or the IB Learner Profile. These frameworks offer structure while allowing schools the flexibility to define and develop IM in a way that aligns with their specific context. By utilizing these tools, schools can navigate their IM journey with a clear direction while adapting them to suit their unique circumstances.

The three pillars of International Mindedness developed by Singh and Qi (2013)

The learner profile encourages students to embody traits such as being inquisitive, critical thinkers, effective communicators, and reflective individuals. It also emphasizes the importance of demonstrating qualities like empathy, integrity, and a balanced approach to learning. Additionally, the IB encourages students to be knowledgeable and willing to take risks (IBO, The Learner Profile, 2013) .



In their book "Education for International Understanding: The International Baccalaureate Experience" (2007) , Mary Hayden and Jeff Thompson underscore the significance of international mindedness in cultivating students' global awareness and comprehension. They stress that international mindedness encompasses more than just knowledge of diverse cultures and societies. It also entails developing the skills and attitudes necessary for effective intercultural communication and collaboration.

Furthermore, the IB Organization highlights the central role of international mindedness in the Primary Years Programme

(PYP) in their publication "IB Primary Years Programme: From Principles into Practice" (2018). The publication suggests that educators should design learning experiences that enable students to explore global issues, engage in inquiries about different cultures and perspectives, and foster a sense of responsibility towards the environment and the global community.

When examining case studies from different schools (Barratt Hacking et al., 2017) it becomes evident that each school has its own unique perspective on IM based on their specific context. For instance, one school may define IM in terms of 'connections,' while another emphasizes 'respect.' A third school may focus on 'character building,' and a fourth on 'balancing national and international perspectives.' Additionally, IM has been described as 'a way of thinking,' 'a way of acting,' 'a way of living,' 'a mindset,' or even as the lens through which they understand 'diversity, equity, and inclusion.'

However, despite these varied approaches, what unites them all is the understanding that IM is something that develops in the context of relationships. It is an acknowledgement that IM is nurtured through connections with others, whether it be through fostering understanding and respect, building character, or embracing diverse perspectives. This shared understanding emphasizes the importance of fostering meaningful relationships within the school community to cultivate a rich environment for IM to flourish.

IM entails actively engaging with individuals who possess diverse perspectives, fostering an understanding and respect for their viewpoints, even in instances of disagreement. It involves immersing oneself in alternative cultural contexts, adapting to unfamiliar circumstances, and seeking personal growth. Simultaneously, it involves introspection and self-reflection, as expressed by Julia Middleton (2014), who emphasizes that thriving in different cultures begins with looking inward. This implies challenging oneself, recognizing and examining personal assumptions and limitations, and embarking on a journey of individual development.

Thus, following Barratt Hacking et al., (2017) IM encompasses two essential dimensions: "reaching out" to connect with others and "reflecting in" to explore and comprehend our own selves. By reaching out, we actively engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds, seeking to establish meaningful connections, foster understanding, and embrace diverse perspectives. Simultaneously, by reflecting in, we embark on an introspective journey, delving into our own identities, values, and beliefs. This process enables us to develop self-awareness, challenge assumptions, and cultivate a deeper understanding of ourselves. The harmonious integration of these two aspects empowers individuals to navigate and thrive in an interconnected global society.

Examining the Notion of International Mindedness □IM□ in the PYP

Within the Primary Years Programme (PYP), IM holds a central position in alignment with the mission of the program. It places importance on both the conceptual understanding of IM and the endeavor to bridge theory and practice. The PYP underscores the establishment of a strong foundation for IM and regards individuals who embody the attributes of the IB learner profile as possessing this quality. Hence, there exists a reciprocal relationship where the development of IM is fostered as individuals strive to embody the characteristics of the IB learner profile.

The acquisition of IM is not solely accomplished through the completion of the PYP curriculum. Rather, it is believed to be actualized through learning experiences that leverage students' beliefs and values as valuable resources. Student-centered learning, which harnesses these resources, serves as a driving force in the pursuit of IM. Moreover, the IB Learner Profile encompasses essential elements encompassing not only the content of learning but also the attitudes of the learners. The ability to effectively express these attitudes is seen as a catalyst for personal growth in alignment with the learner profile and contributes to the development of IM.

Furthermore, motivation is nurtured through discussions within the context of students' lives, aiming to uncover the interconnectedness between "learning and life" and highlighting the ties among "school, society, and home." These aspects hold a close association with the development of attitudes

and agency within the framework proposed by Metli & Lane (2020).³ They are perceived as laying a solid groundwork for future learning and are particularly emphasized in descriptions pertaining to IM in the PYP.

In summary, IM within the PYP encompasses not only knowledge and skills but also places considerable significance on attitudes and agency. Deliberations from diverse perspectives underscore the essentiality of attitudes and agency, accentuating the broader dimensions of IM.

Ongoing efforts to implement our own interpretation of IM at Seirei Gakuen

As a PYP candidate school moving towards accreditation, Seirei Gakuen is in alignment with the abovementioned principles of the IB PYP and has embraced the promotion of IM as a fundamental aspect of our educational philosophy.

Within the school community, school leaders hold a significant role in leading and shaping the work related to IM. They are responsible for ensuring that IM becomes an integral part of the school culture and operations, strategically embedded through mission statements, policies, and guidelines that inform the daily practices and procedures. By doing so, leaders aim to create an environment where IM is not merely an abstract concept, but a lived experience for students, staff, and stakeholders. The process of discussing IM is more important than the final definition. IB advises schools to embark on discussions which involve the whole school

community in the process of defining IM as this helps to ensure a sense of ownership amongst all stakeholders.

In the upcoming section, we will explore the key elements encompassing values, attitudes, and behaviors that play a pivotal role in cultivating IM within the educational community of Seirei Gakuen.

Alignment of Values and Attitudes with Educational Philosophy and Mission

Seirei Christopher Elementary School and Seirei Christopher Kodomoen, affiliated with Seirei Christopher University, are currently in the process of seeking accreditation as candidates for the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB/PYP) . As part of this accreditation process, schools must clearly define and implement a purpose for learning that aligns with the philosophy and mission of the IB.

To fulfill this requirement, we have undertaken a thorough reassessment of our school's educational philosophy and mission considering the IB's mission and philosophy. Additionally, to explore the significance and relevance of our educational philosophy in the context of the future era and education, we have conducted a comparative study using the materials presented by the OECD Education 2030 project.

The Learning Compass 2030, introduced by the OECD, outlines the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that learners need to reach their full

potential and contribute to the well-being of their communities and the planet. In this framework, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are identified as essential domains of the competencies outlined by the OECD 2030 project. By examining and aligning our educational philosophy and mission with the insights provided by the IB's philosophy, mission, and the OECD Education 2030 project, we aim to ensure that our schools are equipped to meet the rigorous standards set forth by the IB/PYP accreditation process. This comprehensive review allows us to reinforce our commitment to providing a high-quality education that prepares students for a future characterized by global interconnectedness and a changing landscape of skills and competencies.⁴

Shun Shirai (白井俊, 2022) aptly asserts, "No matter how high the level of knowledge and skills acquired, if they are exercised in a way that violates human rights, such as threatening the life, body, or property of others, or in a way that violates universal values such as peace and democracy, this is not what education should be about."⁵ This statement underscores the crucial importance of education aligning with ethical principles and universal values.

From a perspective emphasizing the inherent dignity of every human being, education should purposefully align with values that prioritize this dignity, promote a way of life upholding it, and foster social sustainability grounded in trust and hope. By integrating these universal values into

the educational framework, we can create an environment that nurtures the holistic development of individuals and equips them with the skills and knowledge needed to contribute positively to society. This approach not only empowers students to embrace their own dignity but also instills in them a sense of responsibility to uphold the dignity and well-being of others. Moreover, by fostering trust and hope, education can inspire individuals to actively engage in building a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.

Insights from Earnest Boyer and the IB/PYP Framework

Earnest Boyer (1995) , a significant inspiration in the advancement of the holistic educational philosophy promoted by the PYP, expressed the following sentiment: "Being an educated person means being guided by values and beliefs and connecting the lessons of the classroom to the realities of life".⁶ This statement underscores the importance of imbuing education with values and beliefs while bridging the gap between classroom learning and real-life experiences. Aligned with Boyer's ideas, the IB/PYP endeavors to nurture values and attitudes firmly rooted in the five essential elements of the written curriculum: knowledge, concepts, skills, attitudes, and behaviors (taking actions) .⁷ These elements collectively shape a comprehensive educational framework within the program.

To embrace IM it is essential to cultivate personal attitudes towards

others, the environment, and learning that contribute to the well-being of individuals and society as a whole. Building upon this understanding, we believe that developing international mindedness involves acquiring a comprehension of universal values and growing into individuals who embody these values through their attitudes and actions.

Boyer (1995) emphasizes the significance of exploring a range of themes that encompass the shared human experience. As he aptly puts it, these themes represent "the deeply rooted characteristics that bind together the human community."⁸ This highlights the essential nature of delving into the commonalities that connect individuals across cultures and societies, which serve as the foundation for understanding our interconnectedness and fostering IM. These themes typically include topics such as Who We Are, Where We Are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works, How We Organize Ourselves, and Sharing the Planet. By exploring these themes, students develop a deeper understanding of universal values, global issues, and their role as responsible global citizens.

The IB promotes the notion that IM extends beyond abstract ideas and it encompasses a call to action when they declare that "PYP schools can and should meet the challenge of offering all learners the opportunity and power to choose to act; to decide on their actions; and reflect on these actions in order to make a difference in and for the world".⁹ This way, IB emphasizes that PYP

schools have the capacity and responsibility to empower all learners to actively choose to act, make decisions about their actions, and reflect on those actions with the aim of effecting positive change in the world.

However, to cultivate children's adherence to universal values, it is imperative to provide them with tangible behavioral models, exemplify such behaviors, and create opportunities for them to actively engage in those behaviors. To inspire children to take action, it is crucial to encourage them to reflect metacognitively on how they can further develop their own values in a positive direction and empower them to translate their thoughts into concrete actions. By doing so, we can foster a proactive mindset and encourage children to become agents of positive change.

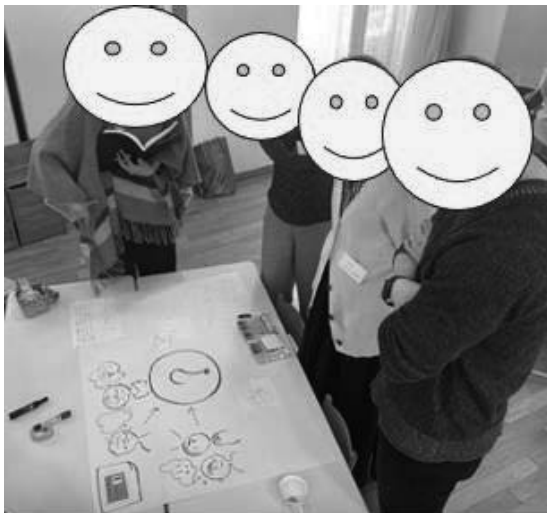
In shaping the school community, one perspective is that the formation of learner identity occurs through a combination of conscious and subconscious assimilation. Participants gradually internalize the values and practices inherent in the learning community, a process facilitated by exposure to the community's language and the ideas and meanings that underpin their value systems. Moreover, learner identity is further solidified through shared experiences and active involvement with the practical aspects that have been cultivated within the learning community.

Shaping the school community

As part of our commitment to fostering ownership among all stakeholders,

we implemented a significant initiative in March 2023. This involved organizing a whole school professional development session centered around the utilization of the IB Learner Profile as a framework. By doing so, we aimed to cultivate IM and ensure that our mission statement aligns with the principles of the IB. This strategic approach not only strengthened our sense of collective responsibility but also served as a catalyst for promoting a vibrant and inclusive learning environment within our community. We thoroughly examined the "reaching out" and "reflecting in" dimensions mentioned earlier and our teachers engaged in meaningful reflections, emphasizing the importance of embracing diverse perspectives and actively participating in global contexts. With the presence of an independent IB professor from Tamagawa University, our primary focus revolved around the definition of international mindedness. Through collaborative efforts, we collectively developed and deliberated upon this definition, with the professor playing a vital role in facilitating the process. His expertise and guidance added valuable insights to our discussions, ensuring a comprehensive and well-informed understanding of international mindedness within our educational context. During the course of our exploration, it became apparent that Christian values, Open-mindedness, and Cultural Understanding emerged as key attributes closely intertwined with IM. With this understanding as our guide, we redefined our mission statement to encompass the

principles of "Love of God," "Love of Others," and "Love of Inquiry." This shift in focus has led us to embrace a conceptual learning approach that progressively encourages students and teachers to actively participate in local and global contexts, utilizing their home languages as a means of connection and exploration.



'IM and the IB Learner Profile' (Teacher PD, March 2023)

Additionally, attributes such as being principled, caring, and effective communicators also played a significant role in shaping our understanding of IM and informing the revision of our mission statement. Considering Seirei Gakuen's Christian values and emphasis on service activities, these attributes not only contribute

to our connection with the IB mission statement but also guides our exploration of personal identities within the unique context of Seirei Gakuen.

Implementation of universal values

Both Seirei Christopher Elementary School and Christopher Kodomoen, affiliated with Seirei Christopher University, have integrated the introduction of universal values into their learning communities. They are committed to providing experiences and fostering efforts that enable students to acquire attitudes and behaviors grounded in these values.

The educational philosophy of Seirei Gakuen centers around the principles of the "dignity of life" and "love of neighbor," as derived from the teachings of the Bible. These core values form the foundation for the development of their educational programs.

When IM is viewed in terms of universal values, the community of the Seirei Group, of which Seirei Gakuen is a part, has a history of always acting in accordance with these values. To cite an example, the efforts to accept and resettle Vietnamese refugees in 1977 are noteworthy.¹⁰ They were early to take proactive measures to safeguard human rights. Given the current challenges humanity faces, such as the pandemic and refugee crises, it is crucial to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of the illustrious history of Seirei Gakuen. As a result, Seirei Christopher Elementary School organizes meaningful visits to Seirei Gakuen'

s local historical museum as a part of the curriculum for all students from first to sixth grade. This allows them to delve into the rich historical context and gain valuable insights.

Christopher Kodomoen places great emphasis on its curriculum, which encompasses worship, Bible stories, and other intentional efforts to instill universal values. An illustrative example of this is seen in a class of five-year-old children who, while watching and listening to the daily news about the war in Ukraine at home, expressed their heartfelt concerns. Questions arose: "Are bombs raining down?" and "Which is worse?" The children engaged in discussions with their teachers and parents, collectively contemplating "what we can do" in response to the situation.

Drawing inspiration from their previous Christmas donations supporting welfare facilities of the Seirei group in Brazil and India, the children suggested actions like purchasing food for babies and providing housing for those who have lost their homes. These ideas translated into action, facilitated by the teachers who asked thought-provoking questions and encourage dialogue. The entire process is recorded and shared through articles in the school newsletter. This initiative fostered authentic participation for the children, recognizing their actions as significant contributions and shaping their perspectives and attitudes within the learning community.

Throughout this endeavor, the teachers assumed the role of facilitators,

promoting in-depth discussions and dialogue. Furthermore, parents were encouraged to discuss the issue within their own homes, thus nurturing shared values within the learning community. This approach establishes a space where children actively participate and their contributions are acknowledged, ultimately leading to the development of valued perspectives and attitudes.

Conclusion

The IB upholds the fundamental principles of humanity as essential ideals that should be actualized, with the aim of constructing a superior and more harmonious global society. To accomplish this objective, it is crucial for children to develop the capacity to contemplate the true meaning of valuing human dignity and to translate this understanding into appropriate actions. Presently, when observing the situation worldwide, universal values such as "democracy," "basic human rights," and "rule of law" stand at a crucial juncture.

Considering this, the fulfillment of the IB's mission is of great significance. Seirei Gakuen, which has embraced the Primary Years Programme (PYP), should strive to devise a more tangible and effective approach and curriculum that nurtures global citizens with an international mindset in conjunction with universal values like "dignity of life" and "love of neighbor," while also actively implementing them in practice.

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