

**University of Southampton**

**A Study of Public Relations Activity in International  
Schools and its Use as an Indicator of their Distinct  
Character**

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**ABSTRACT**

**RESEARCH AND GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

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**A study of Public Relations in International Schools and its use as an Indicator  
of their Distinctive Character**

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Chapter 1 shows how this thesis began as an investigation into the nature and extent of PR activity in international schools. A study of the literature shows that little is known about how these schools function as a distinctive class of institution.

Chapter 2 shows that organizations in a business context appear to have four key characteristics: there is a number of different understandings; there is a tendency to undervalue the activity; the practitioners tend to be under-qualified and the activity tends to be disliked. It also shows that little is known about the nature of PR activity in international schools.

Chapter 3 investigates previous attempts at the categorizing of international schools and outlines previous models used. It also provides an introduction to a new model- the ID Matrix, building upon the conceptual framework by Cambridge and Thompson (2000) with the '18 Domain Model'.

Chapter 4 shows how a Research Plan was drawn up so that the nature of PR activity in international schools could be investigated. The PR practitioner in thirty-four schools in twenty-two countries were interviewed or surveyed by post.

Chapter 5.1 analyses the data collected. It shows that this survey seemed to reveal more about this type of school. It seemed to reveal that these schools appear to share a number of common characteristics. The nature and extent of PR activity seems to be very similar among all schools. Moreover, the manner by which the PR practitioners are appointed and the manner by which they undertake PR seems to reveal a distinct characteristic: that international schools appear to be very informal. This characteristic had been noted before but not explored (see Hayden and Thompson 1997).

Chapter 5.2 explores this characteristic further. A second key characteristic is also noted: that international schools appear to be very isolated and that practitioners within them are also very isolated. The nature of this characteristic is also investigated further. Attempts were made to conceptualise both.

Chapter 6.1 summarises what this research tells us about PR activity in international schools. Chapter 6.2 shows that this research could be made to test further the assertion by Cambridge and Thompson (2000) that there is no single definable entity which can be identified as an international school. It shows that it is possible to argue that international schools do appear to share a common distinct characteristic: that they are all intrinsically 'American'.

Chapter 7 shows that this feature requires further research as does the area of PR activity. For example, research into the area of Human Resource Management might reveal more about the informal nature of this type of school and the 'American' nature.

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## **1) The context of this research**

### **1.1) The evolution of this research**

This thesis starts with a confession. Like many educators, I began my teaching profession being hostile to the notion of educational marketing. My first year of teaching was the first year following the 1988 Education Reform Act, legislation that brought into focus the need for schools to engage in marketing and public relations. My first school engaged in a project, using a marketing consultancy firm, to gather the views and attitudes of parents. At the time this seemed, to me and most of the other staff, to be an immoral waste of time and money. It seemed wrong for a school to engage in public relations activity when, at the same time, it was laying off teachers due to lack of money. Looking back, this view was born out of ignorance: ignorance over what public relations is and over what my school was trying to do. This thesis starts from this precept- that public relations is a concept with many different understandings and one that attracts much hostility.

Hence, my interest in the topic of educational marketing began by accident. It was a conversion that began when I moved to my present school, the International School of London, eleven years ago. Here I was given a position on the marketing sub-committee and began to get involved in the school's public relations activity. I began to see that PR had a vital role to play both in terms of the school's survival and in providing a quality product that both the parents and children wanted and needed.

At the same time I began to see that PR was an activity being carried out, certainly by my own school, as an ad-hoc unplanned activity within a very limited budget. In effect, it was nothing more than a one way process involving a brochure, the occasional advertisement and the occasional newsletter. There was no data collection.

It was also an activity being undertaken by an untrained and unqualified practitioner with no educational marketing back-ground (the school's Development Officer).

I often wondered: 'To what extent is this the case with other international schools?'. In other words, 'is this normal practice in international schools?'. Hence, the origination behind the primary research question of this thesis: what is the nature of public relations activity in international schools?

This thesis began life, in 1994, as an investigation into factors affecting the nature of public relations activity in international schools, an area that had I become interested in and involved with after my move into the field of international schools, a move that had led to my conversion from being hostile to the idea of PR. Initially the idea was to survey the 15 member schools of the London International Schools Association (LISA) one of many such Regional Associations around the world. However, this was too small an area and so schools from around the world were brought in, a move that was to prove to be both more interesting and more expensive!

It became clear after visiting the first four schools that this survey was going to reveal something altogether more interesting and significant than merely an insight into PR activity. It became clear that a pattern was emerging as to the type of PR activity being undertaken. There was also a pattern with regard to the nature of this activity. For example, the back-ground of each of the practitioners was very similar. The barriers they faced in carrying out PR activity were similar. Their views towards PR were similar. The more schools I visited, the more this pattern emerged. It became clear that a study of PR activity in international schools could provide a window into understanding how these schools work. Moreover, it became clear that it might offer a valuable insight into how these schools function as a distinct class of institution.

The second research question for this thesis emerged: 'To what extent can we, through an investigation of public relations activity, identify international schools as a distinct class of institution? What is the nature of this distinction? What does it tell us about the character of these schools?'

It was inevitable that the two would be linked. After all, any large-scale survey into a particular area of an organization's activity is bound to uncover insights into how that organization functions. It is bound to highlight similarities and differences between different organizations. However, the way in which seemingly extremely diverse schools appeared to share common characteristics in terms of their organizational culture was a surprise.

Hence this research, via a logical link, proved to offer more than an insight into the nature of PR activity in international schools. It offers insights into how these schools function as organizations and how and to what extent they function as a grouping: a distinct class of institution. This sort of understanding is needed as international schools as a class of institution are increasing in size and importance.

## **1.2) The growth of International schools**

It is true to say that there is not much material available for the researcher with regard to international schools. As Hayden and Thompson (2001 pXII) say: '*One of the striking features of the world of international education is the dearth of written material within the public domain*'. The publication of the 1991 *World Yearbook* is seen by Hayden and Thompson (2001) to mark the turning-point. At the same time it is true to say that there has been little formal research into this field of education. As Hayden and Thompson (1998 p551) state: '*It is only recently that research has addressed directly that branch of international education which relates to the context of international schools*'. The studies undertaken by the Centre for the study of education in an International context (CEIC), at the University of Bath, into 'international attitudes', appear to be the major examples.

What are international schools? This is a difficult question to answer as there is no consensus over what an 'international school' is. According to Hayden and Thompson (1999 p2), no one has so far come up with a clear and exact definition. What is without question is the fact that international schools are an area of schooling that has grown enormously in number over the last 30 years from 50 schools in 1964 according to Findlay (1997), to an estimated 2,000 today. According to Pearce (2001 p3), in 1997 there were 1724 institutions in 174 countries, following at least eleven different systems and serving over one million students.

According to Hayden and Thompson (1995 p335), Matthews (1988) gives an interesting analogy stating that the international school network was equivalent in size to that of a nation with a population of 3-4 million. Say, the size of Denmark. This compares with the 300,000 estimated by Leach in the mid-sixties (according to Hayden and Thompson 1995 p333). This is due to a number of factors: increasingly cheap travel and the rapid growth of multi-national corporations; the trend towards keeping children with the family instead of sending them to boarding school. As Hayden and Thompson (1995) point out all these factors have led to the increasing demand for international schools all over the world. Some of these schools are 'very old' dating from the 1920s but the vast majority are post-war and many have recently opened.

This growth has been rapid and largely unplanned and has led to some locations such as London having a large and diverse grouping of schools. As Hayden, Rancic and Thompson (2000 p107) state: *'One of the features of this field of international education, linked no doubt to its relatively rapid and to some extent ad-hoc growth...'*. According to the study by Leggate and Thompson (1997) this is one of the major problems affecting the management of development planning in international schools. DeLameter (1981) gives a good example of such ad-hoc development among schools in The Netherlands since World War Two.



At this point it ought to be stated that it is incorrect to think of 'international schools' as merely a post-war phenomenon. According to Sylvester (2002 p91), the term has been in continuous use since the 1860s and there is a need to "...*examine critically the current mythology of international education that sees the field simply as a direct outcome of two world wars or a by-product of the second age of globalization that followed*". Having said that, it is true to say that the majority of present-day international schools are a product of this globalization. Heyward (2002 p9) goes so far as to say that "*International schools, as a category of educational institutions, emerged in the 1950s alongside a dramatic increase in the number of expatriate westerners sojourning in foreign countries*". Hayden and Thompson (1995) also identify the 1950s as a significant period. According to Richards (2001), it was stated by Keson (1991) that: '*International schools began to sprout like mushrooms in the late fifties and early sixties*'. Interestingly, Walker (2000 p193) states 1924, the year of the foundation of the International School of Geneva, as the 'origin' of international education.

It is also certainly true to say that the small 'universe' of international schools is, at present, thriving. All 17 of the schools visited during this research either had a record high student roll or were at the highest level for many years. This is, of course, a factor of the current economic climate and could change with the advent of a global, or even an American, recession. It is also a factor of the increasing globalization of the world economy and the growth of economically mobile multi-national corporations such as Gillette and Shell in particular. The enlargement of the European Union will probably lead to further growth in the near future as would the successful creation of a large-scale free-trade area such as APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation: 21 countries including USA and Japan).

This growth has led to the emergence of a debate over whether there is actually a body of schools that can be identified and categorized as 'international schools'. Indeed Cambridge and Thompson (2000 p1) go so far as to say: *It is our contention that there is no single definable entity which can be identified as an international school.*

This quote shows the difficulty in carrying out research into such schools and partly explains why so little formal research has been undertaken into how they function and behave. However, some areas of activity have been explored. For instance, there has been much discussion on the characteristics of expatriate communities beginning with Cleveland (1960). Cohen (1977) applied the term 'environmental bubble' to describe the protected environment expatriate communities build and it would be interesting to explore how this manifests itself with regard to PR activity. There has also been much discussion on so called 'transition problems' for both the parents and children. Wasow (1993) argued that the New York City based 'Family-School Collaboration Project' might be applicable to international schools, given the nature of their multicultural children. Burleigh (1993), though, implies that these children are 'unique' and that schools need to make much more effort than ordinary schools to keep parents informed of the progress of the child. Both Pearce (1996) and Obura (1985) addressed the issue of how children adjust to a new school.

There has also been much discussion about the role that the school plays as a 'community'. Droppert and Bale (1985 p45) undertook a study between 1978 to 1982 about the stresses of being an administrator in international schools but also had to say that: *"During this four year association it became apparent that the school played a vital role in the community life of the expatriates living and working in that area"*. Allen (2000 p125) argues that: *'I would suggest that schools have frequently been aware of the community around them, but their reactions to these communities have been (and continue to be) far from uniform'*. It would be interesting to undertake formal research into the nature and extent of community activity by international schools. It would especially be interesting to explore Hayden and Thompson's (1995 p332) assertion that: *'While they might seem, up to the present time, almost to have been a well kept secret in terms of their visibility in the community as a whole, international schools in their many guises are rapidly becoming an influential force on a global scale'*.

Linked to this, there has been some discussion about school-community links, mainly revolving around the CAS (Creative, Action, Service) aspect of the IB, a compulsory component of the Diploma Programme. Hobson and Carroll (2000) describe several examples of community service programmes and conclude that they give much scope for children to get involved in 'grass-roots' community service. However, they advise that these programmes require more planning and attention than schools presently give. It would be interesting to discover what effect these community based programmes have with regard to the standing of the school within the local community. An in-depth case study of CAS activity at Machabeng College in Lesotho comes from Kulundu and Hayden (2002) who raised several points about factors effecting the quality and implementation of CAS provision.

There has also been much discussion about the motivation and morale of educators within international schools although this has tended to focus upon the Principal. For instance, Malpass (1994) notes that many schools have had a long history of management difficulties that have led to a constant change of school heads. Hawley (1994 and 1995) undertook research into the question '*How long do international school heads survive?*' and discovered that heads of international schools remained on average of 2.8 years in the position. Hawley identified that there were many different reasons for this but that much of it had to do with micro-politics, particularly problems with the school board. Littleford (1999) also looks into this issue and identifies four types of head. However, no other type of educator appears to have been explored.

The CEIC studies into 'international attitudes' are interesting and relevant for public relations activity. The initial study, involving 48 undergraduate students at Bath University, revealed much about the perceived essential features of an 'international education'. The views of 3,000 students were later accessed through a similar questionnaire study (Hayden and Thompson 1997). This was followed by a survey of 228 teachers (Hayden and Thompson 1998). The survey of students also included a comparison between 18-year olds in six European Schools and International Schools.

This revealed that there was only a small difference in opinion about what an 'international education' should and does involve. It is interesting to note that both groups, students and teachers, identified the importance of certain 'ideological' values and certain 'pragmatic' values. What wasn't explored, of course, were the views of parents. This would link the study quite nicely to the issue of 'parental choice': how and why parents choose a school.

On a slightly different level, several attempts have been made to draw up definitions of international schools based on common characteristics drawn from easily obtained data such as *inter alia* student and staff characteristics. But, no serious attempt has been made to categorize and conceptualize schools using detailed empirical data based on how schools behave. Categorization attempts have instead tended to focus upon the concept of 'diversity'. Findlay (1999) uses this to argue that there are two main groups of schools;

a) those with a parent body and common theme. These have a shared ethos and policy and although they may be found in many different parts of the world they share a founding ethos and aims. Examples include the SABIS Lebanese schools, the United World College schools and the Dharhan District schools in Saudi Arabia.

b) those that are members of a Regional Association body such as the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) or the smaller London International Schools Association. These schools show enormous diversity and serve to meet several different needs but share certain common characteristics as fellow 'members'. The European Council of International Schools (ECIS), founded in 1965 with 480 regular member schools (information correct as of August 1999) and over 50 prospective members in over 90 countries around the world is the oldest, largest and most well known of these Regional Associations serving the interests of over 290,000 students. Membership is open to schools who offer a curriculum in which the culture and educational system of more than one country is represented so for example, the French Lycee schools would not be eligible for membership.

These latter schools would not normally be included in research into international schools. There is some debate though over the extent to which they differ from 'international schools' with Cambridge and Thompson (1999) in particular being concerned with this distinction. The main criteria for joining is to have a student body of diverse nationalities and educational aims and curricula. ECIS member schools also tend to be non-competitive and non-selective in entry and are thus designed to serve a broad range of abilities. Their patrons tend to be employees of MNCs or international governmental agencies although some are expatriates or even locals. The common first language of the students is often English as is the language of instruction. The children are often referred to as 'third-culture' children, being neither a product of the host country nor the country of their legal nationality, having spent most of their previous schooling in 'alien' countries.

There are at least 22 such Regional Associations, showing the diversity of interaction between international schools. (See the list below). The ECIS organization (to be known as CIS from 2003) is by far the biggest and best known but other groupings are also significant. These groupings can be divided into four sub-groupings and are summarized on the next page;

- The single-sister organizations: groups of schools found in different countries who share the same ideology and founding ethos. The United World College schools are probably the best known.
- The American-oriented schools: a wide variety of schools who belong to at least nine different Regional Associations.
- The British-oriented schools: a much smaller grouping mainly in Europe.
- The single-country schools: found mainly within one country or city.

**Figure 1: A listing of the four types of Regional Associations**

LIST OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS			
SISTER COUNTRY ORGANIZATIONS	AMERICAN ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONS	DUAL ECIS MEMBER SCHOOLS	SINGLE COUNTRY ORGANIZATIONS
United World College (UWC)- 10 secondary schools in world, 4 belong to ECIS.	NESA (Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools): 41 schools serving 30,000 students, founded 1968.	NABSS (National Association of British Schools in Spain): 40 schools, all ECIS members. Founded 1978	ISAT(International Schools Association of Thailand): 27 schools.
SABIS- 20 Arab oriented schools throughout the world.	EARCOS (East Asia Region of International Schools): 84 schools serving 50,000 students.  AISA ( American Schools in Africa Association): 80 schools.	COBISEC (Council of the British Schools in the European Communities): 29 British curricula schools serving 10,000 students. Founded in 1981	KORCOS (Korean Council of Overseas Schools): 14 schools, 4 belong to ECIS.
Network of Christian Schools (NIC)- 10 schools.	The Tri-Association: 1) AASCA (American Schools in Central America: 15 schools, 2)ACCAS ( Association of Colombian –Caribbean American Schools ): 19 3)ASSOMEX(Association of American Schools in Mexico ) : 17 .	SGIS (Swiss Group of International Schools ): 32 schools  MAIS(Mediterranean Association of International Schools): 23 American schools in 5 countries	RISA (Rome International Schools Association): 14 schools, none belong to ECIS. Founded 1974.
The European Schools- one in each of the 15 EU members with an international curriculum.	AASA ( Association of American Schools in South America): 41 schools.	ESF ( English Schools Foundation):15 schools in Hong Kong.  CEESA ( Continental and Eastern European Schools): 15 American schools.	IED (International Education Department of PNG): 21 schools.

Several tentative attempts have been made at defining international schools such as that from Hayden and Thompson (1995 p1): *'international schools are a common conglomeration of individual schools which may or may not share an underlying educational philosophy'*. This definition shows how ambiguous such definitions have tended to be. Others have preferred to draw up lists of criteria common to such schools such as Findlay (1999) who notes 4 key criteria;

- curricula that differ from those commonly operated by schools in the host country.
- serving the needs of an overseas community living in a host country.
- having an international student population.
- modifying their curricula to make the most of the international setting.

Findlay also attempts a definition of an international school (page 4): *'a school that serves an ex-pat community with a curriculum that is not of the host country and that has an international student population'*. This definition is useful in that it clearly does not include schools like the French Lycees and solves the problem identified by Cambridge and Thompson (1999) who argue that there is little common agreement over what constitutes such a school. They instead prefer to refer to 'schools in an international context' which allows for the inclusion of both the ECIS eligible schools and the French Lycee schools.

Although the debate over the common criteria and definitions of international schools has gathered pace since the growth of international schools in the 1980s (30% of schools in the ECIS 1999 Directory had been established since 1980), the debate began much earlier. Leach and Knight (1964), in one of the very earliest references, writing at a time when there were fewer than 100 international schools, argued that there were 3 different groups of 'schools in an educational context'. They identified these groups as being a) national schools overseas, b) international schools and c) profit making schools.

They too saw that schools such as the French Lycee were not actually 'international schools' although they deemed that schools such as the present ISLondon, a profit making school, were not international schools either. This distinction between 'international schools' and profit making 'schools in an international context' has now ceased to exist and therefore profit making schools ought to be considered within any representative sample of international schools.

In 1964, it was also a prerequisite to be a member of the International Schools Association to be seen as an 'international school'. Rodsheim (1970) also insisted that only non-profit making schools could be classified as an international school. The important contribution of Rodsheim was to make the first attempt to distinguish international schools from what Cambridge and Thompson (2000) refer to as 'schools in an international context'. This was the first attempt to identify international schools as different from schools such as the French Lycee type.

Attempts at categorizing international schools have produced both a small and large classification of schools. One of the smallest came from Jonietz (1991) (see Hayden and Thompson 1995 p3) who identified only three types of school and produced the following broad definition: *International schools serve students and teachers living outside their home nations in a model of multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-national education that uses English language instruction and offers a formal international curriculum and existing examinations for secondary students.*

Like Leach and Knight (1964), Sanderson (1981) identified seven types of international schools although Sanderson also included French Lycee schools. Ponisch (1985) went further and identified eleven types according to two key criteria: historical diversity and diversity of student body. This latter criterion is still used as the key criterion by academics such as Cambridge and Thompson (2000) who have attempted to build a conceptual framework, the 18 Domain Model (see later). However, even Cambridge and Thompson acknowledge the ambiguity of such models and the problem faced by many schools 'overlapping' between domain grouping.



### 1.3) Summary

International schools are a small and diverse class of institution belonging to a number of Regional Associations around the world, but they are growing in size and importance partly as a direct consequence of the increasing globalization of the world economy since the 1980s and the increasing mobility of labour. One would expect this trend to continue especially given the economic growth of China and the imminent enlargement of the EU. Furthermore, the debacle over 'A-levels' during the Summer of 2002 gave much attention in the UK press to the IB and international schools. On top of all this, there is also the entering of the market of British 'public' schools, a trend started in 1996 when the school modelled on Dulwich College was set up in Phuket. Halpin (2002 p4) comments on how the Harrow International School in Bangkok, which was granted ECIS member status in January 2003, is due to be followed soon by the Shrewsbury International School.

Thus, it would appear that international schools are a growing field of education and are emerging, also, as a seemingly more diverse and interesting class of institution. It appears, to an extent, that international education is 'coming of age'. This is argued by Peel (1998 p12) who may be being proved correct in his assertion: *"As recently as twenty-five years ago international education was still a rather odd phenomenon on the fringe of the mainstream. Now as the twentieth century reaches its zenith, we find ourselves somewhat surprisingly at the centre. Suddenly, our schools are the focus of much attention"*.

This thesis began life as an investigation into the nature of public relations activity in these schools. However, it emerged at the start of the survey that this offered a much wider insight into how these schools function as a distinct class of institution. As a consequence, this thesis shows how an investigation into PR activity revealed a window by which we can further understand the extent by which international schools can be categorized and conceptualized as a distinct class of institution.

It provides an understanding of the organizational culture of these schools and provides evidence for conceptual frameworks to be devised which allow us to further understand how these schools function as a class. This is useful given the growing role of international schools as a class of institution within the world economy and the subsequent growing role of public relations within them.

Ponisch (1985) identified eleven types of international schools according to two key criteria: historical diversity and the diversity of the student body. It is this concept of 'diversity' that is still used as the key criteria. For example, Cambridge and Thompson (2000) have attempted build a conceptual framework for classifying international schools, the '18 Domain Model' (see later). However, even Cambridge and Thompson acknowledge the ambiguity of such models. It also ought to be stated that more recent attention has been given to the ideology of international schools, mainly centring upon the notion that international schools have 'international values'. But, this has tended to centre upon the curriculum of international schools, one of the key indicators of a school's level of 'diversity'. For instance, Phillips (2002 p161) in the *Journal of Research in International Education* states that "...values lie at the heart of the educational programmes of such schools and it is perhaps here that the distinctive nature of what is perceived as an 'international school' is rooted". There has been much discussion about this feature of international schools. Walker (2000) argued that one of the main aims of every international school is to promote among its students what is generally called cultural understanding.

Sylvester (2000 p22) argues that: "*No discussion of the future is possible without frequent use of the word 'global'*", and that international schools ought to be widening the angle of vision through which students view the world. However, it is argued by Hayden and Thompson (1995) that this value system is a dynamic concept that can cross frontiers and is not the sole domain of 'international schools'. They argue that the concept of 'worldmindedness' can become the goal of any school, hence any school can become 'international'.

It is also worth mentioning at this point that Hayden and Thompson (2000) argue that the diverse community of international schools ought to consider a closer bond. They argue that it is time to consider the formation of a possible 'Alliance for International Education' which would co-ordinate the growth of these schools. This is an interesting hope for the future. At the same time, it would be interesting to discover to what extent schools at present international schools co-operate and share resources and experiences. Or, is it that schools are separate and isolated?

Hence, it is clear that international schools can be further classified according to the two dimensions of their 'diversity' and their values, or 'ideology'. It is this theme which is developed in Chapter 3. The next chapter examines, in detail, the meaning and nature of Public Relations in schools in general.

## **2) Perspectives on PR activity and international schools**

### **2.1) The context of PR activity**

Public Relations is an area of activity that has gained importance in British state schools since 1988 and the advent of the Educational Reform Act that opened up 'parental choice' of schools although it is an activity that all schools have always practised. However, without a doubt, few concepts produce as much difference of opinion as public relations. It can be claimed to be a much 'misunderstood' and derided concept. We need to be careful not to accuse a person of 'misunderstanding' what PR as there are many different *understandings* as to what it is and can do. This understanding is a feature of the life-history and national culture of a person. For example, a British educator may see it in light of 'doctoring' and 'spin', political connections that rose to prominence in the 1990s. However, to an American educator the concept may be seen differently. Is this a factor in international schools?

This is the sort of question we know little about although my own experience of PR activity in international schools suggests that it is a significant factor. There are other areas we also know little about. We know little about how or why public relations is undertaken in schools or by whom. A starting point is to consider literature on public relations in both a business context and in an educational context. This literature shows PR is affected by four particular factors: that PR is a complex term with a multitude of meanings; PR is an activity considered by many schools to be of limited importance; PR is an activity usually undertaken by unqualified and inexperienced practitioners; PR is an activity that has become disliked and distrusted by many people.

It is not clear to what extent these four general factors affect the culture of PR activity in international schools although my own experience within my own school has shown me that we can expect each to have a significant bearing on the nature of PR activity. Furthermore, other factors affecting the organisational culture with regard to PR activity need to be analysed in an attempt to reveal how international schools *behave* as a distinct class of institution. Many of these factors are likely to be specific to international schools, such as the management culture and the founding ethos. An investigation of such factors might reveal to what extent we can identify such schools as a distinct class of institution.

## **2.2) PR as a complex term with many meanings**

The most used definition in British educational literature (see Davies 1988, Devlin and Knight 1989 ) is the 1948 British Institute of PR version;

*"PR practice is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics "*.

This is often shortened in modern texts (see Ali 1995) to *'the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics'*.

The second most common (see Kotler and Fox 1985) is the American National School PR Association version of 1984;

*'a planned and systematic management function designed to help improve the programs and services of an educational organization. It relies on a comprehensive two-way communication process involving both internal and external publics with a goal of stimulating a better understanding of the role, objectives , accomplishments and needs of the organization'.*

This sort of broad definition can lead to much difficulty in terms of actual practice in a school or any organization. What it shows is that PR has much to offer any organization: it can help to discover the current image of and attitudes towards a school, avert crises, resolve and minimize conflicts, help deal with gossip and myths, build respect and reputation and advise management on policy.

A leader in 'Education' (1991) showed that only 90% of FE colleges said they practiced any PR. At least 10% saw PR as something that they did not actually do, certainly not formally. This survey also found that all the colleges saw advertising as a PR tool whilst only 20% saw an activity such as visiting a secondary school as PR. Thus, this survey raises questions about what PR educational institutions believe they are doing and suggested that PR is seen as being about ad-hoc events rather than a long term planned process. It is also seen as being a much smaller activity than it actually is, a point argued by business PR practitioners such as Milner (1995).

Certainly, Adams (1987) argues that schools tend to do more PR than they actually think they do as they do not recognize a lot of their everyday activity as being PR nor do they recognize the extent to which they do it. Adams, furthermore, equates PR with the general concept of 'communication' a term often used to imply that PR is only about sending messages. However, this does not identify many internal activities such as assemblies and staff meetings as being PR activities, probably because these are most often seen as 'academic' activities not involving parents.

It is certainly true that the educational literature reveals a major problem over the understanding of what PR is. Indeed Turner (1987) argues this to be the main problem affecting PR in a business context. Davies and Ellison (1991) argue this is also very true in an educational context with it being confused with associated but smaller concepts such as advertising, promotion, press relations and publicity as well as marketing, a concept seen as either larger or smaller than PR depending on each writer's point of view (see research among 300 American educational institutions by Kotler and Fox 1985).

A survey of 25 secondary school Heads in England and Wales (see Foskett 1996) showed that most saw PR as being the same as marketing whilst the rest linked it to either communication or image making or had no idea what it is. This resulted in Foskett referring to marketing and PR in schools as 'alien concepts' needing to be deconstructed if they are to be made more familiar and to be more closely embraced by practitioners unfamiliar with these concepts.

This finding is probably explained by PR being linked to transactional marketing, where the emphasis is on the selling and advertising of a product and service rather than relationship marketing, perhaps a more appropriate link for PR in schools, where the emphasis is on promoting not the product directly but relationships between the product's stakeholders. Certainly, Cannon (1991) argues that marketing and PR are seen in an educational context as linked more to images of selling and merchandising.

Barlow (1996) in an article on marketing strategies for international schools argued that everyone has heard of PR but few know what it actually means. Outside education, there is certainly evidence of it being seen as merely press relations with the Scout Association issuing 'PR' badges for a good press release about a charity function (see McMahon 1996). Educational practitioners such as Davies (1988) also display a very narrow understanding of PR, seeing it as being merely about giving out information. This narrow one-dimensional view of PR as merely an outward and externally oriented concept is a very common theme in other key literature such as Stott and Parr (1992).

A further point is made by Penn (1992) who suggested that some educationalists also confuse PR with the much narrower associated activity of publicity and thus practise PR as merely a cheap, cost effective promotional tool leading to its being done without sufficient expenditure. The issue of PR being seen as 'free publicity' or at least something to be done on the cheap is countered by business practitioners such as Penn (1992) who argues that PR does cost money and requires a reasonable budget.

Kotler and Fox (1985 p12), a widely quoted text on educational marketing, also offer a very narrow understanding of what PR is and can do in a school context. They also link PR with 'free publicity' and see it more as an outward-oriented activity. They offer a definition of PR that is much narrower but less ambiguous than the two definitions quoted above.

*'PR is the management function that evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or institution with the public interest and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance'.*

This sort of definition implies that PR is a process with a stated goal or set of goals. However little research has been made into the PR goals of schools.

Another common understanding is shown by Pardey (1991) who identifies PR as a tool for communicating in the external environment via free media coverage thus again equating PR to 'free publicity'. Pardey also sees PR as purely an external activity to be used only if there is an emergency. This is a common understanding of PR as 'crisis management'. Boden (1990) also refers to PR as being about schools having a plan in case of accidents such as during an outward bound activity week

A further common understanding is to identify PR as a smaller activity than marketing (see Evans (1995) or use the term 'PR' instead of publicity, commonly found in American literature (see Kotler (1991). British texts such as Lancaster and Messingham (1993) tend to use the term 'publicity' instead of PR. This is despite the fact that they have different aims and purposes whilst publicity is mainly an outward oriented activity aimed at external publics. It also raises the issue of PR being identified as being about selling. Indeed Evans (1995) identifies the primary aim of PR as being 'to sell the company' and enhance the appeal of the school, which links PR with being about mere image enhancement.



The debate about the relationship between marketing and PR also raises many other understandings. A key debate in a business context is over what the link is between PR and marketing and which of the two is the larger or more dominant. The debate over the relationship, which Jefkins (1995) argues even rages in an educational context, centres around the different models of relationship such as the 5 models drawn up by Kotler and Mindek (1978). They argue that PR is considered by some practitioners as more important than marketing whilst 'marketeers' would tend to argue that PR is a part of the bigger concept of marketing. Others argue that the two are of equal importance. A further debate is over whether PR or marketing comes first. For example, Tomlinson (1989) argues that marketing is often mistaken for PR which causes schools to start marketing from the wrong end. In this context, PR is neither an earlier nor bigger concept than marketing but is an integral part of the attempt to create a product relevant to consumer needs, the role of marketing. Thus, educationalists such as Tomlinson would see PR as being the same as promotion and so one of the 4 Ps. However, it is not known whether the persons practising PR in schools are actually 'marketeers' who see PR as a small dimension of marketing or whether they regard PR as an area of activity within its own right. Certainly, their understanding of what PR is must be a significant factor affecting practice.

The Kotler and Fox (1985) survey of 300 marketing officers in educational institutions identified that few really understood what either marketing or PR is nor how they are related. A further 61% saw marketing as a combination of selling, advertising and PR whilst 28% saw it as another name for PR. Hence, this survey also discovered that there is evidence of educationalists confusing PR with marketing or seeing it as a much smaller activity akin to selling or advertising. A contribution to unravelling this confusion came from Keen and Greenall (1987) in their handbook for FE and Higher Education institutions and which offers a conceptualization of PR and puts forward a clear and concise case for PR in an educational context. They note that although PR and marketing share similar goals and methods they pursue overall goals that are fundamentally different.

This point can clearly be identified by comparing the 1948 IPR definition of PR with the Institute of Marketing definition of marketing as *'the management function responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements at a profit'*.

Dibbs and Simkins (1994) argue this understanding takes the standard Drucker definition 'marketing makes selling superfluous...' further by stressing that the concept of marketing is concerned with profit making and revenue optimization. Success to the marketer is measured in terms of profitable sales and hence the only real 'public' that matters is the customer. Success to the PRP, however, is measured in terms of increasing the mutual understanding and respect between the organization and its many different publics including many who have nothing to do with sales. In practice, one would expect a Marketing Officer to be more concerned with the raising of funds and the goal of attracting more students and a PRP to be more concerned with several goals involving more publics than merely the direct consumer.

A further common understanding is to see marketing as a positive activity and PR as negative. For example, Harvey (1997) argues that many teachers see marketing as being about 'the predatory concept of competition' and that this is due to a misunderstanding whilst the attack ought really to be aimed at PR, defined as "the worst 10% of marketing activity". This raises the understanding of PR as being the most damaging portion of marketing activity and views marketing as being wrongly confused and tainted with the less positive activity of PR. It is not known how the views of teachers affects the practice of PR in schools.

A practical attempt to get around these understandings, within an educational context, comes from Devlin and Knight (1990) who advise schools to ignore the jargon and debates within the world of PR and marketing and concentrate simply on the British IPR definition of 1948. They stress that there is really no mystique around PR and that it is merely the way that the school relates to its many publics and is concerned with satisfying and discovering their needs.

Kent (1997) argued that schools could either bring in outside help or use handbooks that allow even an amateur to practise marketing. It is not known how much use is made of such publications nor of outside help. A criticism of handbooks is that they tend to make out that PR is a simple concept and that anyone can teach themselves to practise it. Even some PR experts argue this point (see Bland 1987) although other business PR experts argue it is actually a very complex concept and cannot be practised by self-taught amateurs (see Bell 1991). It is certainly agreed though that most people thinks that PR is more simple than it actually is.

A study of the main textbooks aimed at the marketing of both mainstream primary and secondary schools published since 1988 raises a number of other common understandings. For example, Stott and Parr (1992) link PR with ad-hoc events that entertain and invite the presence of parents. To this extent, even the giving of a cup of coffee to a guest in the school office would be identified as a PR activity. PR is not seen by Stott and Parr as a planned, continuous process nor as a means of increasing mutual understanding but is seen merely as a chain of events. However, no study has occurred in schools like the survey of 5 FE Colleges by the Further Education Unit (1985) or that by Kotler and Fox (1985) into what understanding of PR practitioners in educational institutions have, despite the fact that this understanding is likely to be a major influence on the nature and extent of the activity. More importantly, no study has been made into what has influenced this understanding such as the background and career path of the PRP.

Even key literature on the managing of schools offer this sort of understanding with Usher (1995) making no direct reference to PR but refers to 'communication', involving only outward oriented communication and thus more closely linked to promotion. There is thus much evidence of PR in an educational context being seen as something very simple with Dean (1993), for example, referring to PR as merely a process of external communication.

A notable exception within the literature is the ECIS (1987) document designed specifically for international schools, although it concerns itself merely with the concept of PR as a menu of activities. However, it does not address the many specific problems and barriers that these schools face in practising PR whilst it assumes that an activity that works in one school will work in another. International schools are probably more complex than such a document implies.

A further criticism of educational management textbooks comes from Sedgewick (1994) who argues they should concentrate on the more important task of learning and less on the side-issues of PR, marketing and finances, an attack that clearly fails to see PR as a key management activity and one that if done properly will lead to a better overall product including, ultimately, better learning.

Much literature ignores activities such as newsletters and PTAs as being valid PR activities and instead deals with associated promotional activities such as novelties and direct-mail. Pardey (1991) fails to mention the term PR whilst Evans (1995) contains chapters only on marketing. This is a key feature of literature written by marketers who tend to see PR as an inferior and smaller activity, useful merely for promoting a product which leads one to identify a sort of 'turf-war' between educational marketers and PR promoters. This is similar to the situation found in a business context.

Kotler and Fox (1985) underline the idea that it is easier to identify what PR is and is meant to do by looking at the tools used rather than trying to come up with an all encompassing definition which may or may not be representative of PR. They identify 7 key PR activities: brochures, flyers, videos, stationary, logos, press releases and advertising. However, much of this activity can be dismissed as merely either promotion or publicity whilst the list for any given school is clearly much more extensive. A typical international school, for example, could probably list at least 50 activities within their normal PR programme.

As no comprehensive survey has ever been done into what PR activities schools undergo in practice it is difficult to assess how vague Kotler and Fox's list is, although Macdonald and Swiniarski (1995) report that schools in Alberta have caught the 'PR bug' and give a list of 40 activities that schools there are doing .

Furthermore, the drawing up of a list of activities that might be considered to constitute PR activities reveals a much more complicated picture than implied by literature such as Devlin (1990) who divides PR activities into two: formal (areas that the school has control over and can change such as brochures) and informal, such as the grapevine. Barber (1990) goes further by introducing the concept of formal activities being 'front-line PR' and informal activities being 'back-up PR', things that the school does not have to do and are largely free as they involve largely word-of-mouth. Many of the activities done in a normal academic year by a typical international school are completely ignored by the literature which tends to focus on formal, 'front-line PR' and takes the view that this constitutes the majority of PR activity (French 1992 argues that 70% of normal PR activity is formal PR).

A large scale survey was done by the marketing agency 'Metafour' (see Doe 1995) of 60 schools and a similar study of ECIS member schools would make an interesting contrast to see if the problems mentioned by these schools are similar to the problems faced by international schools who have never been surveyed. Darbyshire (1995) argues that this survey proves that a lot of PR activity is going on in schools. However, the extent of this claim being true is not fully known. It can be argued that any survey into PR activity is never fully going to reveal the full picture but an investigation into the extent to which schools consider their activity to be a success and the factors affecting it would be useful.

A further tendency is to disregard PR as a management activity partly stemming from the misunderstanding over the link and difference between PR and marketing. To some educationalists, PR is merely the process of promoting the school following the completion of marketing which relegates PR to being an inferior and smaller activity and disregards its role in helping the school to provide a quality all-round educational product. This misunderstanding may account for the lack of reference to PR in many texts on school management and further explains why it is often relegated, a chapter on promotional activity and an activity not directly associated with the managing of a school nor as a continuous, planned process.

Lastly, a further criticism of educational literature on how to practise PR is that the attempt to draw up a 'menu' of activities for schools to practise is not very useful since each school is different and thus needs to approach PR in a different way. This is even more applicable to the hugely diverse grouping of international schools. Key PR practitioners such as Barber (1990) argue that recommendations made to schools in the literature cannot be too prescriptive since what will work in one school may not work in another. This applies not only to menu style handbooks on PR practice but any attempts to look into 'good practice' in schools. Thus, there is an argument that research into PR practice in schools ought to look more into HOW schools do PR rather than WHAT they do. To this extent, one can argue that a definition of PR might be that it is whatever practitioners do.

### **2.3) PR as an undervalued activity**

The narrow understanding of PR as 'free publicity' often leads to underfunding. Davies (1988) implies it can be done very cheaply and without much cost whilst Devlin (1990) produces evidence of schools doing this in practice. This clearly undermines the role of PR to schools yet, done properly and fully, PR can have many advantages for a school over and above the attracting of more students.

It can help to discover the current images and attitudes, an advantage much overlooked by literature, avert crises, resolve and minimize conflicts, minimize gossip and myths, build bridges between different publics, build respect and a good reputation for the school PRP and advise management on policy. In total, it can help to produce a quality educational product.

In a business context, PR is more often seen as being mainly about minimizing and averting crises. For example, Winner (1987) sees PR as allowing a company to identify future danger areas and thus offset them. It is not known to what extent schools see PR as a pro-active crisis averter or whether they see it as more reactionary means of managing crises as seen by Reader (1992) who refers to PR as Media Relations and a means of getting a message across to counteract bad news. This is a reactive activity aimed at crisis fixing. It is certainly not clear whether PR in international schools is used as a way of averting crises or merely something to be used once a crisis has occurred. This would depend upon the understanding of the PRP. Generally, the main goal of PR to a school is probably to attract more students. A study of other goals might identify other aims.

In fact, both Keen and Greenall (1987) and Devlin and Knight (1990) highlight a total of 7 key PR goals for any school but it is not known how these equate to schools in practice nor whether they prioritize them in the same way with the main goal of making the school better known. Although these two lists are very different, Keen and Greenall stressing the goal of influencing local decision making and maintaining good relations with the local community, and Devlin and Knight stress the goal of influencing local political decision making as areas of importance to international schools. No investigation has been done into how or to what extent these schools foster good relations with the local communities. Moreover, no investigation has been made into what the precise PR goals are in schools nor has any attempt been made to analyze how they might differ over time.

The growing popularity of the IB and the fact that many schools seem to be moving away from 'A' levels (see Targett 1999 and O'Leary 1999) may have contributed to the fact that most ECIS schools appear at the moment to be fully subscribed (Rosengren 1999 and Schaecher 1999 both comment that ECIS member schools at present are thriving although the reason is not known ) so one would expect the goal of attracting students to be less of a goal than it was say in 1994 when independent schools were in recession and many were closing down (see O'Leary 1994) , whereas the literature assumes that the goals are static and not open to change in terms of listing nor ranking.

This issue is raised by Dore (1992) who argues that some schools need more PR than others and that, in practice, only the under-subscribed need to bother whilst the over-subscribed are under less pressure to compete and thus can co-operate more. However, it is not known if this is the case in practice although a survey of international schools at the moment should reveal the validity of the claim since nearly all are over-subscribed.

Dore (1992) raises the issue that with many schools it is more a case of the school choosing the consumer and that the main goal ought to be the communication of information to and from present consumers rather than potential consumers where the main emphasis of present practice and literature is laid. Thus, Dore would argue that the term 'school choice' would be better than 'parental choice'. It is not known to what extent schools do this nor how. This situation is obviously going to be more the case with schools that are over-subscribed hence a survey of PR activity among international schools at the moment is likely to find that little pro-active PR aimed at the consumer is occurring since nearly all these schools are full at the moment. Thus, literature intended for use in attracting more students may not be very relevant at the moment for many schools as the goal of attracting more students is now likely to be less of a goal.



There is evidence that in practice schools neglect the very useful aspect of PR allowing a school to garner information on views and attitudes and thus be able to identify trends and dangers. The survey by Pike (1991) for example, revealed that none of the 12 schools in his study undertook any form of market research whilst the larger Marketing Direct (1997) study revealed that 50% of schools admit to doing some research into views but it did not reveal to what extent. It is not fully clear, though, to what extent the area of data collection and use of surveys and questionnaires is neglected by schools. Furthermore, business practitioners such as Dudley (1975) argues that the main advantage of PR is that it can discover the climate and subsequently advise management on changes needed to the image and what policies were needed, an area that Lloyd (1984) argues to be much overlooked in a business context. Both Black (1972) and Jefkins (1986) also stress the usefulness of PR in analyzing trends. However, it is not known to what extent schools use PR in this manner: as a management tool for discovering what policies are needed to improve the quality of the product and as a tool for increasing mutual understanding. It is also not known to what extent schools use PR through surveys and data collection as a means of observing and monitoring the organization's image. This is argued to be the key goal of PR by Jefkins (1988) rather than merely being seen as a tool for altering the perceived image or projecting a favourable image, a goal stressed by Arkin (1992). At the same time, Reeves and Capel (1989) in their early article on PR practice in a primary school argued that the goal of PR is to present and control an image rather than be controlled by the image .

For international schools, in particular, the nature of their diversity makes effective PR activity a necessity for survival because of the following factors: the large annual turn-over of both students and staff giving rise to the concept of the 'global nomad' and Third Culture Kid (THK) (see Schaetti 1998 and Harding 1998); the highly competitive environment amongst the schools especially in areas such as London and Brussels; the constant need to build up a strong sense of community spirit among different nationalities and cultures; and through the isolation of the schools from the local community.

A further key problem is the lack of catchment area or feeder schools, which makes marketing strategies suggested by Beischer (1994 ) who draws up a month-by-month admissions plan focusing on feeder schools invalid and meaningless for international schools who tend to depend upon word-of-mouth reputation and image.

Another argument found in the literature is the 'fighting back' idea put forward by educationalists who feel that schools ought to be more pro-active and ought to publicize their strengths more. The origins of this view go back to the late 1980s and gained momentum in the early 1990s with Forster (1993) arguing the case for schools to have a press strategy so as to get good news in the local paper on a regular basis and Moran (1989) had earlier argued that PR was a means of promoting the good characteristics of schools and could help schools to pursue the 'agenda for national recovery of confidence of schools'. Devlin (1989) also argued the case for PR to concentrate on the trumpeting of a school's virtues which if done properly could lead to a 'fight back'. It is not known to what extent schools use the press nor what they publicize. It is certainly not clear if they use PR activities such as press relations to trumpet their virtues or merely to counterattack crises.

Furthermore, Moran (1989) argues that education is becoming a scapegoat for society's problems and that PR, done properly, offers a schools an opportunity to fight back by creating a greater understanding of what they do and why. Foskett (1992) also claims that PR can allow schools to get back into the driving seat whilst Davies (1988) argues that PR allows schools to trumpet their successes and tell people of what they do and how they do it. This particular view of the importance of PR to schools highlights the role of PR as a vital pro-active process of communication and information that has at stake the long term survival of many schools in an increasingly competitive and hostile environment.

A further idea is the 'good relations' concept as put forward by Arkin (1992): PR aims to foster good relations between schools by allowing them to promote and discover through research their particular strengths and thus promote their 'Unique Selling Points' which, in theory, will reduce the perception of competition. However, even an aggressive promoting of a school's strengths could be perceived by another school as a threat and a negative aspect of PR.

A key indicator of how important a school regards PR is the budget allocated although this is also an indicator of understanding as PR can be misunderstood as 'free publicity'. The Metafour study found that schools spend an average of £2,500 with a maximum of only £4000 and only 75% have an actual budget for PR and marketing activity. Darbyshire (1995) felt this showed that schools do not regard PR and marketing seriously enough and that the budget ought to be much higher than found by the Metafour study. The explanation for the small budget may be more due to misunderstandings over what PR is, especially if it is seen as free publicity.

## **2.4) PR and its practitioners**

PR tends to be practised by people who are untrained and unqualified. Perhaps this is due to the fact that there are few degree courses recognized by the IPR in the UK and it is very difficult for students to get on these courses (see Elrick 1996). Jenkins (1988) is very critical of the way practitioners learn on the job and argues that PR is the 'most untrained profession'. French (1992) believes that PR in schools is usually done by 'untrained amateurs' but the validity of this claim is not known. Watts (1977) argues that the PRP quite often has very little idea of what PR is and is meant to do whilst there is little idea of how it differs from other associated concepts.

There is some evidence of this in education in England and Wales following fast growth after the 1988 Education Reform Act when articles started to appear about schools appointing full time PR officers and Heads started to call for more training. Castle (1991) reported that Heads were pressing for PR training and skills and White (1998) calling for the mentoring system set up by the government to be extended. It is not fully clear who is doing PR in schools nor what training they have had or need nor what experience or qualifications they hold nor what knowledge they have of the concept of PR .

Foskett (1992) and Bellinger (1986) also argue that there is a lack of expertise in the field of school PR whilst Weindling and Earley (1987) found that PR was an area that few Heads felt equipped for. What has not been investigated fully though is what particular areas PRPs in schools are least equipped to handle or what areas they have the less expertise in, although Foskett (1992) argues that the 1988 ERA forced Heads to focus on finances rather than marketing and it is areas around finances such as fundraising where there is a particular lack of expertise. Ballinger (1986) also identified this whilst Keen and Greenall (1987) thought that finding funds to finance marketing was a hurdle and offered ways to solve it. The study by Weindling and Earley (1987) did find that the Heads found only one area of PR a problem, the area of 'creating a better public image of the school'.

Certainly, the Leverhulme Trust (1990) survey revealed that only 2% of primary schools had a PRP and Castle (1991) reported that at least 25 LEAs knew of PR Officers in their schools whilst in Bradford all schools had a press officer. Despite the fact that in maintained schools the Head is more often than not the PRP, little research has been done into how they manage the job with Weindling and Earley (1989) providing the biggest survey which revealed 5 key areas of concern .

A further interesting point relates to the gender of the PRP in schools. The ECIS Statistical Survey of international schools in 1997 (see Thearle 1999) revealed that 80% of Heads were male as were the vast majority of senior management although the majority of teaching staff in these schools are female. A similar study by Rees (1992) showed this to be the situation in international schools in Asia where 75% of the teachers are female but few management positions were held by these women.

Thus, any literature that assumes the PRP is the Head can also assume that this person is male. Also, a particular effort needs to be made to include female administrators in any research into PR activity. At the same time, research has to involve schools where the Head is not the PRP as this would exclude many women. No attempt has been made to look into the gender of the PRP in schools. One can expect the gender of the PRP to be an important factor affecting the nature and extent of PR activity given that women are likely to have had a different career path and have a management style different from men. This also raises the issue that if the PRP is female, they may be operating within a male dominated management culture which may affect their practice. Certainly, it is not clear if the assumption made by literature that the PRP is necessarily male is valid. Furthermore, the gender of the PRP may have an influence on the job-description. Hence there is a need to analyze the nature of job-descriptions.

Research into the life history of administrators in international schools is also significant. Thearle (1999), in a survey of 41 female senior administrators, found that only 13 admitted to their careers being planned whilst a further 25 said it had been largely opportunistic. Thus, any research among PRPs ought to include persons who have pursued a variety of career paths. A further significant finding by Thearle (1999) is that the majority of female administrators have been in the job for longer than the average educator in an international school.

In 1991 there was much debate and controversy surrounding the decision by a secondary school in Basildon to employ the Chair of Governors as a marketing and publicity officer (see Lowling 1991). This highly paid job was criticized as a gamble and unnecessary expenditure although the person appointed was a qualified press officer. The same year saw another much criticized move, the appointment by a London primary school of a marketing officer from Heinz on a 6 month payment by results contract. Although it is clear that some schools started to experiment with the position of a PRP in 1991 after the Heads of schools felt they were not qualified nor trained to do the job it is not clear how widespread this move was nor how long these positions were held for.

A further trend has been for schools to employ a Head with previous marketing skills with Dean (1997) reporting that the Head of Britain's first purpose built GM school had worked in marketing until going in to teaching. Keen and Greenall (1987) stress that the PR Officer can operate under a plethora of different banners (they mention 5) and can differ according to the culture and organization. However, each person can be expected to deal with what Keen and Greenall would refer to as 'PR in the round'.

Black (1972) argues that all employees are in fact responsible for PR whilst Kotler and Fox (1985) make the point that no one person in a school can be expected to conduct all the PR. These views raise the point that all persons in a school have contact with publics and thus all persons, whether teaching staff or secretarial staff, practise PR to one degree or another. Furthermore, Barlow (1996) argues that not only have few international schools have a marketing or PR specialist. The validity of such claims is not fully known.

## **2.5) PR as a discredited activity**

PR has become discredited and disliked to the extent that many business organizations are now reluctant to use the term and instead use other associated terms such as 'public affairs' or 'community relations'. In education, the concept of 'external relations' gained momentum in the early 1990s.

There is evidence that the PR industry feels it is losing respect (see Mitchell 1997). Furthermore, Jefkins (1994) argues that we live in a world hostile to PR and links this concern to the practice of 'PR cowboys'. However, it is not clear if this applies to schools nor what has caused Harrison (1991) to argue that the idea of employing PR techniques was an anathema to many schools.

Concern has been shown by educationalists towards school PR and marketing. For example, Tyther (1992) attacks PR in schools as being done for all the wrong reasons and is aimed more as a tool for selling rather than improving the product whilst the National Consumer Council produced a poster 'Sponsorship in Schools' including a checklist on whether sponsorship and marketing were of value (see TES 1996).

However, an alternative view has also started to emerge with Harvey and Busher (1996) agreeing that the concept of marketing is regarded with suspicion by many in education due to its commercial implications and the way that companies are using it to market their brands but they also argue that if understood and done properly it can be beneficial to a school. Prestige (1997) argues that school links with business and commerce via the schemes mentioned above are good for schools and provide much needed resources. It may be that the concept of PR being discredited and disliked by schools is an over-exaggerated assumption with evidence that some educationalists are unhappy with the current situation but are prepared to accept that PR per se is not bad.

Certainly, educationalists were becoming concerned about marketing and PR activity even in the late 1980s. For example, the NAHT (see Blackburne 1990) published a 6 point Code of Conduct for its members and threatened to expel any Head who practised the worst excesses of PR and marketing which showed that the 1988 ERA had led some educationalists to worry about the growing competition and use of gimmicks and stunts highlighted above. At the same time, schools on the Wirral had drawn up a Code of Conduct (Castle 1991).

## **2.6) Areas of PR activity needing further investigation**

It can be seen that little is known about the nature and extent of PR activity in schools. It is not known to what extent it is practised as a long term planned sustained process of two-way communication between all the many publics that a school is concerned with, as specified in the 1948 definition. There is evidence, for example Green(1993), that PR is seen as merely about fund-raising but it is not known if this is true. This is because few accounts exist of what schools are actually doing or have done in the past. The first such case-study by Tilling and Walker (1988) is now over 10 years old and may or may not describe the norm at present. There has been several large scale surveys such as the one by the marketing agency 'Marketing Direct' (see Revell 1997) and the earlier similar sized survey by The Leverhulme Trust (see TES 1990).

The studies that have occurred have involved only a handful of schools such as that by James and Phillips (1995) who surveyed 11 schools in both the maintained and independent sectors. A further key weakness is the way that much of this research has involved the random sampling of schools, an issue that needs to be addressed by future research especially any research involving a very diverse body of schools such as international schools.

In particular, little is known of how schools are using new technology such as the internet for PR purposes although Wiltshire (1998) reports that at least 80% of all international schools now have a Web-Site. Matthews (1999) reports that web-sites are being developed at low cost by junior persons and are failing to be updated or managed and are not used for receiving information. However, it is not known to what extent these criticisms are valid. The only PR tool that has been covered much by research is the school brochure, seen by Devlin and Knight (1990) as one done by all schools and hence the most important.



Little is known about how schools use particular tools. No detailed survey has taken place into the use of advertisements by schools even though the Metafour study found that schools advertise, on average, 6 times per year. No survey has looked into the use of school newsletters despite the Metafour study finding that only 5% of schools consider this to be their most effective tool. Modern PR tools such as the promotional video, an important tool for international schools, have also never been investigated regarding either its use nor content.

Foskett (1992) in outlining his detailed programme for ER, made the first stage a detailed survey of internal and external views and needs, an area examined in detail also by Davies and Scribbins (1985). It is not clear to what extent schools regard the views and attitudes of publics as important nor to what extent they collect this sort of data. It is especially unclear as to what extent schools collect data on 'first impressions' and the views of visitors despite the fact that research by Shattock and Walker (1977), Keen and Higgins (1990) and Handford (1990) clearly showed how important the school environment is to a visiting parent and how much it contributes to first impressions.

A further dimension to the importance of market research to schools comes from Winner (1987) who sees PR as being about communicating answers to the needs of the publics after these needs have been discovered through research and survey. Thus, data collection is an essential and integral part of any PR programme and needs to be included in any survey.

It is also not known how much importance is attached to PR by schools despite it being identified by educationalists such as Calvert (1994) as a vital activity that ALL schools do and have to do as all schools have contact with publics. Certainly, literature into 'Parental Choice' such as Dennison (1991) and Elliott (1984) clearly shows that PR ought to be taken more seriously by schools intending to increase their student roll and should also be aimed much more at the students themselves.

Other publics are rarely mentioned by literature and very little is known of how schools involve the many other publics that they have contact with. In terms of international schools, no research has been carried out into so called 'Parental Choice' and little is known of how and why consumers choose such a school. Therefore, it is difficult for any PR practitioner in an international school to undertake 'effective' PR in an effort to attract more students. Connected to this, no research has been done into the extent to which schools see other schools as competitors or, indeed, how they aim to compete.

Meakin's (1995 p5) guide about language and culture and the problems facing ESL parents and students moving to a new international school concluded that these schools *'need an informed and consistent set of systems for keeping open the communication between the school and parents, so that the causes of misunderstanding and confusion are removed'*. Thus, schools ought to use existing national community links to offer support to new families and to help advise on and explain local difficulties that may arise. It is not known how and to what extent international schools make use of community links nor what systems and mechanisms link consumers from non-English speaking countries. Moreover, it is not known what mechanism schools have in place to offer support to the PRP nor what degree of delegation occurs in international schools by the PRP. To what degree does the PRP act in isolation? No attempt has been made to examine what links and relations international schools have with the local host country community. In particular, how isolated international schools are within the local community.

Most literature and research into PR practice is concerned with large secondary schools. International schools, in contrast, not only tend to have both primary and secondary departments but also tend to be very small. Evidence that these small schools have been neglected in terms of research, literature and even training conferences is the call by Harding (1998), Head of a small school, for more attention to be given to the problems facing small schools who make up 62% of all schools across the world.

Thus, there is clearly a need to focus attention more on small schools and the specific problems that they face. Furthermore, no survey has looked into the practical issue of what support and training could be given to the PRP in schools and no survey has looked into the extent to which PRPs in schools learn 'on the job' as many do in business according to Jefkins (1989).

It is also not clear what sort or degree of outside help is given to schools. Barber (1990) argued the case for hiring professional consultants and Conkey (1999) recently advised international schools to bring in outside PR experts but it is not known what help schools are given. The Brentford and Chiswick Times (1996) reported that a struggling secondary school had called in a PR firm to help improve its profile but the Marketing Direct (1995) survey found that few schools used any external help. Jackson (1994), in his review of literature, identified 1990 as the year that articles first began to appear on PR in schools and highlights a call by Devlin and Miller (1990) for the setting up of a national centre for PR in schools, a call still to be met. Thus, it is still not clear how much help the PRP gets either in school or through the visiting of outside training agencies.

A further area unknown is to what extent the PRP in a school feels important and respected although Keen and Greenall (1987) put forward the argument that there is often an imperfect understanding of the true potential of the PRP who is often very much an undervalued resource for a school. Also, since PR and marketing in an educational context suffers from a growing feeling of dislike and disrespect the PRP in a school may feel threatened and disliked; it is unknown if this is true in practice or how it affects their motivation and confidence.

It is also not clear what sort of organizational structure PRPs operate within. Devlin (1989) advises schools to establish a PR committee made up of pupils, parents and teachers but it is not known if schools have such a structure nor if the PRP operates totally in isolation.

In particular, the concept of shared marketing , the last stage of the 8 stage PR model put forward by Devlin and Knight (1990) , is an area much overlooked by literature which tends to assume that schools carry out PR and marketing in isolation and without contact with other schools or contact between PRPs. However, some schools do operate within a consortia structure such as the loose 17 member London International Schools Association consortia.

It is also not fully known who the PRP in schools actually is although the survey by Pike (1991) revealed that in 11 of the 12 schools surveyed, the Head was the PRP. In international schools one could expect to find a much more complicated picture thus making much of the literature aimed at mainstream schools invalid in terms of these schools. It is not even clear if each school has a person who can be identified as the PRP despite the Marketing Direction survey concluding that PR was a specialist activity requiring a specialist person and Dean (1993) calling for PR to be done in schools by a specialist person .

Research by Metafour (see Doe 1995) showed that 80% of secondary schools believe that their PR activity is not effective or successful due to lack of funds, time and experience. Lack of training or qualifications was not mentioned. It is certainly not known how schools evaluate their performance in terms of PR practice nor what data and information they collect. In a business context, this is becoming a much more important and specialized activity (see Arnold 1999) with companies specializing in the evaluating of PR performance being set up.

Barlow (1996) argues that few international schools have marketing strategies and plans. It is not known to what extent schools conduct PR as advised by Devlin (1989) in Sayer and Williams (1989) with a planned 8 stage PR model nor whether schools follow the advice of Black (1972) and Jefkins (1986) of having a clear strategy and plan.

It is also not known to what extent schools indeed have a marketing plan nor to what extent it is a continuous process or merely a process to be instigated when the student roll is poor despite calls from Davies (1995) for PR to have more of a strategy and plan. An investigation into this aspect of PR would reveal the extent to which PR was being practised as a continuous, planned process as stressed by the British IPR definition of PR from 1948.

It is certainly not known to what extent, if at all, schools practise PR using a method or system whilst Derbyshire (1995) points out that money spent on PR without a robust marketing plan is wasted and dangerous whilst Davies (1995) talks of the need for a school to have a marketing strategy if it is to be effective. However, the Leverhulme Trust (1990) survey revealed that only 50% of maintained schools have a marketing plan although it is not clear how detailed or planned these plans actually are.

No investigation has been made into how much money schools are prepared or are allowed to spend on PR. If PR is being practiced in schools as defined by Pardey, one can assume that schools are spending very little on PR and may indeed have no budget at all.

## **2.7) Summary**

There are 4 key possible factors affecting the nature and extent of PR activity identifiable in the literature but these are yet to be fully tested by research or case study: the differing understandings over what PR is and how it differs from other smaller yet associated concepts; the feeling of distrust and hostility towards PR by educationalists; the lack of awareness of PR as a management tool with much to offer schools and a means of helping to provide a quality educational product; and the varying level of competence and training of practitioners.

However, there are likely to be many other, more specific, factors that affect the nature and extent of activity in international schools not fully explored by literature nor research such as the size and location of the school, organizational culture, national cultures, budget, perceived competition, the view that the child has much 'pester power', the history and development of the school, the micro-politics of the school, the management structure plus the gender, qualifications, job description, training, experience and career path of the PRP .

The Metafour study showed that schools seem to believe they are doing much PR. However, few coherent or extensive studies have ever been made into what they are doing in practice nor what factors determine and explain it nor why some schools feel that they are doing it better than others. It is very unclear, for example, to what extent the practitioner is to blame although we should expect their level of training, competence and confidence to be a major influence in determining the nature and extent of their activity.

There is clearly a need to discover not only what sort of PR is being practised by international schools but also to what extent and how the aforementioned factors affect the nature and extent of this activity. More to the point, though, there is a need to go beyond merely providing an account of the current state of play and to offer an insight into how improvements could be made to current practice whilst an emphasis is needed on mechanisms and systems rather than merely examining activities and use of tools. It is necessary to look into how and why schools practise PR as well as what they do.

As Foskett (1992) notes, little attention as yet appears to have been made to the need for proper planning of PR whilst few specific models of PR planning exist and none specifically relate to schools. An attempt needs to be made to address this gap. Educationalists such as Williams (1989) are very critical of PR as being practised by schools, seeing it as a one-way process of communication offering nothing more than distortions, misunderstanding and misinterpretation and argue that most material sent out to parents is negative.

Furthermore, it is argued that the school ought to have a more detailed PR strategy aimed at building a network for feedback whilst the evaluation stage of the PR model is seen as the most badly done stage although this is not known to be true. Moran (1989) argued immediately after the 1988 ERA that many schools did much PR but it tended to be in an adhoc and improvised manner whilst arguing that few schools have fully thought out a developed PR programme to the point where it could bear public scrutiny. Moran goes on to argue that PR in schools needs a much more professional approach especially as it is a key management activity and that 'schools are about not only managing information to children but about managing communication in, to, and from the school as an organization'. Lastly, there are claims (see Devlin 1990) that PR in schools wastes much money, time and resources which in itself raises serious management issues. However, it is not known how valid these criticisms of PR in schools are nor what factors might cause these claims to be valid.

It can be seen that there is much that we do not know about concerning PR practice in schools. This is especially the case with international schools, a grouping of schools that is growing in importance but little understood. Hence, the next chapter attempts to explain more fully what an international school is and does, and how it might be further categorized as a distinct class of institution.

### **3) Models and perspectives on understanding international schools as organizations**

Chapter 2 showed that there is much that we do not know about the nature of PR activity in schools, in general. However, more specifically, there is also a lot that we do not know about the nature of international schools. Attempts have been made to identify and categorize this grouping of schools and this chapter aims to build upon these attempts. This is important if we are to attempt to more fully understand the degree to which international schools can be identified and categorized as a distinct class of institution.

#### **3.1) Categorizing international schools**

There are several ways of recognizing whether a school is indeed an 'international' school. One that has been commented upon is the informal nature of international schools. Matthews (1998) identified international schools as having a shared set of informal values whilst Hayden and Thompson (1995) suggest the key difference between international schools and other schools is their informal nature. Gellar (1981) and Burleigh (1994) both argued that international schools provide an informal, friendly, close knit community. This characteristic of international schools as being a 'pseudo-family' is seen as an important feature but is difficult to assess in a formal way and no attempt has been made to conceptualize the causes or nature of this 'informal' criteria. Other more tangible indicators that are suggested as criteria include the curriculum, organizational style, management approaches and the school governance make-up. All of these would lead to an identifying of the level of 'diversity' of a school. Findlay (1999) suggests that the best way to recognize an international school is by identifying the founding group, as it is they that establish the school in the way that meets their needs. Thus, the key to the diversity is the framework of establishment: hence the origins and history of development must also be considered when drawing up a representative sample of schools.



A further means of identifying schools within this 'common conglomeration' is to take the consideration by Hill (1994) and then Matthews (1989) that international schools essentially form two groups based upon their level of 'ideology';

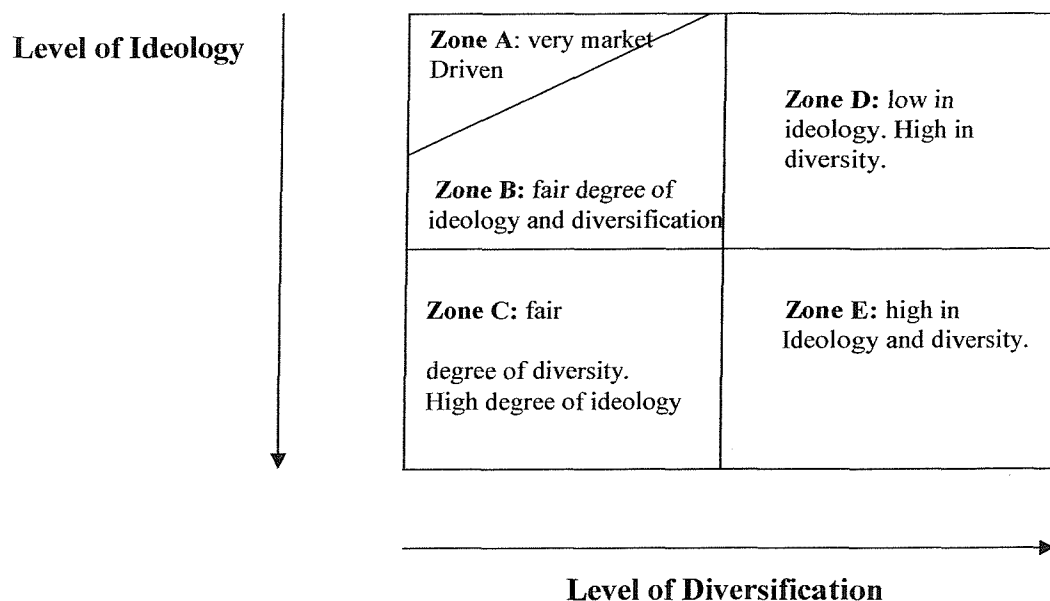
1) Market-driven schools: These are schools offering a national educational system away from the home environment aimed at a particular grouping of students, for example, the French Lycee and Japanese Schools or the four Dutch schools in the UK. These schools are market driven in having been set up to meet the needs of a particular market. They offer the home curriculum to an 'ex-pat' community. They were set up to meet a basic need of the market at a certain time.

2) Ideology-driven schools: These are schools with no particular national allegiance offering an international education drawing on the best of all offered. They have a body of students of different nationalities who are often not of the host country nationality and may not necessarily be English speaking. These schools have a high ideological component in the sense that they often have an aim to 'bring differing nationalities together as a world family' or in the words of Matthews (1989 p3) they are founded for the *'express purpose of furthering international understanding and co-operation'*. They do not cater for merely one nationality and aim more for the educating and creating of a 'global citizen'. They are much less market driven although some are profit driven. Extreme examples here would be the 10 United World College schools whilst the American oriented schools, although market -driven to a greater degree, would also fit in to this grouping proving that the dichotomy between 'ideology driven' and 'market driven' constitutes more of a spectrum than a clear distinction with schools having a degree of both values rather than a clear split, a point also argued by Waterson and Hayden (1999).

### 3.2) The ID Matrix

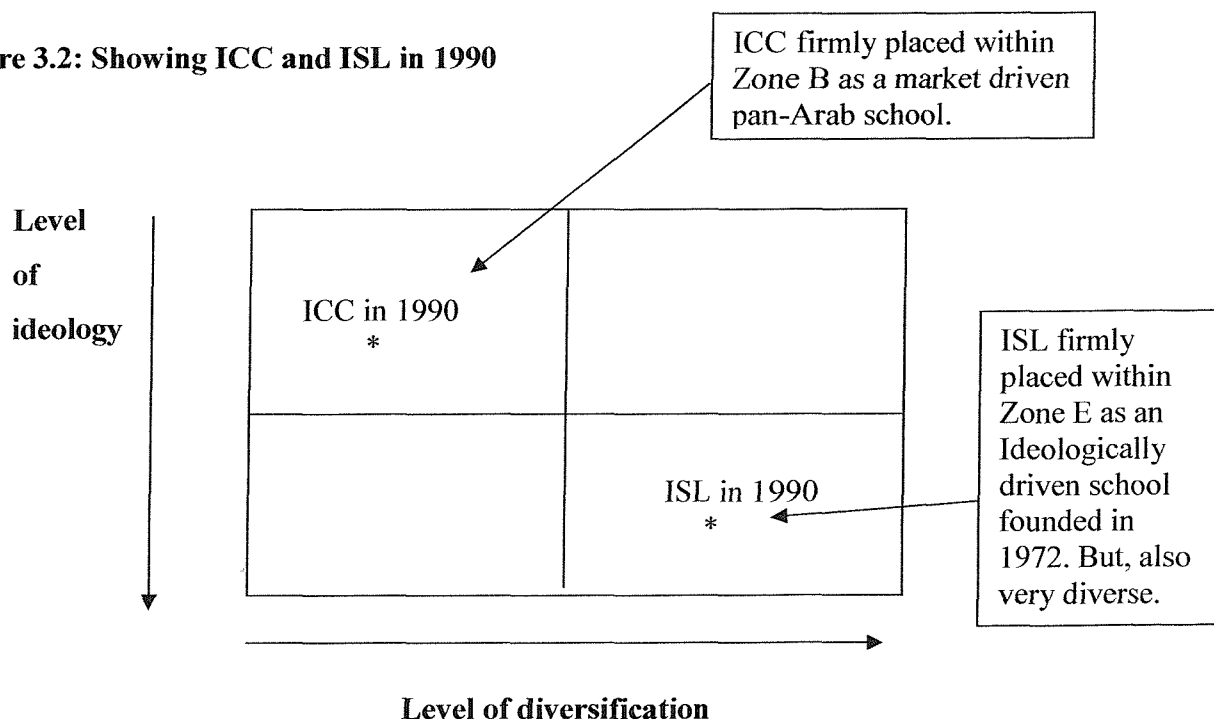
Using the 'diversity' categories such as the staff and student body, and the two 'ideology' categories from Matthews (1989) one can create a model. International schools generally fall into 5 categories depending upon their level of 'diversification' and 'ideology'. Building on the assertion by Cambridge and Thompson (1999) that it is possible to identify clusters of schools whose relationship to each other can be shown in a multidimensional matrix whose dimensions comprise the diversity of teaching staff, student body and curriculum, a model for categorizing international schools can be drawn up. See Figure 3.1 below;

**Figure 3.1: Introducing the ID Matrix**



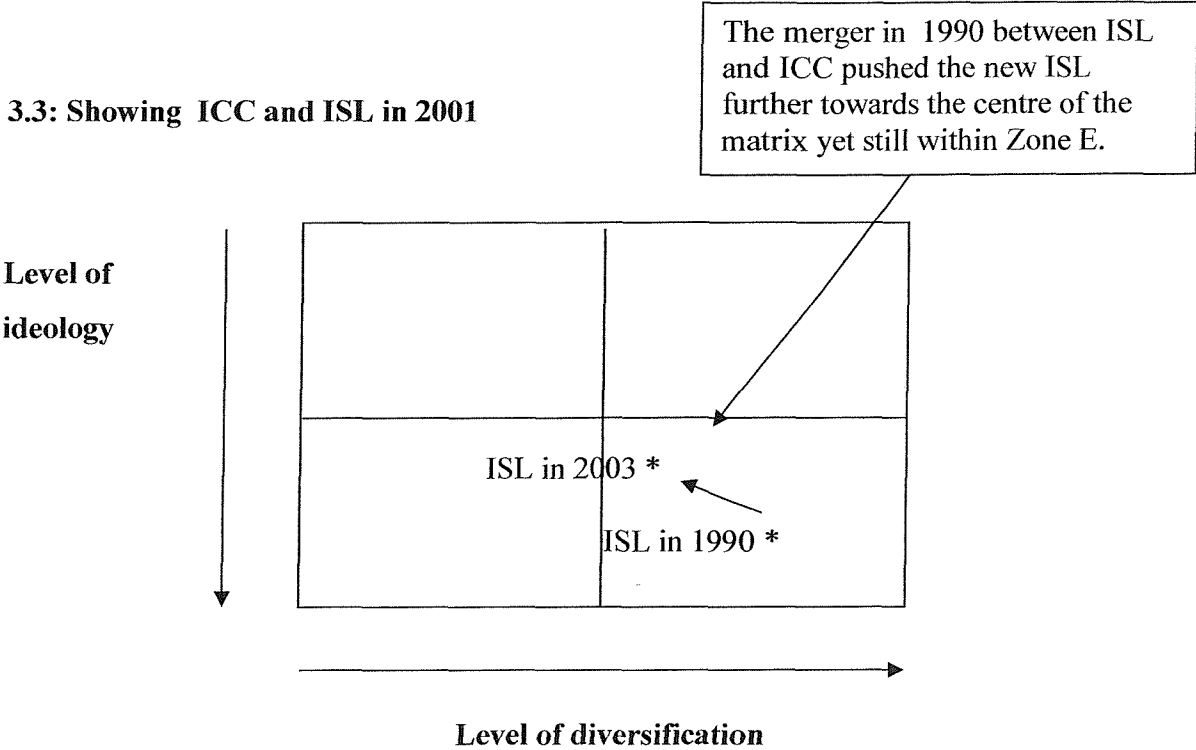
As an example, ISLondon was founded in 1972 to create a school with a general international body and an international curriculum and was the first UK school to offer the IB. It was not set up to meet the needs of a particular market but instead intended to create its own market, a key feature of an ideologically driven rather than a market driven school. It also had a large number of different nationalities amongst its pupils and did not belong to any parent body nor was it modeled on any other particular school. Instead it joined the loose body of ECIS schools and thus it also had a high level of 'diversification'. In 1990 ISL merged with ICC, a school established by ex-pat Lebanese nationals in 1987 in order specifically to serve the Arab community in London. This was clearly very much a 'market driven' school although it offered a British curriculum to Arab students and thus was still an 'international' school in the Findlay (1999) sense rather than being a 'national' school like the London French Lycee. It was also founded as a sister organization of the large ICC school in Beirut and thus had a lower level of 'diversity' than the ISL school. This clearly places ISL in 1990 in Zone E and ICC in Zone B. This is shown below in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2: Showing ICC and ISL in 1990**



The modern day ISL is a different type of school, and this suggests that schools can move within the matrix depending upon circumstances and marketing strategy. ISL has a high level of 'ideology' with an ethos that aims to 'serve the international community in London' whilst creating a 'global citizen' and is thus much less market-driven than the old ICC although it is perhaps less ideology-driven than the old ISL. It has a large range of different nationalities although the Japanese community make up a large proportion of the student body: hence it is much more 'diversified' than the old ICC but less so than the old ISL which had a larger number of smaller national groupings. It also now has a 'mixed' national/ international curriculum consisting of GCSE and IB. It can be seen that ISL has shifted within the matrix and found a new position identified by its links with other schools, its ethos, its curriculum, its student body and its staff in terms of nationality and native language. It is still in Zone E but has shifted towards the centre as shown below in Figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3: Showing ICC and ISL in 2001**



### **3.3) The 18 Domain Model**

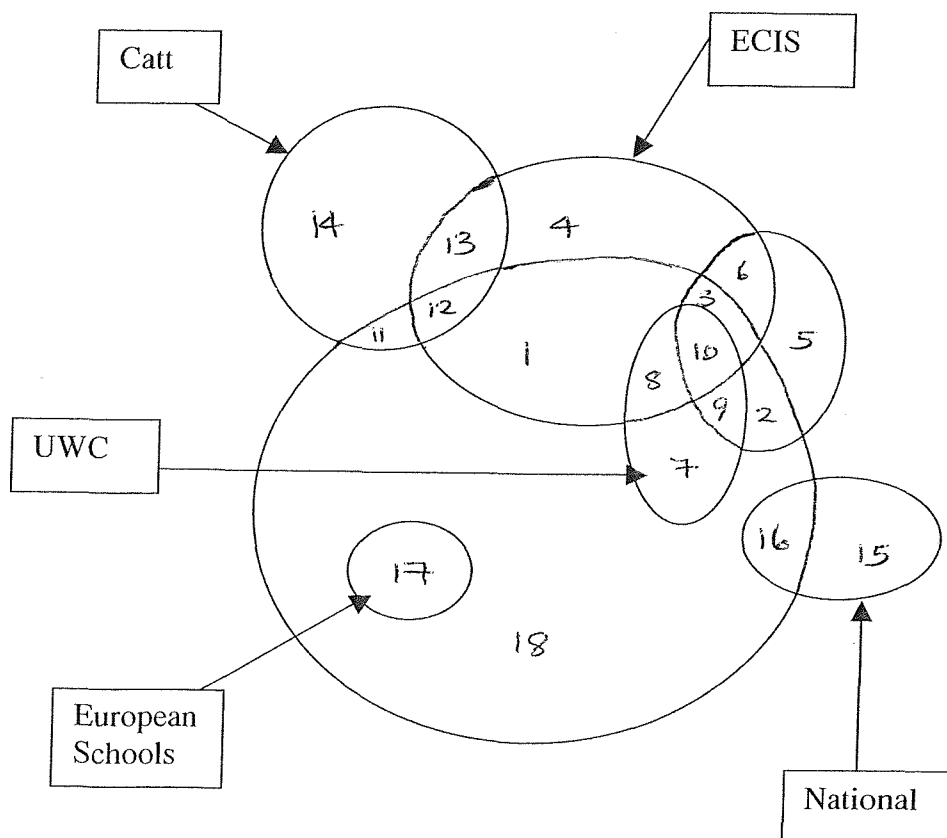
The ID Matrix can be linked to the latest attempt to provide a conceptual framework for categorizing international schools developed by Cambridge and Thompson (2000) of Bath University. Cambridge and Thompson categorize the schools according to the directory that they advertise in and hence identify schools as either 'ECIS ' or 'Catt' or 'ISS' schools, the three most used educational directories. They see 18 types of international schools, 12 of them being 'schools in an educational context' (Domain 18: refer to Figure 4). A further 6 types are classified as 'encapsulated representatives of a particular culture' schools. This would include schools such as the French Lycee grouping. Some schools such as the UWC schools are seen as lying totally within Domain 18 and linked to the ECIS circle since some are members.

This model is useful for conceptualizing the complexity of the international school 'conglomerate' and highlights the inter-connected nature of many schools whilst highlighting the fact that many schools operate in complete isolation. It also accepts that some national state funded schools can be categorized as international schools (Domain 15).

Although this model is a useful attempt to classify international schools it makes no effort to show the relative sizes of each domain which would allow considerations to be made for the drawing up of a representative sample within each domain. This model can be linked to the 'Ideology-Diversification Matrix' which allows the 18 domains to be more closely linked to the groupings of schools identified by the matrix and allows consideration to be made towards the size and importance of each domain, useful for sampling purposes.

The 'Catt' and 'ISS' Directory zones can be replaced with Regional Association zones so that the 'ISS' directory schools become schools that largely belong to other Regional Associations as well as ECIS. The 'Catt' zone become schools that belong to Regional Associations other than ECIS. For conceptual purposes these 18 Domains are best divided into 12 groupings as shown in Figures 3.4 and 3.5 below. It can be seen that ISLondon, for example, would be placed in Domains 4,5 and 18 as indeed would the majority of all international schools. Hence, any research among international schools ought to contain a large sample of schools from within these three domains.

**Figure 3.4: Introducing the 18 Domain Model**



**Figure 3.5: Linking the 18 Domain Model to the ID Matrix**

<b>Domains as conceived by Cambridge and Thompson (2000)</b>	<b>Domains as incorporated within the ID Matrix</b>
Domains 15 and 16	Regular state schools are in Domain 16 (Zone A). Some state schools may be similar to Zone C schools in Domain 13 but were not included in this research.
Domain 10	These are Zone C schools that are members of ECIS and other Regional Associations.
Domain 7	These are Zone C schools that are not members of any RA.
Domain 9	These are Zone C schools that are members of ECIS but belong to other Regional Associations.
Domain 17	These are non-ECIS member schools in Zone C but not members of any other RA.
Domain 18	These are schools that do not belong to a RA nor a parent body.
Domains 4, 6 and 18	These are member schools of ECIS.
Domain 13	These are ECIS member schools in Zone B who also belong to other RA s.
Domains 5 and 14	These are non-ECIS member Zone B schools.
Domains 2,9 and 11	These are non-ECIS member Zone D and E schools.
Domains 3 and 12	These are ECIS member schools in Zone D and E who also belong to other RA s.
Domain 8	These are ECIS member schools in Zone C.

This table shows that it possible to link the ID Matrix to the Cambridge and Thompson (2000) model. Moreover, it shows that the 18 Domain Model is an over-complicated model whilst the ID Matrix could be used instead as a much simpler model. Instead of focusing upon the educational directory grouping or Regional Association of international schools it may be more relevant to focus upon the ideology and diversity.

It is obvious from Figure 3.4 that the categorizing of international schools via a model cannot be based solely upon the level of diversity in terms of membership of Regional Associations. Cambridge and Thompson (2000) have attempted to make the categorizing of schools using 'diversity' criteria less subjective by analyzing individual data for schools such as curriculum, student body and staff. This criteria would be useful for categorizing schools within the 'Ideology-Diversification Matrix' although much more criteria could be collected.

Categorizing schools according to crude data such as the student body raises problems. Cambridge and Thompson (2000) note that raw numerical data about the number of 'British students' or 'number of US teachers' is of little use other than for matching schools by size and a crude assessment of their level of diversification. They argue that the calculation of proportions might be more useful as this requires data on the percentage of British students among the student body, data difficult to acquire but more useful for categorization purposes than raw data.

The ECIS Directory gives information on 'nationality richness' and states, for example, that ISL has 21 nationalities represented among the 51 staff members but it does not give any indication of 'equitability', the number of staff within each nationality. On the other hand, the ISS Directory of Overseas Schools gives information about equitability but only gives a limited number of nationalities such as US, British and 'other'. Thus, in order to analyze diversity one needs data on not only how many nationalities are within the staff and student body but also what proportion of each nationality they are. This sort of information will allow a more accurate placing of a school within the 'ideology-Diversification Matrix' along the Diversification axis.



Given the difficulty of obtaining precise data, a practical solution is to break down the student and staff body according to 3 groupings for UK based schools: US, British and 'other' and 4 groups for non UK based schools: US, British, host country and 'other'.

For example, a typical large UK based American oriented school in Zone B with 1200 students might have only 7 nationalities represented among the 160 staff of whom, 75% are US citizens. A further 25% are British and the remaining 10% are 'other' nationalities, probably other Europeans. Using Simpson's Index of Diversity, as applied by Cambridge and Thompson (2000), the level of diversity can be more accurately measured;

$$D = N(N-1) / \sum n(n-1)$$

D= Diversity index

N= total number of staff members

n= number of people within each nationality

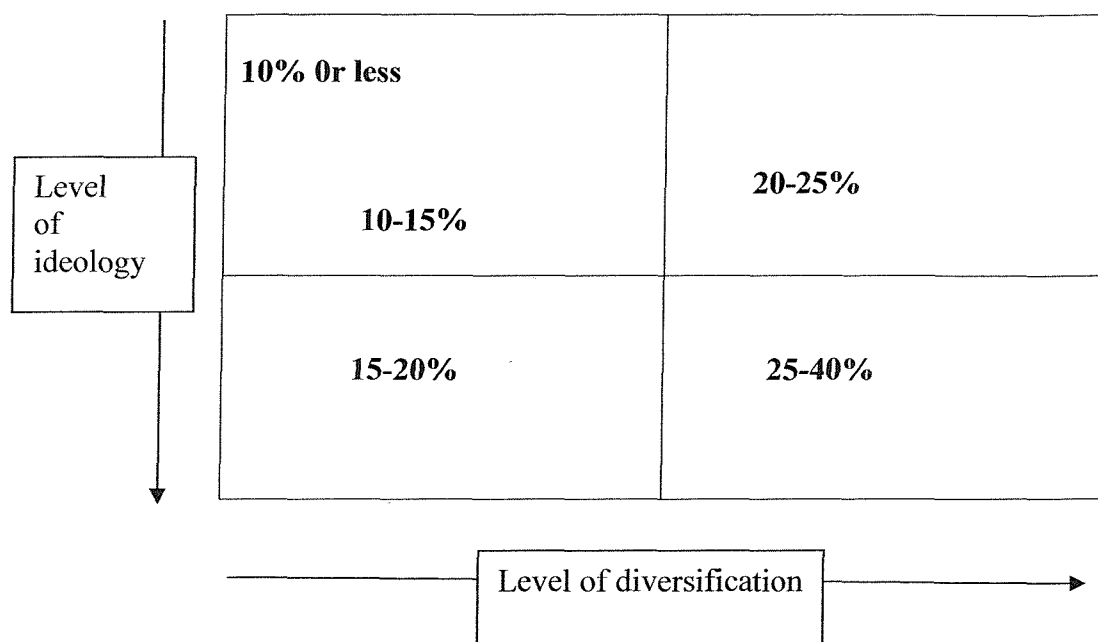
z= sum of all the members within each nationality

The above example would be calculated as:  $160(159)/120(119)+24(23)+16(15)$ .  
This gives a Diversity Index of 1.7.

Other dimensions, not explored by Cambridge and Thompson could be used to make the categorization of schools within the ID Matrix less subjective. For example, one could consider the degree of 'turbulence'. This can be done by looking at the turn-over of students but this is a crude indicator and does not take into account the degree of turbulence over a period of time. For instance, a school may have had a stable roll over the last 2 years but this may not be the case if one looks at the trend over the last 10 years and may not be atypical of the degree of turbulence that the school suffers.

One needs a more comprehensive study of the turn-over over the last 4 years in order to calculate the degree of volatility. Figure 3.6 is a crude attempt at placing international schools within the ID Matrix according to their level of student turn-over. IS London, with an average annual turn-over of 35% is used as a gauge.

**Figure 3.6: The ID Matrix and levels of student turn-over**



One way of doing this is to calculate a Marginal Volatility Index. This can be calculated by looking at figures for the school roll over the last 4 years and dividing the change by the total number of students. For example, a typical small school such as ISL has a very volatile student roll which can move between 200 and 270 students. The following example gives an MVI of 0.16 by dividing the marginal total of 110 by the total number of students of 690 who had been at the school during the period 1996-1999. This is calculated below;

**Figure 3.7: MVI and ISLondon**

Small school in Zone E	Year	Total number of students	Marginal volatility
MVI = 110/ 690 = 0.16	1996	200	0
	1997	220	+20
	1998	260	+40
	1999	210	-50
		<b>Total 690</b>	<b>Total +110</b>

The typical Zone A school is likely to be almost always fully subscribed with a very much lower degree of volatility and a student roll that might move between 1300 and 1350 students, for example. The MVI in this case would be 0.025.

**Figure 3.8: The MVI of a Zone A school**

Zone A school MVI= $100/4000$ =0.025	1996	1300	0
	1997	1350	+50
	1998	1350	0
	1999	1300	+50
		Total 4000	Total +100

A large American or British oriented school in Zone B is likely to be slightly more volatile and a student roll that moves between 1100 and 1400. In this case the MVI is 0.08 (see Figure 3.8).

**Figure 3.9: The MVI of a Zone B school**

Zone B school MVI = $300/3900$ = 0.08	1996	1100	0
	1997	1200	+100
	1998	1300	+100
	1999	1400	+100
		Total 3900	Total +300

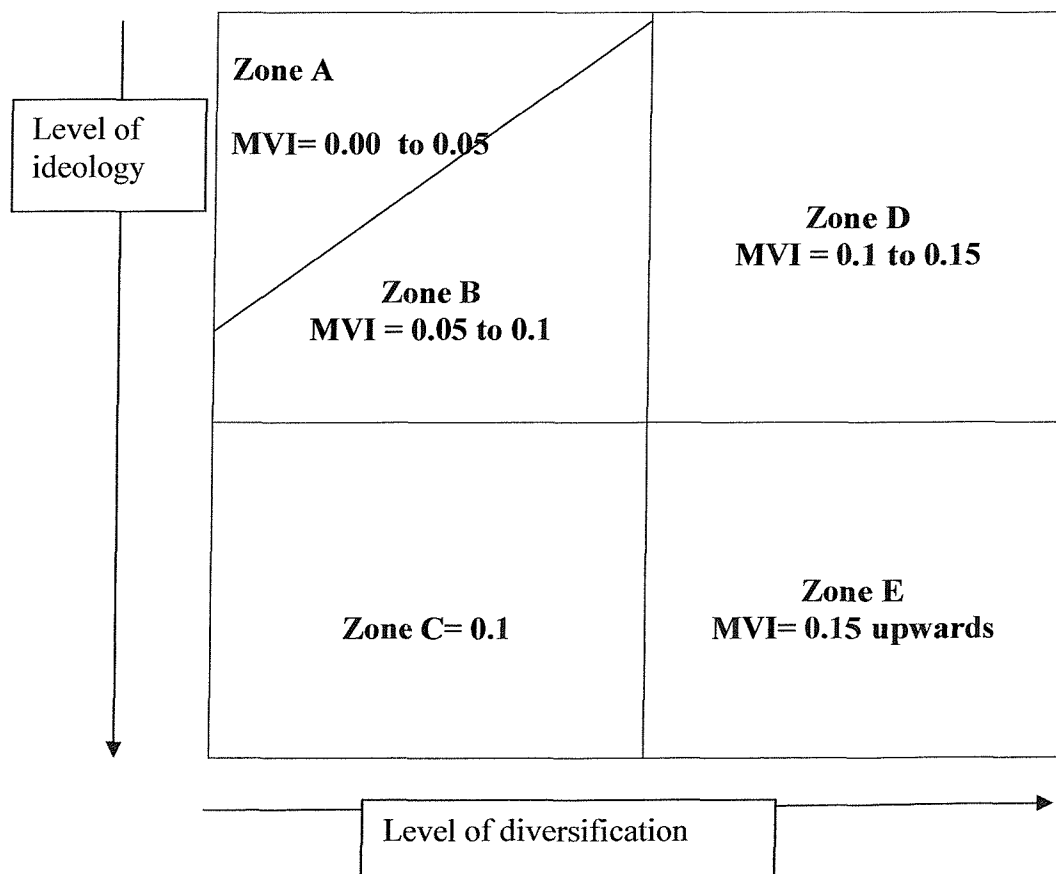
A Zone C school is likely to be very stable but more volatile than a Zone B school. A large school in Zone D is likely to be more volatile given that they have a more international body of students than schools in Zone B. However, these schools still tend to have a large number of stable company communities as in Zone B.

**Figure 3.10: The MVI of a Zone C school**

Zone D school  MVI = $400/3700$ =0.11	1996	1000	0
	1997	1200	+200
	1998	1300	+100
	1999	1400	+100
		Total 3700	Total +400

Thus it can be seen that Zone E schools are 60 times more volatile than Zone A schools and 15 times more than Zone B schools although the annual turn-over of students in the Zone E school was only twice that of the Zone B schools. Hence, by measuring volatility we are able to get a much clearer idea of how to categorize a school within the ID Matrix than it we merely look at turn-over. In summary, schools can be categorized within the ID Matrix with the following MVI calculation;

**Figure 3.11: MVI and the ID Matrix**

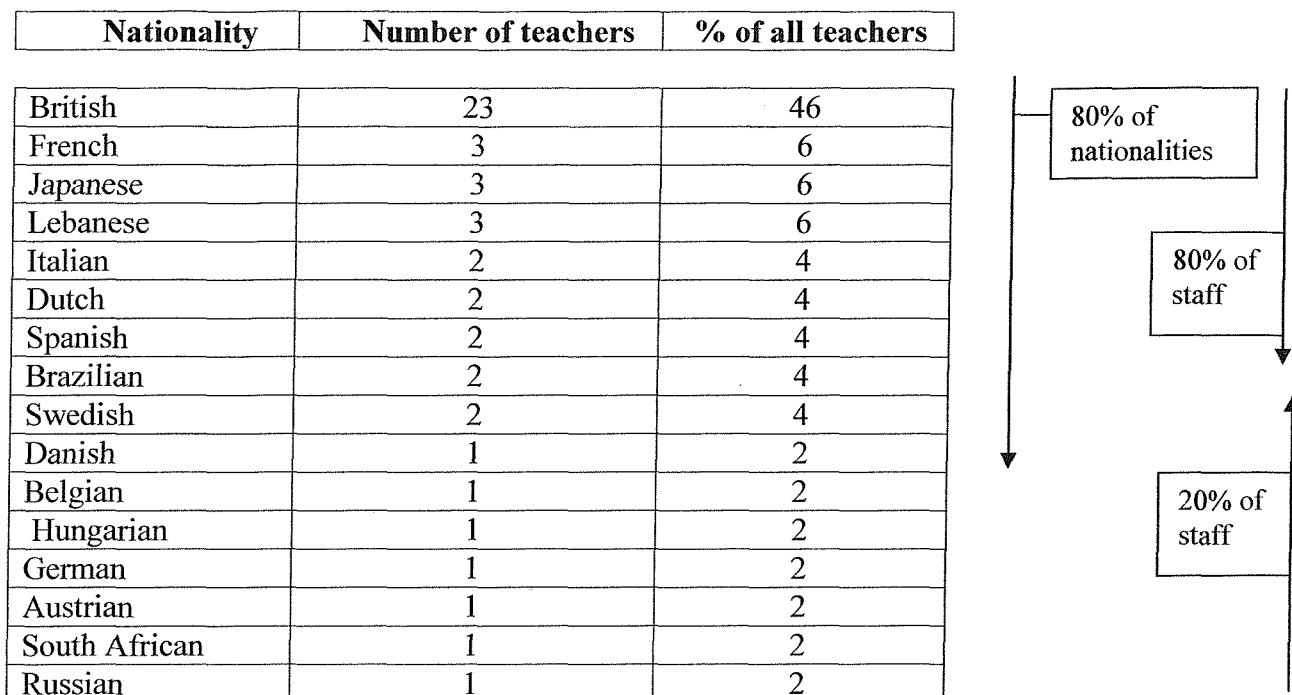


Schools can also be categorized according to how well they respond to the 80/20 Rule as measured using Pareto Analysis, a useful marketing tool for targeting and identifying important consumers. It rests on the principle that 20% of your customers account for 80% of your custom.

For example, ISL has 49 staff represented by 16 different nationalities. However, this figure alone does not give an indication of how diverse the school is in terms of staff as one nationality may dominate. If 40 of the staff were represented by only 3 nationalities then the '80/20 Rule' would apply and the school could not really be considered to be very diverse since a few nationalities dominate the staff as a whole. This is a feature of a Zone B or D school where American and British teachers dominate. In a Zone E school the staff are made up of a large number of small national groupings hence the 80/20 Rule does not apply .

The table below shows the situation for ISL in the academic year 1999-2000. It can be seen that the largest nationality (British) accounts for 46% of the entire staff body and 15 nationalities make up the remainder. These 15 are divided fairly equally with 2% -6% of the total staff. As there are 16 nationalities in total, each nationality is 6% of the total number of nationalities. If one adds together the largest 3 it can be seen they represent 58% of the staff thus giving rise to a '58/18 Ratio', not quite a '80/20 Rule'. Although one nationality does indeed dominate, the staff body as a whole is made up of many other nationalities although they represent only a few staff each. It is only when the largest 9 nationalities are added together that 80% of the staff are represented which shows that ISL is in fact a very diverse school in terms of its staff body and deserves to be placed within Zone E. Alternatively, the largest 9 nationalities represent 40% of the total number of nationalities and 80% of the total number of staff , thus giving a '80/40 Rule' which again proves ISL to be very diverse.

**Figure 3.12: Pareto Analysis and ISLondon**

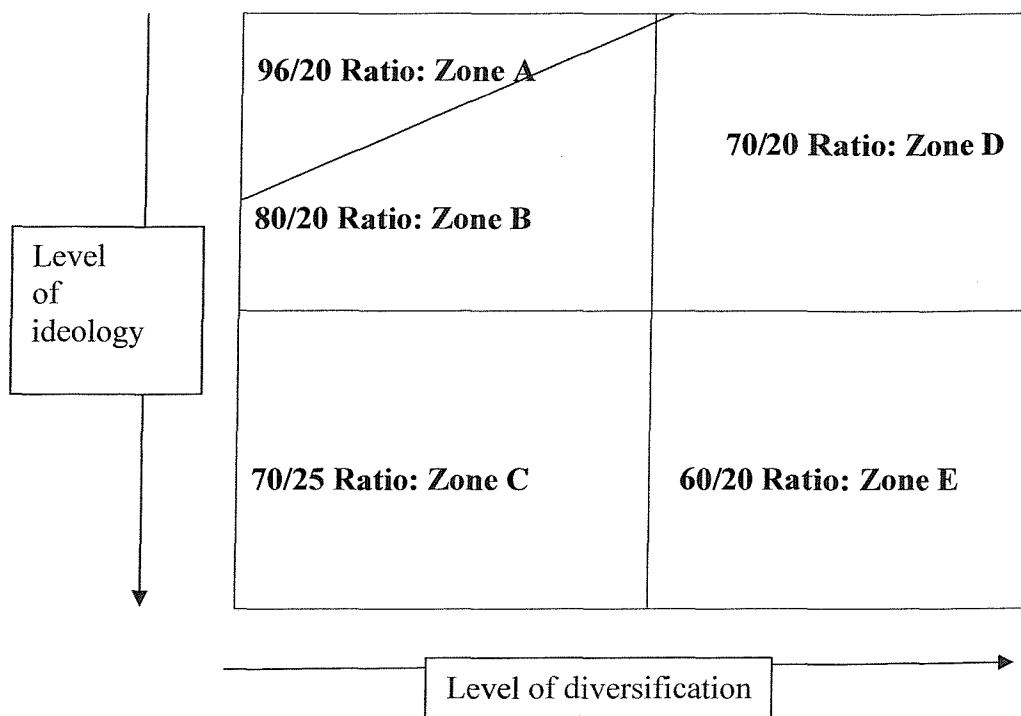


A typical large American oriented school may have 7 nationalities of staff giving each 14% of the total. However, the two largest might account for 70% of the entire staff of 120 teachers thus giving rise to a '70/28 Rule', a figure much nearer to 80/20 than the ISL example. Indeed the American nationals alone are likely to lead to a 65/14 Rule.

A typical Zone D school might have 10 nationalities among 100 staff but have 50 American and 27 British teachers giving rise to a 75/20 Rule. Thus the fact that they have more nationalities represented does not mean that they are more diverse since the staff may be dominated by a couple of nationalities.

Pareto Analysis is especially useful for identifying schools in Zones A, B and E: the more above the 80/20 Rule that a school is the more it can be placed within Zone B whilst the further below it is the more it can be placed in Zone E.

**Figure 3.13: Pareto Analysis and the ID Matrix**



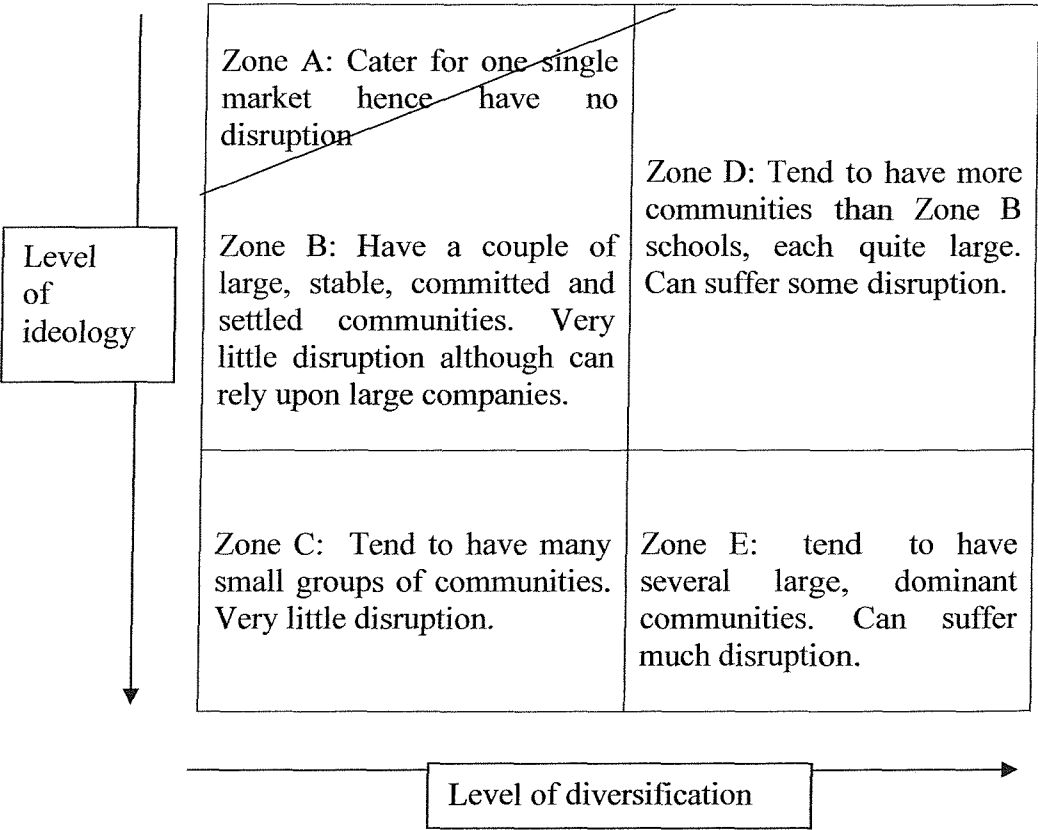
The 1999 LISA Directory shows that the average Zone B school in London has only 7 nationalities within its staff body whilst the average Zone E school has 20. Zone C schools are more complicated as they can either be very ideologically driven in the sense that they may have many language teachers or may not be as diversified and may have a Rule similar to the Zone B schools. At the same time, many Zone D schools have a very similar Rule as schools in zone B.

International schools suffer from ‘disruptive communities’. For example, ISL used to have a large Swedish community but a small Swedish school was set up in London and ISL subsequently lost the market share so they now have no Swedish students.

Schools can be categorized within the ID Matrix according to the degree to which they suffer from this sort of disruption. Small Zone E schools suffer most as they are Market Opportunists who aim to cater and attract several large communities. Thus they have the most to lose if one of these communities were to move on to another school. The lower the ratio, the more they suffer disruption as they rely more upon small communities.

Because Zone B and D schools tend to cater for Anglo Saxon, English speaking communities they are less likely to suffer from the sudden movement of a large community. However, they are likely to suffer from company movements. Zone C schools tend to have a lot of very small communities and thus will not suffer from any sudden movement and the disruption is likely to be minimal.

**Figure 3.14: The ID Matrix and the level of disruption**



Disruption is clearly more of a ‘ small school’ problem and shows that a number of small schools need to be included in any sample of schools. In terms of marketing, they are more likely to engage in data collection than large schools.



### **3.4) The TFPI Model**

A further way of conceptualising PR activity in international schools is to develop a model centred around four of the key features of activity: training, freedom, planning and isolation. This model also allows us to compare international schools with more ordinary state schools in order to ascertain the degree to which international schools are a distinct class of institution.

This model can be drawn up by considering the main aspects of PR activity in international schools. The following lists these features;

- The lack of marketing plan leads to a lack of set goals or targets resulting in the PRP assuming that the main PR/marketing goal is to attract more students. As most schools are presently full, this results in a large degree of complacency on the part of both the PRP and the school.
- The PRP has a large degree of freedom to carry out PR activity as they wish as long as within the budget. Little formal mechanisms exist to make the PRP accountable and little appraisal is undergone.
- The nature of the organisational structure results in a large degree of isolation for the PRP, at a number of different levels. Also, the PRP makes little contact with peers in other schools.
- The nature of the structure also leads to a large degree of micro-political tension between the PRP and associated practitioners. This leads to the PRP feeling threatened and even more isolated.
- The informal nature of the appointment of the PRP is combined with the informal nature of the role of the PRP with no clear, written job description being supplied.
- The level of activity is greatly affected by the level of confidence felt by the PRP. This is a by-product of the lack of job description, written marketing plan, lack of experience and lack of initial and on-going training as well as the fact that the area of Parental choice has undergone no formal research.

All these factors lead to a culture of the PRP doing what they think they ought to be doing and what they are confident will produce tangible results. There is no real culture of experimentation nor any formal culture of appraisal and on-going support..

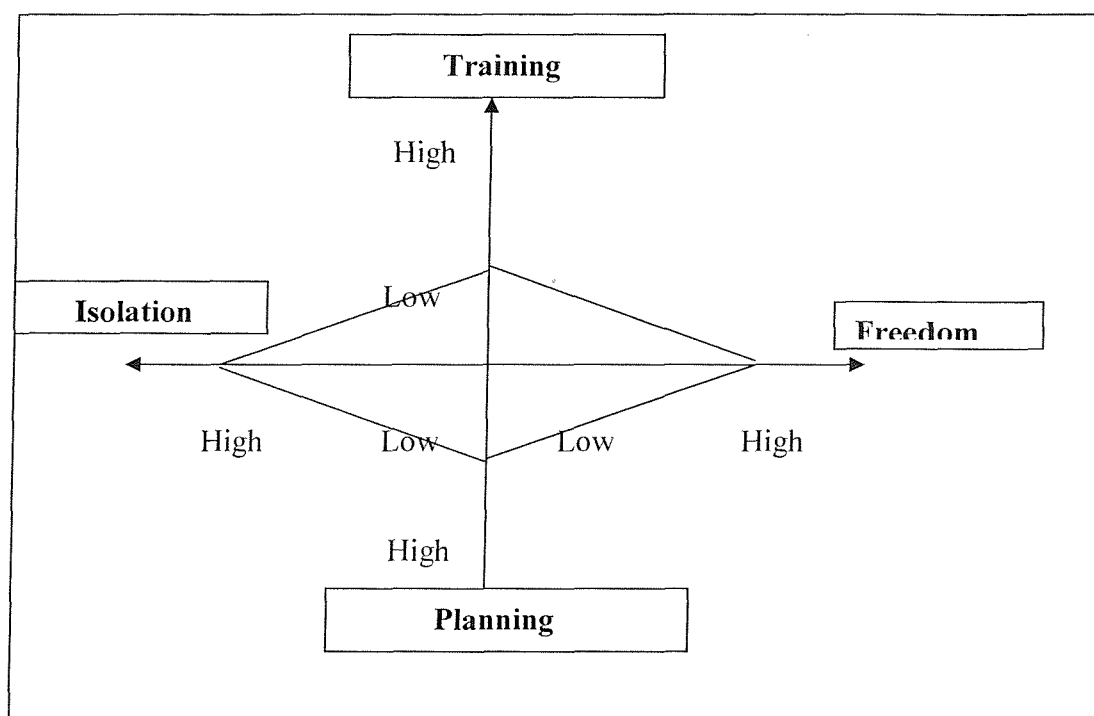
- There is a culture of distrust among Heads in many small , mainly Zone E schools, which leads to them carrying out most of the role of PRP. Many Heads feel unable to delegate the job to another person and may be under pressure by the school's owners to do the job themselves. This is also a direct result of the understanding of PR as being merely 'meeting and greeting' and hence something that the Head of a small school ought to do.
- There is a feeling evident among most international schools of not being liked nor understood by the local community which lead to a culture of being defensive and reactionary activity rather than pro-active. Schools feel threatened by the 'outside' which leads them to appoint 'insiders' and leads to their isolation from the local community who they perceive do not like them.
- This sense of threat leads to international schools adopting an internal culture of being a friendly 'family' environment.

From this information one can identify four key characteristics regarding the organizational culture of international schools;

- Training: there is little formal induction training or on-going training. Schools make the assumption that the person they have appointed is capable of doing the job and is in no need of further training.
- Freedom: connected with the above point is the fact that the person is given much freedom to do what they want. There is little evidence of formal appraisal systems. Some appraisal does go on but tends to be quite informal.
- Planning: the above two points lead to a low level of planning. It is not normal for a school to have a formal development plan. In many schools this process is difficult given the unpredictable nature of the student numbers.

- Isolation: schools tend to operate with little formal contact with others. The same is true within the school with little formal contact between departments and educators.

**Figure 3.15: The TFPI Model for a typical international school**



It is shown that international schools are characterized by;

- A low level of formal training
- A high level of freedom
- A low level of planning
- A high level of isolation

A comparison with British State-maintained schools illustrates this model much better and allows us to better understand the degree to which international schools are a distinct class of institution.

It can be seen that international schools, with regard to PR activity, are quite different from normal state schools;

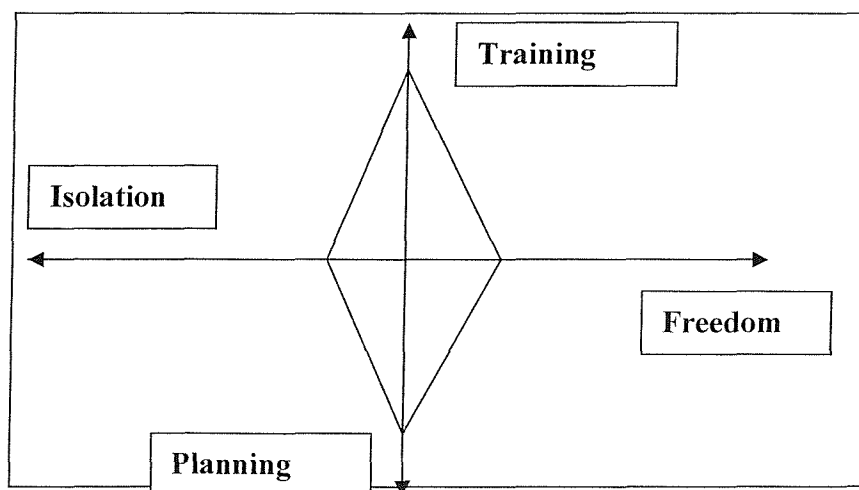
**Figure 3.16: Comparing international schools with English state schools**

Characteristic	International Schools	Maintained Schools
Training	<p>Teachers often appointed without formal teaching qualifications or training.</p> <p>Newly appointed staff given little prior information about the school.</p> <p>Newly appointed staff given little induction training.</p> <p>Staff given access to Regional Association conferences or curriculum conferences. But, only if within school budget, and usually only on a two-yearly cycle (certainly the case with the IB).</p>	<p>Teachers only appointed with formal training qualification such as BEd or PGCE.</p> <p>Teacher undertakes probation period.</p> <p>Newly qualified teachers given a 'mentor'.</p> <p>Locally based training offered by the Local Education Authority (LEA).</p>
Freedom	<p>Normal for a school to not adopt the National Curriculum.</p> <p>Some schools moving away from exam-based curriculum (Middle Years Programme is a good example). Freedom to choose themes and draw up their own syllabuses.</p> <p>Schools free to offer subjects of their choice (ISL, for example, offers one period per week of 'World Issues').</p>	<p>Schools follow National Curriculum.</p> <p>Schools follow exam based curriculum.</p> <p>Little freedom for offering subjects.</p>

Planning	<p>Normal for a school to not have a detailed, written Development Plan. Some schools adopt an informal 5 or 10 year plan.</p> <p>Few schools have a written Marketing Plan.</p>	All schools required to adopt a formally produced School Development Plan.
Isolation	<p>Schools tend to operate alone. Local Associations exist (such as the 16 member LISA organization) but rarely meet up.</p> <p>Some Local Associations offer joint in-service training but only on a bi-annual basis (certainly the case with LISA).</p> <p>Little evidence of shared marketing.</p>	All schools operate within a consortia with the other LEA schools. Schools have joint brochures as well as individual ones.

Maintained schools, certainly in Britain, can be characterized as being very different from the average international school in having a low level of freedom, high level of training, low level of isolation and a high level of planning.

**Figure 3.17: the TFPI Model for a typical British state school**



### 3.5) Management Culture

As most international schools are either American or British oriented they ought, in theory, to be very 'Anglo-American' in terms of their management culture (according to Hofstede 1985). However, this has never been identified or explored by research.

Hofstede, through his study of IBM, discovered that American-oriented multinational corporations display four key characteristics; a high degree of individualism and masculinity, and a low degree of power distance and 'uncertainty avoidance'. In practice, this would show up as a management culture where an employee is given much freedom and is left alone to get on with the job. This is based upon the assumption that the person is fully trained and competent. A study of PR activity should reveal much about this characteristic.

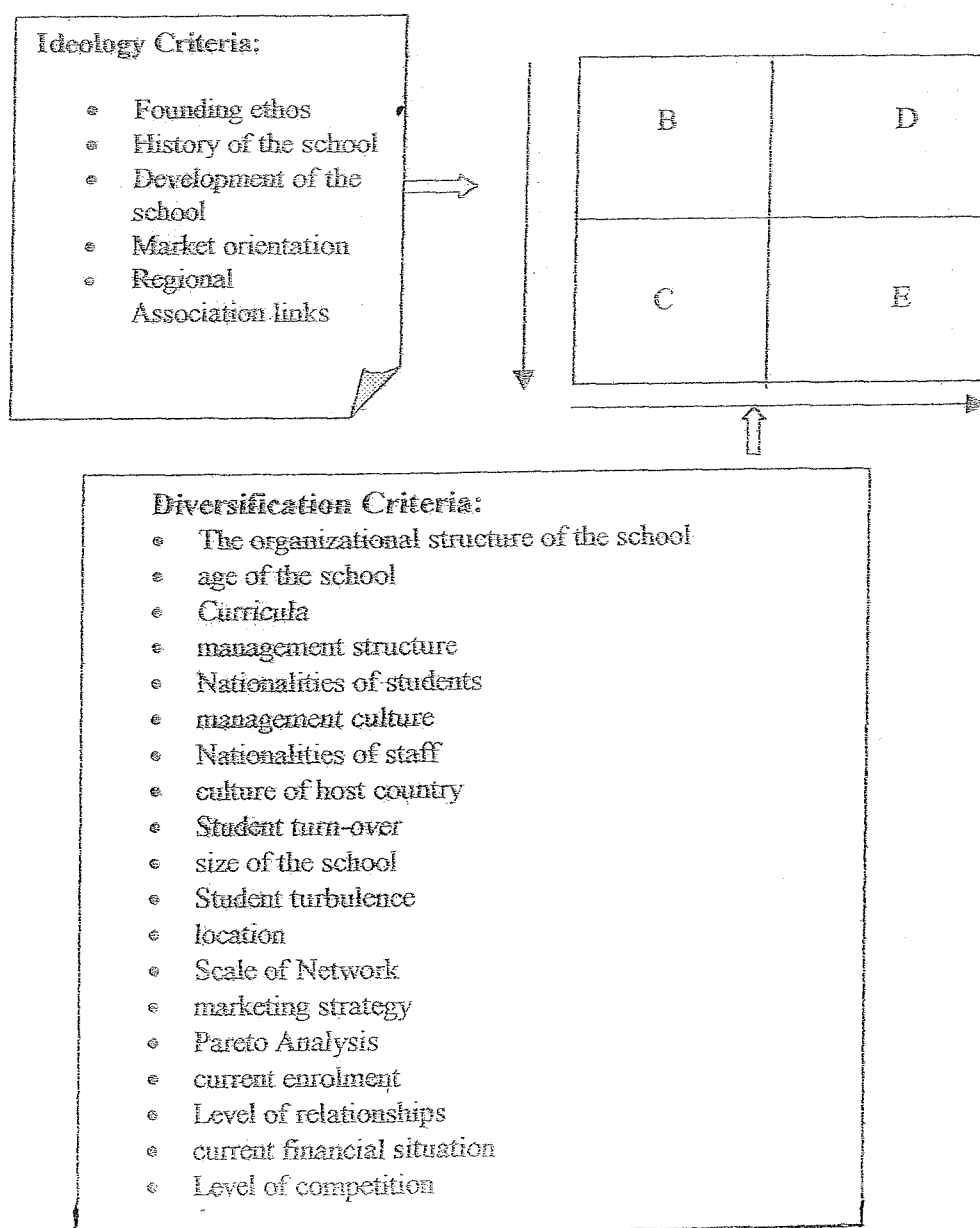
Other models could also be used. For example, Schein (1985), Pugh (1963) and Handy (1985) have also produced models to conceptualize the management culture of an organization. All aim to show that an organization with a similar management culture should behave as a distinct class of institution. To what extent would an investigation into PR activity in international schools reveal this? How strong is this management culture in international schools?

More recently, Taylor (2000) reports on research conducted by Trent University into the management culture of McDonalds restaurants around the world. This showed that the management culture differed little except in countries with a strong local culture. For example, Scandinavian countries have a strong collectivist culture (according to Hofstede 1985) and so their management culture is different. To what extent do international schools conform to Anglo-American management culture? Hence, it ought to be possible to undertake research into the activity of international schools and discover the extent to which they share common characteristics, especially given that these schools ought to show, in theory, strong 'Anglo-American' characteristics.

### 3.6) Summary

Many attempts have been made to define what an international school is and how they differ from other so called 'schools in an international context'. However, this has been merely attempted by using data such as the curriculum or a break-down of the nationalities of the staff and student body. Recent attempts have become slightly more sophisticated and attempted to identify the 'diversity' of international schools using such scientific tools as Simpson's Index of Diversity. This sort of data can also help to categorize international schools within the 'ID Matrix', an alternative model to the '18 Domain model'.

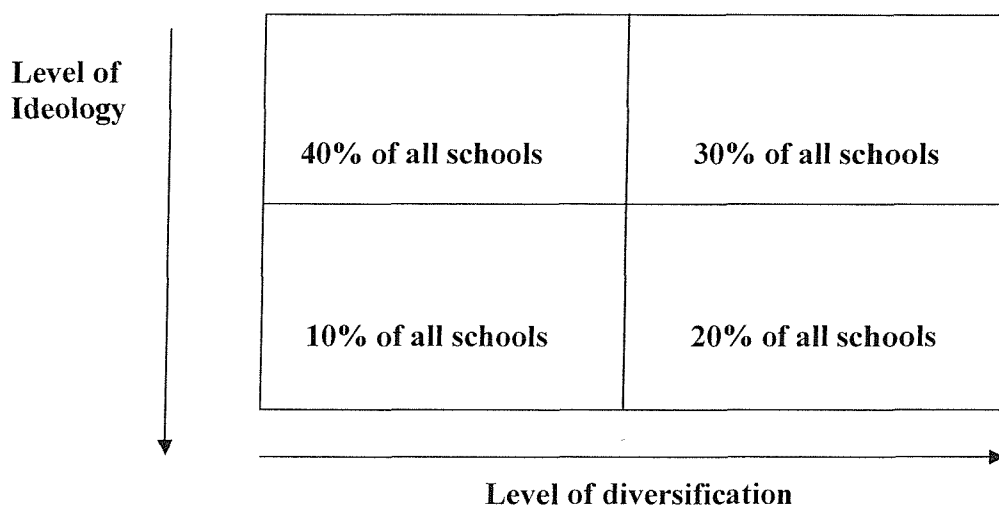
**Figure 3.18: A Summary of data that can be used to categorize schools within the ID Matrix**



Data such as a calculation of the ‘marginal volatility’ or using Pareto Analysis can also be used. Otherwise, very few serious attempts have been made to build a conceptual framework for categorizing such schools with the ‘18 Domain Model’ being the latest and most sophisticated. The ‘ID Matrix’ model can be developed further. An analysis of the 16 LISA member schools shows that 70% can be placed within Zones B and D whilst 20% are in Zone E. Only about 10% are in Zone C. So, any ‘representative’ sample of international schools should include twice as many Zone B schools as Zone E, and at least three times more Zone C than Zone B. If research were to be conducted among, say, 10 schools of which 6 were American and 2 were British-oriented, this would not be a ‘fair’ sample as these schools tend to be Zone B or D type schools and only a maximum of seven of these ought to be in the sample. However, a sample of 3 to 1 in favour of American schools would be acceptable.

A key contribution of this model is its ability to show that a ‘fair’ sample of international schools ought to include at least one third of schools that are neither British nor American-oriented. These also tend to be smaller schools. The sample of schools used within this research fitted within the following model which shows how international schools can be categorized within the ID Matrix model.

**Figure 3.19: A ‘fair’ sample of schools within the ID Matrix**





London has the largest concentration of international schools in the world. There are 49 in the UK with 24 of these being in London and the surrounding area according to the 1999 Findlay Guide. However, a number of these are actually 'national' schools and can be located within Zone A. Of the schools which can properly be called 'international schools', 30 are ECIS members and 16 of these belong to the LISA organization. They range in size from 55 students to 1300. Three are very large and seven are quite small (fewer than 350 students). Even this does not sum up their range of diversity.

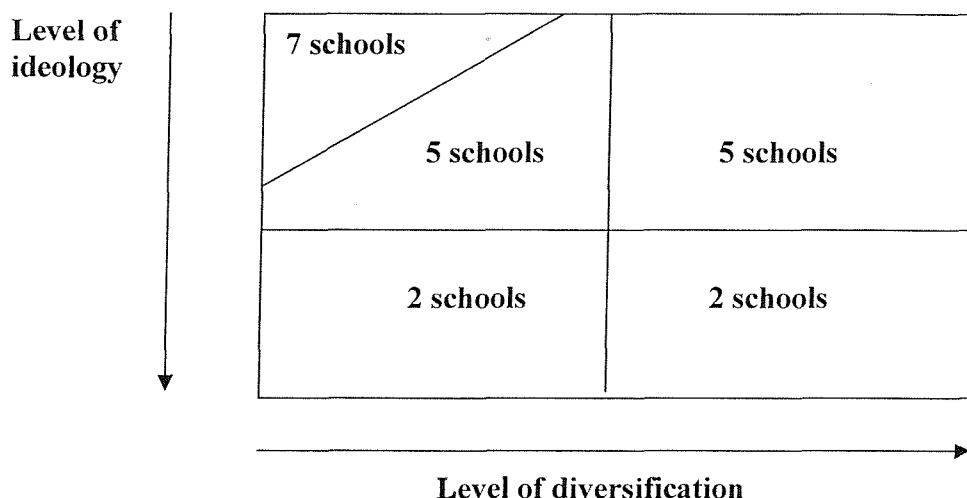
Of the 14 located in the London area, eight are American-oriented, one is Greek, one is British and the other three have no particular orientation. In terms of curriculum offered, two offer a fully British curriculum, 3 a totally American one, 4 offer a mix of the two and one offers a fully international curriculum of Diploma IB and Middle Years IB.

By also examining the student population we can more fully categorize schools within the ID Matrix. Although the American-oriented schools typically have between 35 and 60 nationalities within the student body, up to 80% will be American citizens which places these schools within Zone B. A similar percentage of the staff will also be American. The smaller schools, such as ISLondon, have a similar number of nationalities but no one nationality will comprise more than one third of the total. The number of nationalities within the staff body will also be greater than the American-oriented schools. This places such smaller schools within Zone E.

Hence, by considering the curriculum and the student and staff body (contained within the 2000-2001 LISA Directory), one can better place the schools in London within the ID Matrix. Five are very market-driven towards a single identifiable market whilst a large proportion of their staff and student body are of the same nationality.

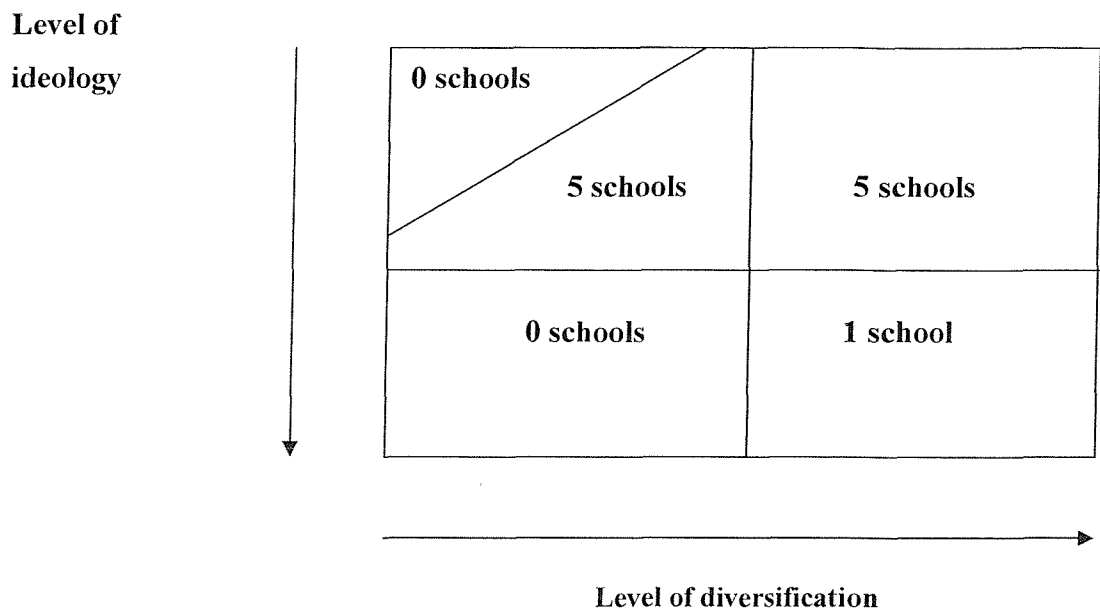
They also have a national curriculum and thus can be placed in Zone B. A further five also have a single main market but show a greater diversity with regard to their curriculum and staff/ student body. This places them in Zone D. Two schools are not very diversified in terms of curriculum but aim to serve a wider body of nationalities. These are in Zone C. Only two schools can be placed in Zone E with having both an international curriculum and a very wide range of nationalities. However, a large proportion of their students are represented by a small number of nationalities and hence they are only just in Zone E (ISLondon, for example, has a large Japanese population).

**Figure 3.20: Placing the London international schools within the ID Matrix**



In total, nine distinct communities are served by their own school in London. One other serves a pan-Arab community. However, only the American and Greek schools are eligible for ECIS membership and even the twelve American schools serving the 60,000 students found within a 30 mile radius of London contain much diversity. These nine private and three Ministry of Defence schools seem quite similar but closer examination shows that five have a much greater mix of nationalities and so should be placed within Zone D. at least one can be placed within Zone E. However, this school was originally founded to serve only the American community and is thus an example of a school that has moved within the Matrix.

**Figure 3.21: Placing the American schools within the ID Matrix**



This model helps us to conceptualize the diversity of schools in London and to categorize schools for research purposes. For example, a representative sample would need to include at least one school from within zones C and D. If research were to be undertaken with just schools from within Zone B, this would not constitute a ‘fair’ sample.

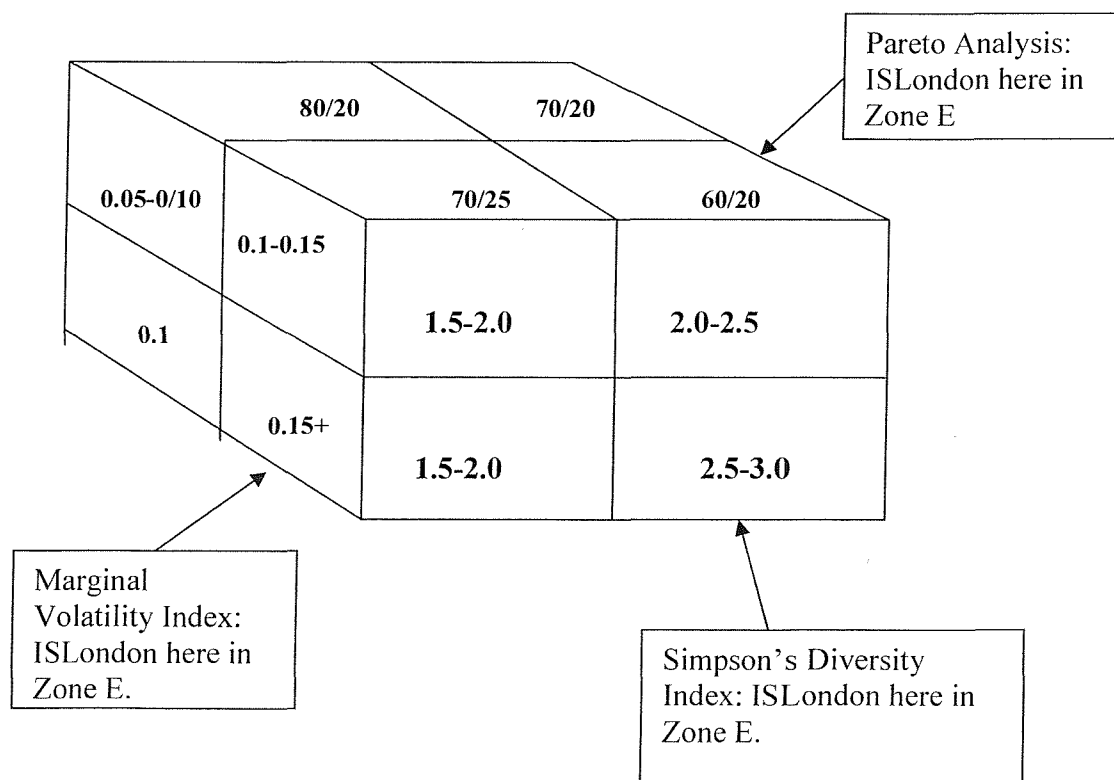
A ‘fair’ sample within London needs to include a number of schools from within all four zones but the majority ought to be within zones B and D as American and British-oriented schools make up the main body. This model also shows that even within this grouping, there is enormous diversity in London, as many of these schools lie within Zone D as in Zone E and thus a ‘fair’ sample of both need to be included. Merely undertaking research among the market-driven American-oriented schools found in Zone D would not be ‘fair’.

The criteria previously mentioned such as the Diversity Index and Marginal Volatility Index can be used to place schools within the ID Matrix in a less subjective manner. Take ISLondon, for example;

- ISL has a very diverse student and staff body. Its 50 staff are represented by 21 giving a Simpson's Diversity Index of 2.7.
- Among the 21 nationalities, the main three account for 58% of all staff giving rise to a '58/18 Ratio' using Pareto Analysis. This proves it to have a very diverse staff body.
- Between 1996 and 1999 a total of 690 students attended ISL with the number fluctuating between 200 and 260. This gives it a Marginal Volatility Index of 0.16.

This firmly places ISLondon within Zone E as shown below;

**Figure 3.22: ISLondon within Zone E.**



## **4) Methodology and Design**

### **4.1) Introduction**

This chapter aims to reveal what Hammersley (1992) refers to as the ‘research journey’. It should be noted that this was quite a complex journey. As Hammersley notes (1992 p172): *What is involved here is not a cross-roads where we go left or right. A better analogy is a complex maze where we are repeatedly faced with decisions, and where paths wind back on one another.* This chapter shows how, for example, both the pre-pilot and the pilot stages of the Research Survey involved a journey back along the ‘path’.

It is important, of course, to be aware of not only how a researcher did their research but also why this particular path is chosen. As Scott (2000 p1) points out: *Researchers need to be very clear not only about how they are doing research on educational management and leadership but also ‘why this approach rather than another?’* This is entered into in the next sub-chapter.

### **4.2) Validity and Representativeness**

#### **4.2.1) Introduction**

The opening chapter to this research reveals the degree to which this is an ‘interpretive’ piece of research. The use of personal pronouns, rather the more conventional ‘positive’ approach of the third person, shows the degree to which it is recognized that this sort of practitioner based research ought to reflect the degree to which the researcher was a part of the reality of the study. This research involved the collection of much quantitative data via questionnaire and postal survey.

The collecting of data from schools around the world in 22 different countries necessitated this. Obviously, not everyone could be visited and interviewed. However, it was recognized that statistical data alone was not sufficient. Also, qualitative research lends itself well to research involving the individual as the object of the research, in this case the school PRP. This data could then be aggregated to give an overall picture.

Hence, this research lent itself to what Coleman and Briggs (2001 p24) refer to as a 'dual approach' involving both quantitative and qualitative methods. The two support each other. The use of surveys helps to avoid what Coleman and Briggs (2001 p24) call 'naïve empiricism' whilst the use of interviews helps to overcome the tendency of some research to substitute narrative for analysis.

The main point to be considered is that quantitative data alone is not enough as consideration needs to be given to the holistic picture in which the research is embedded. One can only make sense of such data if we are to understand the data in a broader social and historical context. Hence, data about the history and development of the school was sought as was details of the practitioner's career-path. Only by taking this path can we really understand what the practitioner was doing and why. Also, qualitative research via interview is particularly useful with regard to research that aims to analyse processes. This research concerns itself with the processes of induction and on-going training, appraisal and appointment. This information is difficult to obtain via questionnaire. Further, it requires a context: knowledge needs to be acquired about the nature and culture of the school.

An effort has been made in this research to avoid using the 'positivism' approach of making the answers seem like fact. This research can uncover possible causes for PR activity but cannot prove for certain that this is the cause. It also cannot be proven that the findings relate to other areas of school activity.

There has much criticism of educational research over the last few years (see Hargreaves 1996 as an example). This criticism has been largely based around the concept of what is *useful*. Thus, an attempt has been made with this research to provide something that is useful. Firstly, to academics wishing to pursue further the concept of categorizing international schools. Secondly, to academics wishing to pursue the understanding of international schools as organizations and as a distinct class of institution. Given the lack of formal research among international schools this present research hopes to provide a base for future research. This research makes no attempt to be critical of current PR activity or to offer suggestions as to how this activity might be improved although it was very tempting. Instead, it aims to show how this activity might reveal a better understanding of how international schools function and behave as a distinct class of institution. Also, in Chapter 5.3, it shows how this understanding might be built upon by further research via analysis of another area of activity, the issue of Human Resource Management.

#### **4.2.2) Validity**

According to Trochim (2002), some qualitative researchers reject the framework of validity that is commonly accepted in the social sciences. They reject the basic realistic assumption that there is a reality external to our perception of it. Consequently, it makes little sense to be concerned with the 'truth' of an observation or interview. Trochim offers four alternative criteria for judging the soundness of qualitative research;

a) Credibility: Although I am not a PRP myself I have had a large amount of experience in the field of marketing international schools. However, it should be noted that the participants in this survey were invited to make comments on the overall findings, which were posted to them. Moreover, the findings were aired at a workshop at the 1999 ECIS Annual Conference in Nice, with over 20 PR practitioners and educators in attendance. Many of the findings outlined in Chapter 5.1 came out of this session. (See Appendix L for an copy of the report given).

Both methods proved the findings, from the perspective of the practitioners themselves, to be both credible and believable. This is what Hitchcock and Hughes (1999 p106) refer to as *respondent validation*. Of course, some of the data involved feelings and the perceptions, hence it cannot be stated that the data was entirely truthful. As Hitchcock and Hughes state (p106): *'It remains to be asked whether validity can ever be satisfactorily and completely demonstrated in qualitative research'*.

b) Transferability: It cannot be stated with certainty that the findings of this research are applicable to other settings, or to other types of school. However, it is possible that the findings could be replicated via research into Human Research Management in international schools (see chapter on Further Research).

c) Dependability: Could this research be replicated or repeated? It is certainly true to state that this research is possibly a product of its time and place. At present all international schools appear to be thriving. However, if the research were to have been undertaken in the early 1990s or at a future time of global recession, the findings might be different. But, it ought to be stated that efforts were made to deal with this. Schools were deliberately brought into this survey in the Far East where economic conditions over the past 10 years have been less favourable, thus a certain amount of 'space triangulation' (Cohen and Manion 1989) occurred. Hitchcock and Hughes (1999) refer to 'dependability' as 'reliability' and make the important point that it is wrong to think that it is vital that the research can be exactly replicated. They make the point (p108) that: *'The same situation ought to be able to be researched in the same way, producing roughly the same sorts of findings by different researchers'*.

d) Confirmability: It is true to say that each researcher brings their own unique perspective to any study. Hence, a detailed analysis has been given of the Research Schedule so that the findings can be checked against the questions asked during the survey. Also, much data has been added to the Appendices, for the same purpose.



#### **4.2.3) Representativeness**

This surrounds the extent to which the situation and individuals investigated are typical or representative of the situation and individuals as a whole. According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1999), the most important point is to have obtained a good overall view of the setting or situation. To this end, some form of sampling is inevitably necessary. This research involved 'Stratified sampling' which offered a greater degree of sophistication than 'Simple random sampling'. Here, the practitioners were selected according the following five key criteria: gender; size of school; founding ethos of the school; location; career path.

The emphasis was placed upon obtaining as natural and representative a picture of the situation as possible. It became clear by the time of the tenth school visit that it was much easier to obtain access to PR practitioners in large schools (those with more than 800 students). However, at least 60% of international schools have less than 300 students. Hence, an effort was made at this stage to bring more small schools into the sample. In the end, about 60% of the 34 schools sampled were small schools. This involved what Cohen and Manion (1989 p89) call 'Quota sampling'. It would also be correct to point out that the visiting of the first ten schools allowed the identification of more sophisticated criteria such as length of tenure and size of budget. Hence, a certain degree of 'Snowball sampling' (Cohen and Manion p89) also occurred.

It should be noted at this point that an initial intention of this research was to merely use the 16 ECIS member international schools in London. In the end, several schools were included from London but a number of other cities were included. As the sample included 5 from London, 3 from Brussels and 3 from Amsterdam, there was also an element of 'Cluster sampling' (Cohen and Manion p88).

### **4.3) Aims and intended contributions to knowledge**

#### **4.3.1) What is the nature of PR activity in international schools?**

There is much to be learnt about the way that schools undertake PR and about the person in the school who is responsible for it. Only small scale surveys have ever been undertaken with Foskett (1995) and his 12 schools study being one of the largest. Others are merely case studies of single schools. No such case studies exist for international schools as no formal research has ever been done into the PR activity of international schools. As a result, much educational marketing literature is theory based and much is based upon general business theory. Furthermore, it is not known to what extent these schools suffer from the problems that affect other organizations as analysed in Chapter 2.

Little is known, for example, about the PR goals of schools. To what extent do they differ? Little is known about the features of their PR activity. Are there generic features? Little is known about what factors affect PR behaviour. Are there common factors? How significant are other factors such as the management culture, the school's budget, the school's organizational structure, and the history and development of the school?

There is a particular need to study all sizes of small as most literature assumes that schools are quite large yet 60% of international schools have less than 300 students. According to Harding (1998) these schools have been overlooked by previous studies. A study of all these factors ought to lead to not only uncovering the current state of play with regard to PR activity but ought to also allow us to categorize and conceptualize schools in terms of their PR behaviour.

Such a study would also reveal more about the organizational structure of international schools. It would reveal who undertakes PR in the school and how it is undertaken. It would reveal the extent to which schools differ in their PR activity. In short, it should reveal much more about how international schools behave and the extent to which they can be categorized and identified as a distinct class of institution.

Such a study would be useful as little is known of how international schools function and behave. The fundamental point is that no study has been undertaken using data about how these schools actually behave. No study has ever attempted to gain access to information about the schools' function as organizations. Instead, attempts to categorize them have concentrated upon easy to obtain data about the staff and student body and the school's curriculum. Only very limited attempts have been made to build conceptual models to characterize international schools such as the Cambridge and Thompson (2000) '18 Domain Model'. However, this model makes no attempt to conceptualize the way that schools behave and function. It tells us little about what characterizes an international school except to say that they belong to a hybrid grouping of schools which may or may not share common characteristics. There is need for a much simpler and more useful model.

An aim of this thesis is to offer an insight into how international schools behave and function with regard to PR activity: to explore their mechanisms, systems and structures. Furthermore, there is a need to explore who actually does PR as their life history and training are likely to be significant factors. However there is a further aim: to offer an understanding of how this activity allows us to identify these schools as a distinct class of institution. After all, PR is an expression of the organizational culture of a school. Hence, by looking at PR activity we should be able to discover how schools promote themselves, and also gain an insight into their organizational culture, which in turn ought to lead to a better understanding of how schools function as a distinct class.

#### **4.3.2) What does the nature of this activity tell us about the character of international schools?**

International schools are a small yet distinctive group within the broad area of independent educational provision both in the UK and elsewhere in the world. Whilst the term 'international school' is in common usage, any attempt to seek a definition of their nature is elusive. Similarly, the concept of PR is also widely known but difficult to define. This thesis, by analysing the organisational culture with particular reference to public relations activity, explores the nature of international schools and makes an attempt to build a conceptual framework for their categorisation.

*"The term 'international school' is frequently used but it cannot be applied to define a single class of institution".*

This quote, from Cambridge and Thompson (2000 p2) summarises the present state of play with regard to international schools. Basically, very little is known of how they behave and function both as individual schools and as a distinct grouping. This is partly because of the pre-occupation over the defining and categorizing of such schools, and in particular, the distinction between 'international schools' and other 'schools in an international context' such as the French Lycee type of school. As a result, very little is known of how to distinguish them as a distinct class of institution.

One particular area of activity that has never been analyzed or explained is their PR and marketing behaviour; a study of this area of activity may extend our knowledge of how this class of institution functions and the extent to which such a distinction can be made. This in turn ought to lead to a better classification and categorization of international schools. This thesis aims to build upon the previous attempts by Findlay (1997), Matthews (1997) and Cambridge and Thompson (1999) to categorize international schools by seeking to develop a conceptual framework for understanding how such schools function and the extent to which they function as a distinct grouping.

An ultimate aim is to build a model that not only allows a school to be identified as an 'international school' but also allows schools within this grouping to be further categorized. This would be a major contribution to the recent attempts to build a conceptual framework.

*"In the UK, only four schools, all independent, carry the title 'international' , although 46 schools offer the IB, nearly half of them State schools"* (Wallace in TES 30/11/01 p9).

This quote, from a recent article about the growth of the International Baccalaureate examination in UK schools, demonstrates the lack of clarity in the understanding of international schools and partly explains why so little formal research has been undertaken into how they function as a distinct class of institution. Wallace (2001) makes the assumption that one can identify and categorize an international school merely by either looking at its title or data such as the external examination curriculum followed. The reality is more complex, and the simplistic notion put forward by Wallace is just one of the many misunderstandings over what an international school is or does. In part, this is due to the fact that the research based evidence about international schools is very limited. Only very generalised and often vague attempts have been made at the categorising and identifying of what these schools are and how they differ from other classes of schools.

Attempts to categorize international schools have become more sophisticated since 1964 but there is still an overwhelming reliance on easy to obtain data such as the diversity of the staff and student body whilst recent attempts have introduced several untested, informal and ambiguous criterion. All have attempted to draw up a list of 'core universals' with an aim to be able to distinguish between 'international' and 'national' schools. No serious attempt has been made to distinguish between different types of international schools and very few attempts have been made at building a conceptual framework for categorizing international schools.

There is a particular need to explore more fully the 'informal' nature of international schools which academics such as Thompson and Hayden (1999) argue is a key feature. This thesis attempts to explore this feature and its possible causes. An attempt will be made to conceptualise this feature, assuming such a dimension actually exists. It is also possible that international schools have other generic features which has never been mentioned or explored before. An exploration of PR activity may reveal this more fully.

Ultimately, this thesis aims to examine the extent to which international schools are more complex with regard to their PR activity than one might expect which may lead to a more fuller understanding of how they can be categorized and conceptualised. It attempts to examine the extent to which they are more complex than people such as Wallace seem to think they are.

## **4.4) Ethical issues and considerations**

### **4.4.1) Introduction**

This research as a 'practitioner based enquiry' was conducted as ethically as possible using the benchmarks outlined by Cohen and Manion (1997), Hitchcock and Hughes (1988) and more recently by Foskett (1999) who deals more specifically with markets research in education. The benchmarks used were the 'Ethical Principles for the Guidance of Action Research' adapted by Cohen and Manion (1997) from Kennis and McTaggart (1981);

- Observing protocol: The relevant authorities were consulted and informed and that the necessary approval was obtained.
- Involving the participants: The PRP surveyed were encouraged to improve, shape and form the interview schedule which was altered during the 17 visits.
- Negotiations with those affected: Several PRPs, especially those who are also the Head, felt they did not have the time to participate whilst some felt they did not have the knowledge to fully participate. Their right to not wish to participate was respected and the issue was not pursued any further. In the case of two of the postal surveys, a reduced survey was sent so as to unburden the load.
- Reporting progress: At the beginning of each visit, each PRP was informed of the progress and allowed to offer suggestions. At the end of the 18 visits, all the PRPs who had participated were faxed and thanked and told of the current state of progress.
- Obtaining explicit authorization: Each PRP was asked at the beginning of each visit to confirm that the necessary authorities knew of my visit and were aware that I would be taking away data and publications.
- Negotiating descriptions of people's work: During the interview with each PRP, my understanding of what they had said was read back to them so as to confirm the accuracy of the systems and practices operating within their school.
- Negotiating accounts of others points of view: Requests that certain data or views be 'off the record' were granted
- Negotiate reports for various levels of release: Towards the end of the 18 visits, PRPs were asked what sort of report they were expecting from myself and when they would expect it.
- Accepting responsibility for maintaining confidentiality: At no stage was a full list of the participating schools made available to anyone other my supervisor although schools visited knew of some of the schools to be included. The participants of the postal survey were only told of how many schools would be included.
- Retaining the right to report your work: Although certain personal views, for example, a PRPs criticisms of their school management were considered to be 'off the record', the remainder of the data, disadvantaging or not, were reported.

- Making the principles of procedure binding and known: Before each interview a brief chat was had over the background to the research and what format the interview would have. A brief explanation was also given to participants to the postal survey.

Cohen and Manion (1997 p52) argue that this sort of educational research is where one's 'ethical antennae' needs to be especially sensitive. Foskett (1999) adds that the area of educational marketing research in particular is an ethical battlefield. A particular issue facing research among international schools is the difficulty of ensuring anonymity among the small 'world' of such schools. Other ethical issues are;

#### **4.4.1.1) The nature of the participants**

Any research involving personal history and life-stories is bound to be difficult to assess as all the circumstances of a persons life cannot be known. It is especially difficult to compare the life-stories of different people of different cultural backgrounds.

One particular issue is the need not to deceive participants. As Foskett (1999) points out this may be unavoidable since a degree of 'chat' is bound to occur during a friendly visit. However, the researcher faces much frustration in trying to treat each school equally whilst obtaining the necessary information.

#### **4.4.1.2) The use of the data**

Foskett (1999) also remarks that research into the highly sensitive area of educational marketing poses many ethical considerations not faced by normal educational research. In particular the data to be gathered is highly sensitive and knowledge of it could lead to financial and competitive gain. Schools are naturally worried about the use of this data and are wary of the results revealing their identity and leading to another school obtaining competitor advantage. Therefore, anonymity and secrecy are crucial.



Much of the data could, in extreme, be used by opponents of PR and marketing in an educational context to attack its use in schools and thus add to the growing distrust and dislike of its activity. If this research were to be carried out by a commercial company as 'commercial marketing research' any disadvantaging data would be kept confidential between the participant and the marketing company and vetoed in the report. However Kemmis and McTaggart (1981) state that an important ethical principle of research is the right to report the work and as this research does not involve in-depth case study and will aggregate the data, the right to report the findings outweigh any risks .

A further complication arises over who actually owns the data. Given that it has come from a single individual within a school, the data belongs to those individuals and not their schools. However, in order to maintain anonymity, any copy of the data must be given in an aggregated form as they have no claim over data given by another person in another school.

There is pressure for an early release of the data as the collection took almost a whole year and the first schools surveyed may feel deceived by not having received any results. From a methodological point of view the later any results are released the better since that allows for all the data to be fully analyzed and the results to be fully written up. Thus, the temptation for any early release of results was resisted.

#### **4.4.1.3) The nature of the data collected**

PR activity in schools is by its very nature both emotive and controversial . This is not a problem with PRPs but it may affect the interpretation and understanding of the data's findings by others, many of whom may be hostile to PR. Much data is bound to be not only sensitive in a market competition sense but sensitive in a personal sense as it involves practice by individuals. Thus, anonymity is essential.

Foskett distinguishes between research into 'markets' and 'marketing'. This research is concerned with the latter but it could be confused with the former. It is not concerned with the examination of marketing strategies nor the means by which individual schools compete. Nor is it concerned with an analysis of marketing in action like 'commercial academic research'. Instead it is 'academic marketing research'. However, the exact nature of this distinction needs to be explained to participants.

Thus, there is a considerable potential problem with this research being misconstrued as 'commercial marketing research', the analysis of schools in terms of how they compete and compare according to various marketing tools and strategies. 'Academic marketing research' on the other hand is concerned with seeking a better understanding of specific marketing goals and systems. The aim is to provide general information of benefit to all schools unlike the sort of specific commercial research that a school might seek from a hired consultant.

Thus, the key to gaining access was to stress the non-commercial nature of the research. It was vital to allay fears that this research might be for a third party and hence the academic dimension had to be stressed.

A temptation that was avoided was to drop the title 'PR' and pretend that this was not marketing research. Instead, the nature of this research as a form of objective academic marketing research involving the general analysis of PR mechanisms systems and organization of benefit to all international schools, not individual ones, was made clear.

A further complication was with the 'price' to be paid, traditionally access by the participating school to a report of the findings. Participants expect to gain access to the results and may expect information about individual schools. The confidentiality of the research was stressed at the outset and they were able to choose whether to participate.

However, this did not pose a problem, especially given the fact that most international schools are presently full.

#### **4.4.1.4) The context for the research**

This research occurred at a time when many schools were appointing PRPs and questioning their organizational set-up regarding PR practice. Also, as most international schools are presently full the difficulties outlined above may be underestimated by future researchers in the field who undertake research at a time of greater competition and suspicion.

#### **4.4.2) The drawing up of a Cost-Benefit Ratio involving this type of research**

Do the ethical costs of my research outweigh the ethical benefits? The table below shows that there were a considerable number of costs as well as benefits concerned with this research;

**Possible ethical costs**

- The PRP feels obliged or is told to co-operate with the research.
- Those who participate may be upset by findings that are critical and may feel that they show them to be un-professional or un-trained.
- Those who don't participate may feel they have not been fairly represented in terms of the above.
- Some schools may feel upset that their 'secrets' regarding PR and marketing have been unveiled.
- There is a chance that schools may identify themselves or competitors from the results giving rise to the perception of schools gaining competitor advantage.
- Other international schools may be upset at the findings and feel that they do not represent their PR practice.
- The findings may upset the ECIS organization by being critical of the support they give to schools.
- The findings may upset the ECIS organization by being critical of the schools they aim to support.

**Possible ethical benefits**

- This research could help to improve PR practice.
- The present state of PR practice will be revealed helping to outline any areas of concern and needy of improvement.
- This research could help to improve the profile of international schools.
- The profile of PR in an educational context will be improved and strengthened.
- This research could help schools to, learn from other schools.
- The role of PR as distinct from marketing will be revealed and strengthened.
- This research could lead to an overall improvement in the 'quality' of the educational product particularly in terms of communication and contact with 'publics'.
- This research could lead to more contact and co-operation between schools.
- It gives PR practitioners an opportunity to go on the attack and prove their worth.
- It could raise the profile of the ECIS organization and other Regional organizations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This research may be wrongly construed by 'marketeers' as an attack on PR .</li> <li>• It could lead to schools copying or following recommendations not appropriate to their circumstances and thus lead to a worsening of practice .</li> <li>• The small schools may feel that they have been neglected by my research and that the findings are mainly of relevance to Large Schools .</li> <li>• The small schools may believe that this research has worsened the inequity in terms of research and support between them and the Large Schools.</li> <li>• Those who participate may feel that their life-course and career path has been misunderstood or misconstrued.</li> <li>• The female PRPs may feel that my findings are sexist whilst the findings may be construed as an attack on female PRPs .</li> <li>• This research may lead to a use by some schools as a means of competing with other schools and thus lead to increased competition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It could help provide information for the ECIS organization to improve their support for PRPs in international schools .</li> <li>• This research could lead to greater co-operation and networking by the PRPs themselves</li> <li>• This research could allow newly appointed PRPs in particular to identify areas of weakness .</li> <li>• This research could help practitioners to reassure themselves of their practice in relation to other schools .</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This research may undermine current PR practice.</li> <li>• The findings may lead to an attack on PRPs by senior management .</li> <li>• Any critical findings may lead to participants feeling deceived in having taken part.</li> <li>• The releasing of findings may lead to participants feeling that their trust has been betrayed.</li> <li>• Senior school management may be critical of the PRPs for participating in the research</li> <li>• The findings may be used by critics of PR posts in schools as an argument against having such a post.</li> <li>• This research could add to the growing distrust and dislike of PR in an educational context.</li> </ul>	
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#### **4.4.3) Dealing with the ethical issues raised by the Cost-Benefit Ratio**

##### **4.4.3.1) Informed consent**

Issues concerning the gaining of access to the school are best explored using the 4 key dimensions as outlined by Cohen and Manion (1997);

- Volunteerism: All participants should be free to participate but they may come under pressure from senior management to take part. The lack of information over whom the PRP was in the case of most schools meant I had to approach the Head first and rely on them to pass the information over to me or the request over to the relevant person. Thus, I can be fairly confident that the PRPs participated with the co-operation and knowledge of the school senior management.
- Competence: All practitioners ought to be in a position to make an informed decision about whether to take part. In order to do this, I made it clear to the school in my initial contact that I am a teacher at another international school, in London, undergoing part-time PhD level research.
- Comprehension: Each practitioner ought to be made fully aware of the nature and purpose of the research. By contacting the school management first I am also confident that the school senior management had full comprehension of the nature and purpose of my contact with their PRP and ultimate visit to their school.
- Full Information: According to Cohen and Manion (1997) all participants and schools ought to be aware of the factors affecting them by participating, or not, in this research. There is a need to stress that this is private research and the research will only be assessed by the University of Southampton. However, it was stated that findings might be published.

#### **4.4.3.2) Confidentiality and trust**

A major problem is that the researcher holds, or is perceived to hold, a large amount of information of data and information about other schools. It is important to explain that any information will not be released in a way that will allow the school to be identified whilst it is useful to be honest to the PRP about which other schools are involved. This way they can choose to with-hold information if they want.

#### **4.4.3.3) Issues of Deception**

A visit to a school by a person who is perceived, correctly or not, to be an 'expert' in the field that the participant practices inevitably put pressure on the visit to take the form of 'internal marketing'. The participant will want, and perhaps as a 'price' expect, to engage in general marketing chat about their school and the market. Also, some PRPs are new to the job and very keen to make contacts and network.

These issues need to be dealt with, as argued by Hitchcock and Hughes (1988) through the pre-pilot and pilot stages of this research which will be especially important in assessing how far an interview can go and how detailed the data can get before ethical barriers arise.

#### **4.4.3.4) Ethical issues concerning life decisions**

This research inevitably involves the analysis of personal 'choices' and life decisions as it seeks to identify the background and training of PRPs in international schools. However, this poses several ethical problems especially around the notion of boundaries.

As Foskett (1999) notes, no researcher has the right of access to intimate personal histories or life accounts and one can only encourage the emergence of enough information for a general picture to emerge.



#### **4.4.3.5) Tolerance of views**

As this research involved the investigating of the views of PR it involves a specific problem surrounding concepts that have no precise meaning and definition. It is very easy to be critical of the view and understanding that a person may hold about PR especially if it contradicts and differs from one's own view and understanding. The only way of assessing the views and understandings is not by how much they differ from one's own view but from the commonly agreed definitions and understandings.

#### **4.4.3.6) Preserving the dignity of participants**

Preserving the dignity of participants can be a key source of tension. The interviewing of participants showed that there was a level of depth where they became uncomfortable especially when discussing their life-story and activities. According to Cavan (1997) a researcher must forego depth if this undermines the human dignity of participants which means that the pursuing of truth must always come second to the preservation of human dignity. A practitioner new to the job may feel threatened or nervous at the concept of intrusion into their activities whilst an experienced practitioner may resent the questioning of their long standing and seemingly successful practices.

Furthermore, as this research aims to investigate the training, qualifications and activity of PRPs in international schools it may prove to be critical. However, it would be unethical to make the participants seem inadequate, incompetent or even untrained.

Thus, although it is possible to assess what the PRPs are doing and are meant to be doing it is not possible, nor is it ethical, to assess their ability and competence. Research into the activities of a person is always going to give rise to ethical tensions whilst the discovering of the limits of this tension are an important research finding.

According to Aronson and Carlsmith (1969), identifying the limit of tension between my right as a researcher within a democratic society to reveal the truth in the pursuit of knowledge, and improving present practice and the right of individual practitioners in a civilized society to preserving their dignity and self-respect is an important research consideration and finding.

Thus, research of this sort encounters what Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) refer to as the 'Two-Rights Conflict': my right to conduct research and the right of practitioners to self-determination, dignity and privacy.

#### **4.4.3.7) Privacy**

Much of the data is private to the individual and the school. Some of it is private in the sense that it will reveal the views of individual practitioners plus their experiences and background. Hence, much of this data is quite sensitive and may lead to a person feeling that right to privacy has been invaded. It may also lead a school itself to question the extent to which a practitioner gave away data.

It was not clear initially to what extent the researcher would be allowed to collect data and facts. Research among international schools is never going to uncover a uniform set of data as some schools will be more willing to give data than others and some areas of questioning may be no-go areas. This leads to results and depth of data differing from school to school which is very frustrating given the immense pressure on a researcher to visit a school and come away with the 'necessary' information. Despite these feelings though, the right to privacy of the practitioner and the school were respected.

#### **4.4.3.8) Ensuring anonymity**

Although anonymity was promised to participating schools the ensuring of it in practice is difficult given the nature of the schools involved in this research. As there are only 450 ECIS member schools worldwide, anonymity is difficult. Thus only countries where there were a number of international schools were chosen for data collection. Countries with only one or two schools were not used. As the data will be aggregated, individual schools should not stand out.

A further complication surrounds the identity of the PRP. As they are likely to be the only person capable of supplying the data, it is clear who in the school was surveyed meaning that the anonymity of the school is even more important as knowing the school would also mean that the identity of the person surveyed would be revealed. Thus, any data concerning the life-story and personal details of a PRP needs to be written up in such a way as to guarantee anonymity.

My initial idea to merely deal with the 16 ECIS member schools in London would have revealed the identity of all the schools involved and thus made anonymity of both the school and the PRP impossible and made the research unethical. By opening the research out to schools around the world I could guarantee anonymity.

The only way around the anonymity barrier is to use 'micro-aggregation' which could be used to reveal a picture of what the average practitioner and school is doing and what problems they face. Hence, a detailed study of individual schools as case studies was not possible.

#### **4.4.3.9) Preserving equity between the schools**

A key ethical consideration of this research was to maintain equity between large schools and small schools. Initial contact led to a response from 80% of the large schools that I had contacted but only 50% of the small schools responded. A number of small schools was included in order to re-dress the balance. The fact that it is easier and convenient to visit and include large schools in research may explain why small schools are argued by Barlow (1998) to be largely excluded from research.

#### **4.4.3.10) Acknowledging participation**

As long as the data is aggregated in order to draw up a general picture, it should be difficult to identify individual schools. Hence it is ethical that each practitioner and their school will be mentioned in the acknowledgements to this research.

#### **4.4.4) Summary**

This sort of academic marketing research poses many ethical barriers for the researcher, perhaps more than with other types of educational research. This is especially true with research among the small world of international schools. The competitive nature of these schools raises barriers to entry and anonymity is an issue. Preserving equity is also a problem since it is must easier to undertake research among large schools than small ones, although the large American-oriented schools are not actually typical of most schools. Involving more small schools, though, provides its own problems as here the PRP can be placed under more pressure to participate. Research among practitioners involves a number of problems mainly revolving around their career anchor and life-experience. Lastly, marketing research involves the handling of confidential information.

## **4.5) The Research Plan**

### **4.5.1) Introduction**

As the researcher is not actually a school PRP this research cannot be defined as Action Research in the Cohen and Manion (1997) sense. Instead it is an example of Practitioner Based Research: surveying the role and work of PR/marketing practitioners in their work environment. As shown in Chapter 4.3 there are two distinct research questions needing to be investigated by this Research Plan: what is the nature of this work ?, and to what extent does this activity reveal international schools to be a distinct class of institution ?

Although I am not actually a practitioner, I have worked in the field of international schools for 12 years and have served on my own school's marketing and PR sub-committee for the past 8 years, giving a certain degree of insight into the role of the job.

Like Action Research, this type of research has the advantage of being both flexible and adaptable making it a much more suitable procedure for research into a diverse grouping such as international schools. As the study relied chiefly on empirical data, progress needed to be regularly reviewed and the data collection process modified. This research, aside from the pre-pilot and pilot stages, underwent 3 main stages of modification;

- Visits to the first 5 schools dealt with collecting publications, videos and other material. Material in the reception area was noted as was their advertising. Otherwise, the standardized interview schedule was adhered to.
- Visits to the next 7 schools dealt with pursuing the background and life-experiences of the PRP in an effort to fully understand what sort of persons are doing the job.

- Visits to the last 8 schools dealt with issues not fully pursued by the former visits whilst more attention was given to discovering in detail the organizational set-up of the school, the job-description of the PRP and mechanisms used by the PRP involving tools such as the internet and school web-site. More detail were sought about the training requirements of the PRPs and their conference needs, areas further investigated via the postal survey.

This research involved a sequence of firstly collecting general data and then subsequently homing in on key areas. This is a natural development as initial visits reveal patterns and themes that require further enquiry .

A key potential criticism of this sort of research might be the lack of controlled variables especially given the diversity of international schools. Thus, much attempt was made not only to 'sample' the schools to counter concerns about random sampling but also by introducing 4 phases to the research;

#### **4.5.2) The process in detail**

The four distinct stages of the research process are now explained in detail.

##### **4.5.2.1) Phase 1: September 1998-July 1999**

This phase comprised of a Pre-Pilot and Pilot study followed by visiting 17 schools for a face-to-face interview with the PRP. Seven of the schools were in London and the rest in five other European countries. In total, 34 schools were contacted but 14 did not reply and a further three were not interested in being involved. A more detailed summary is below;

**Figure 4.1: Phase 1**

<b>October 1998</b>	<b>pre-pilot at large American school in London</b>
<b>November 1998</b>	<b>Pilot survey in England</b>
<b>November half-term</b>	<b>2 schools in Belgium</b>
<b>December 1998</b>	<b>2 schools in London</b>
<b>December holiday</b>	<b>4 schools in the Netherlands</b>
<b>February half-term</b>	<b>1 school in London</b>
<b>February 1999</b>	<b>2 in Germany, 1 Switzerland</b>
<b>Easter holiday</b>	<b>1 in Germany</b>
<b>Summer holiday 1999</b>	<b>2 in Austria</b>

#### **4.5.2.2) Phase 2: March 1999-July 1999**

This involved a postal survey of other ECIS members but outside of Europe. Initially, 60 schools in 25 countries worldwide were chosen and contacted by fax using the same methodological process as Phase 1: the Head was contacted and asked to pass the request on or give details of who the PRP was. In an effort to get a representative sample of replies, many more schools were contacted in the Far East which has many schools, whilst the USA and Africa has proportionately fewer and hence many fewer were contacted.

An effort was made to include countries where there are many schools so as to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. For example, Russia has very few schools but South Korea has 12 schools which could be included. This was the major constraint.

Finally, including in the sample a mixture of small, medium and large schools was the other main consideration with special effort to include small schools so that their specific problems and features could be compared and contrasted. However, the nature of schools in the Far East, which are mainly very large makes obtaining responses from a representative sample of non-European small schools another constraint.

The information about the schools and identity of the contact person (Head, Principal etc) was, as in Phase 1, obtained from the 1998-99 ECIS Directory and then cross-referenced with the more up to date On-Line Directory ([www.ecis.org](http://www.ecis.org)) since Phase 1 showed that many schools had changed Heads during the academic year.

Twenty-two schools responded (36% response rate) from 15 different countries with 5 giving the name and contact number of the relevant person. The rest were direct responses from the PRP as had happened in Phase 1. One school was in the midst of setting up a PR Office and did not have the time. These details are summarized below;

**Figure 4.2: Phase 2**

Schools contacted by FAX	Number of positive responses received
USA 6	1
Canada 2	1
Mexico 2	0
Venezuela 1	0
Brazil 3	1
Peru 1	0
Chile 2	1
Taiwan 2	1
Indonesia 2	0
PNG 2	2
Philippines 4	3
Malaysia 1	1
Singapore 3	1
Thailand 6	1
S.Korea 1	0
UAE 2	0
Saudi Arabia 2	0
Bahrain 1	0
Botswana 1	0
Kenya 2	0
India 2	2
Australia 3	3
Japan 6	1
China 4	1
Colombia 2	0
Hong Kong 2	1



These responses represented a good geographical spread with a high proportion from the Far East and a representative spread of American, British and International Schools. These schools were sent the postal survey: responses revealed 5 interesting characteristics of ECIS member international schools outside Europe;

- a larger number of schools felt that the Head is the person in charge of PR .
- several schools were at the time setting up a Development Office which is in line with the large schools in Europe.
- several schools equated PR purely with advertising and thus said they did little or no PR. This again was similar to the response from schools in Europe.
- two of the schools could not identify any person in the school who was responsible for PR and thus declined to participate in the research. In both cases they suggested that the school secretary might be the person responsible.
- due to the higher number of Heads being involved with PR, more males were contacted, whereas in Europe most of the designated persons were female.

#### **4.5.2.3) Phase 3 : April 1999- July 1999**

Phase 3 was a postal survey of ECIS member schools in other European countries not included in Phase 1. As the Phase 1 schools were clustered around Northern Europe (UK, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Benelux countries) and around major cities such as London and Brussels, it was decided to include several schools in other European countries. Hence, Spain, Italy, Norway and Sweden with many ECIS member schools were chosen. In particular, the 3 aims were;

- to include southern and eastern / central European countries in the study.
- to include schools not clustered around major cities or other schools .
- to make the survey of more relevance to international schools throughout Europe and to overcome claims of London bias.

**Figure 4.3: Phase 3**

<b>Schools contacted (18 schools in 11 European countries not included in Phases 1 and 2)</b>	<b>Responses received (8 gave a positive response)</b>
Cyprus 2	1
Italy 2	2
Hungary 1	0
Greece 1	1
Denmark 1	0
Spain 2	0
Portugal 2	1
Russia 1	0
Poland 2	2
Norway 3	0
Sweden 2	1

#### 4.5.2.4) Phase 4: July 1999- August 1999

Phase 4 comprised a postal Survey of non-ECIS member international schools involving the move away from ECIS member schools and the inclusion of 3 other international schools in Europe and 7 non-European international schools. This was important as many international schools belong to Regional Associations other than ECIS, the largest.

**Figure 4.4: Phase 4**

<b>Schools contacted (11 in 7 countries)</b>	<b>Responses received (total of 5)</b>
Canada 1	1
Hong Kong 2	0
Australia 2	1
India 2	1
Cyprus 2	1
USA 2	1
Singapore 1	0

All are members of Regional Associations other than ECIS. This stage posed a challenge in involving non-ECIS member schools and in identifying and contacting other international schools without the aid of references such as the ECIS web-site and online directory. However, an extensive search of the internet revealed the identity of 20 international school Regional Associations representing over 550 schools in total throughout the world, similar in nature but much smaller than the ECIS organization. A sample of each association were contacted and included in the postal survey .

A further criticism of this type of research is that it often examines the present state of play without actually examining the factors that influence this behaviour. This particular research is not merely a study of the present state of play but also looks into what variables affect this behaviour so that the organizational culture of international schools can be conceptualized.

Another criticism is that its sample size is usually small and unrepresentative thus its findings are generalized and apply only to the environment in which the research was carried out. As this research is specifically concerned with international schools this needed to be addressed;

a) The size of the sample: It was originally intended to survey only the 16 international schools in London, representing 3 % of all ECIS schools. However, by opening up the survey to a visit of 17 schools in Europe and then a postal survey of other schools, the sample size was dramatically increased. In fact, altogether with surveys by visit and post combined, 7% of all ECIS schools in Europe (25 out of 300) were surveyed as were 7% of all the ECIS schools worldwide (32 out of 450). In total, 68 ECIS member schools were involved representing 16% of all member schools.

b) The validity of the sample: This research deals with a very specific type of school of which there are 24 ECIS member schools in the UK and 450 worldwide. There are only an estimated 2,000 international schools in total world-wide which includes French and German schools, types of schools not normally considered to be international schools. In an effort to draw up a representative sample, the 'ID Matrix' was developed as a framework was devised for conceptualizing and sampling international schools.

### 4.5.3) Summary

A total of 34 schools in 19 countries was involved in the data collection. A simplified summary of where and at which stage is below;

**Figure 4.5: A summary of the school sample**

<b>Country</b>	<b>no. of schools</b>	<b>Phase involved</b>
Switzerland	1	<b>Phase 1</b>
England	5	
Belgium	2	
Netherlands	4	
Germany	3	
Austria	2	
Chile	1	<b>Phase 2</b>
PNG	1	
Hong Kong	2	
Singapore	1	
Cyprus	1	
Sweden	1	
Poland	2	
Portugal	1	
Greece	1	
Canada	1	<b>Phase 3</b>
Australia	1	
India	1	
Hong Kong	1	
Japan	1	

### 4.5.4) Other criteria considered

An attempt has been made to make this research applicable to all international schools not just those in London or the UK or even Europe. Schools from outside Europe have been included in the sample and international schools that are members of other Regional Associations have been included to make the research of relevance to not only the 450 ECIS member schools but to the wider international school community.

In an attempt to overcome criticism of the sample of schools surveyed not being representative of ECIS member and non-member schools, a number of key criteria were considered in order to be able to draw up a list of schools to be contacted and ultimately surveyed. These factors will be explained in detail below followed by an explanation of the difficulties this entails involving international schools.

The following 9 key criteria were considered in drawing up the list of schools to be contacted and ultimately involved in this research and need to be considered by any researcher aiming to involve a representative sample;

- The type of school: Schools were considered to be either nationally biased eg. British or American or Internationally oriented according to their ethos and curriculum.
- The size of the school : The majority of ECIS member schools are Small Schools with less than 350 students and this is certainly the case in Europe with, for example, all 24 schools in Sweden have less than 300 students. This gives rise to the concept of a 'European Model' ECIS school although many other schools are Large Schools with more than 800 students however this size is more typical of the sort of school found outside Europe especially in Asia hence some European schools could be referred to as being the 'Non-European Model'. A few other schools could be considered to be Middle-sized with between 350 and 800 students. Thus any representative sample will consist of many large and small schools and less medium-sized schools.
- The structure of the school: Most international schools have both primary and secondary sections hence any sample is overwhelmingly going to consist of schools with children from Year 3 through to 13.

- The curricula offered: Schools can be categorized as either having a national curricula eg. offering GCSE or AP, or a broader, more international schools have a combination of the two.
- The organizational management structure: Some schools, mainly the large schools will have a designated PR Officer working under the guise of a number of names. With other less large schools, the Head or Principal may also be the PR practitioner.
- The management culture: The culture of the school will be decided by the nature of the ownership and founding of the school. Most large schools are non-profit making and administered by either a Trust or Board, often made up of parents. However, many smaller schools are profit-making.
- The history and development of the school: Most schools are fairly modern and recently founded. A few are pre-World War Two with many being founded immediately post war. The majority were established during the period between 1960 and 1980 whilst many are very modern.
- The level of competition: The situation found in London with 16 ECIS member schools is not normal. The situation in Vienna with 3 ECIS member schools is more normal.
- The range of nationalities: Some schools are dominated by one nationality for example, many American oriented schools have many students from many nationalities yet the American nationals will be dominant. Other schools may have a number of dominant nationalities and some may be dominated by students from the host country. Thus, consideration of the mix and dominance of nationalities needs to be considered.

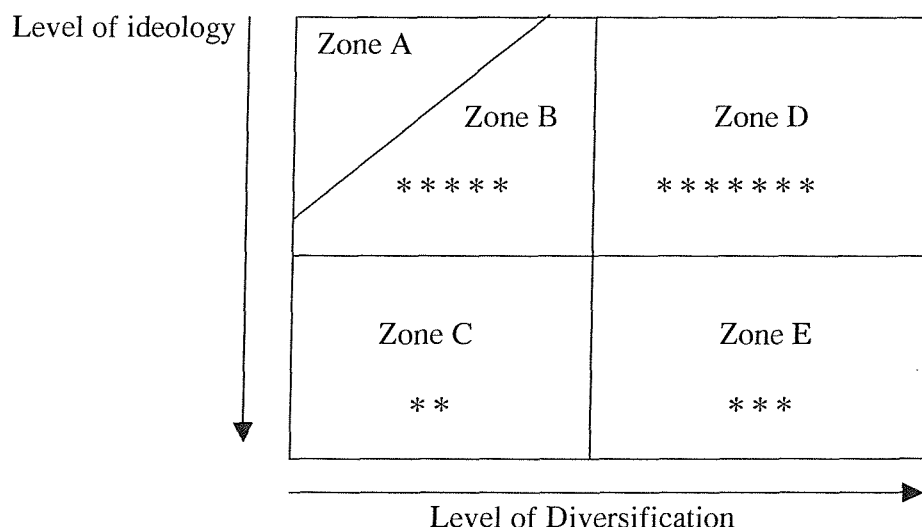
However, sampling and categorizing schools using the above criteria is very subjective. Thus, attempts were made to make the process of categorizing schools more scientific via the application of the 'ID Matrix'. Categorizing schools within this matrix framework made the process much less subjective and should have helped to make the sample of schools involved in the research more representative of international schools as a whole.

#### 4.5.5) An analysis of the sample using the ID Matrix

##### 4.5.5.1) The visits

Of the 17 schools visited, 10 were American or British oriented and positioned within Zones B and D. A further two were in Zone C and 3 were in Zone E. Of course, none were in Zone A. As almost half were in Zone D this made the sample over-weight in these type and under-weight in the other zones.

**Figure 4.6: The schools visited**

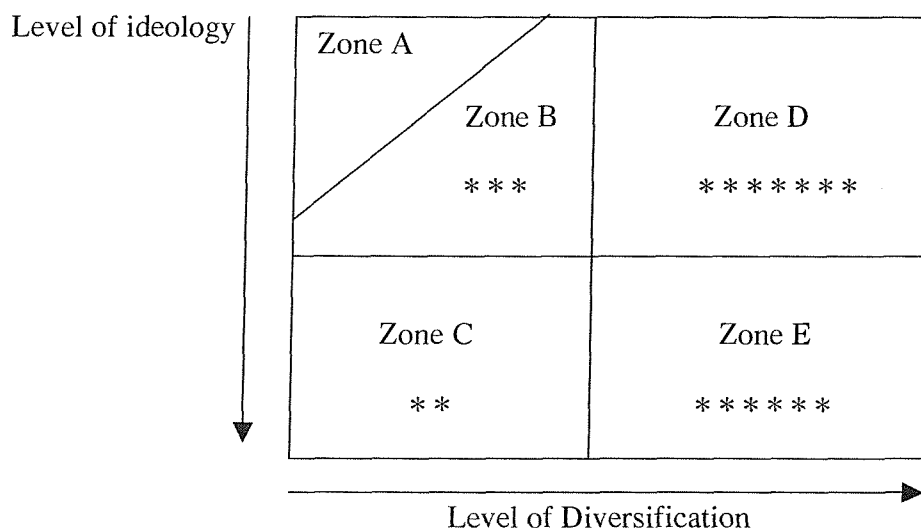


As many of the schools were in London or other large cities, the majority fitted into the Small City Cluster Model in terms of competition (see page for explanation). Most of the others fitted within the American School Cluster Model. They also mainly fitted within the Stand Alone Network Model in terms of their level of marketing networking. The practitioners were almost all female and all had designated marketing positions within the school. In terms of annual turn-over, there was a mix of schools with a fairly stable student roll and schools with a highly volatile student roll. All of these schools were either full or near to capacity. Several had a record student number.

#### 4.5.5.2) The Postal Survey

This brought in more Isolated Cluster Model schools and more Small Country Model schools. Also, more Syndicate Model schools were brought in along with more schools where the head was also the PRP and consequently male. A number of schools were included from the Far East in order to bring in schools where the student roll was not full. An attempt was also made to bring in more Consortia Network schools.

**Figure: 4.7) The Postal Survey**





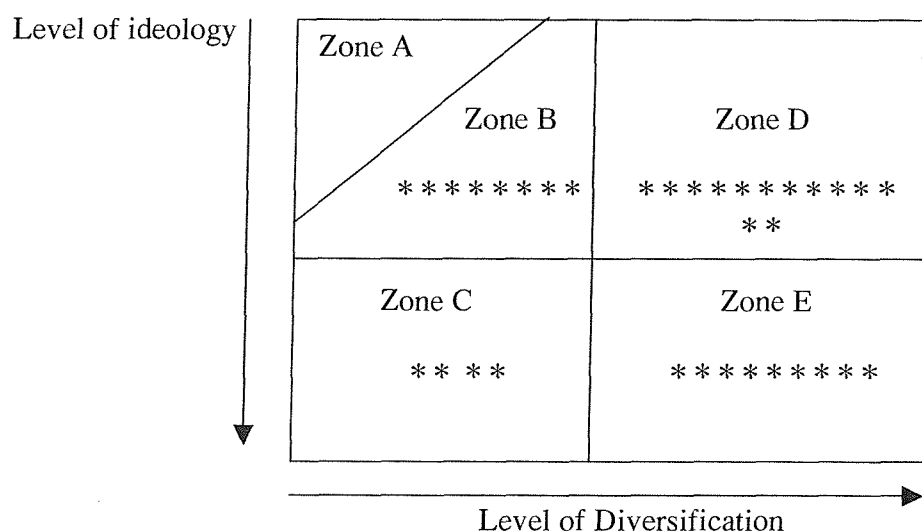
A further two Zone C schools were included which enlarged the sample of ideologically oriented schools. A further 5 Zone B schools were also added as the visits had only included 3 large American or British schools which is too small a sample given the relative importance of this type of school. A further 3 Zone E schools were added along with 6 more from Zone D.

As most international schools in Europe are quite small, one of the main purpose of the postal survey was to bring in schools from outside Europe as they tend to be larger.

#### 4.5.5.3) Summary

Two thirds of the overall sample were from within Zones B and D. A quarter from within Zone E and the remaining 4 were from Zone C. Two boarding schools were included, making up almost 10% of the sample. In terms of ownership, three were profit-making including three limited companies. A further 6 had a Board made up of parents. One school was a Catholic foundation and two were State funded.

**Figure: 4.8) A Summary of the schools involved**



The geographical location was used to calculate the level of competition. Four were in a position of 'high' competition, either within a large city or a large cluster within a small city. A particular focus was made on small Zone E schools within a cluster of larger schools as Harding (1998) argues them to be ignored by research. Nine had a 'high' level of competition due to the fact that they had at least one major competitor school who could be identified. Five were in cities where there was only one international schools and thus they faced little competition.

All but one of the schools had both a secondary and primary department, the usual model of international school. The exception was secondary only. The majority had a mix of international and national curriculum, for example GCSE and IB. Only three had totally national curriculum. The average number of nationalities represented within each school was 50 although two had less than 20 and a further two had more than 80. In terms of history, at least four were founded with less than 50 students but now have over 1000. Three were founded before 1970 and a further three were founded much more recently in the 1990s.

## **4.6) The Data Collection Process**

This chapter analyses the Interview Schedule and explains how this schedule was determined by the pre-pilot and pilot stages of the research process.

### **4.6.1) The Interview Schedule**

The schedule was based upon the 8 stage 'PR Audit Model' outlined by Devlin and Knight (1990). This gives it a logical and systematic sequence and is especially useful and interesting in having a stage beyond the normal last stage of evaluation /monitoring, that of 'shared PR'.

As a supplement, the 5 stage 'PR Process Model' by Kotler and Fox (1995) was used. This is useful for identifying and monitoring the image and attitudes of publics towards the school and is thus too narrow to be used as the main model. This allowed areas of particular interest to stand out such as stage 6, the area of 'Implementation', shown by the Literature Review to be an area in need of more investigation than Stage 5 and 'Programme', for example.

In total, 46 questions were asked. These are summarized below with an outline of the aims of each question. The majority of these questions were designed to gather general information about the nature and scale of PR activity. However, it should be noted that questions 1, 4, 11, and 30 were important questions as they were most likely to gather information that would reveal more about the extent to which schools could be identified as a distinct grouping.

#### **4.6.1.1) The nature and extent of PR activity**

##### **Stage 1: Aims (why use PR ?) : questions 1-4**

This stage seeks to discover what key PR goals schools have and whether they have the 5 key goals as identified by Keen and Greenall (1987). Kotler and Fox (1995) argue that the main goal is to build the image of the organization thus an attempt was made to discover if this applied to international schools whilst also discovering how important the goal of attracting more students is.

This stage also sought to analyze what goals schools share and how they differ and to allow an analysis of what definition of PR they are actually practicing as well as uncovering the extent to which schools practice PR as a planned process.



An attempt was made to discover how these goals are chosen and by whom. Also, an attempt was made to see how goals not usually mentioned by literature and involving problems faced specifically by international schools such as high pupil turn-over and small classes in certain subject areas are seen as important by schools.

Question number	Aims
<p>1: If I give you a list of possible 'PR goals' concerning international schools, which would you say your school's PR Programme was most concerned with? How would you rank them ? (Questionnaire 1 handed out).</p> <p><b>See Appendix A</b></p>	<p>aims: to discover how many aims schools have</p> <p>to discover whether schools share common aims</p> <p>to discover whether the image or pupil numbers was most important</p> <p>to instigate the mentioning of goals not on the list</p> <p>to discover if their goals involve problems specifically related to international schools</p> <p>to make possible an assessment of what definition of PR is being practiced.</p>
<p>2: How are these goals decided ?</p>	<p>aim: to discover who decides the goals and by what process.</p>
<p>3: How have these goals changed ?</p>	<p>aim: to discover what factors affect the choosing of these goals and how they differ over time.</p>
<p>4: If I give you a list of typical problems facing international schools in terms of PR practice, which would you say affected</p>	<p>aims: to discover what schools consider to be their main PR problems .</p> <p>to discover how many problems they face</p>

your school ?. How would you rank them ? ( <b>Questionnaire 2 handed out- see Appendix B</b>	and how these problems are shared by schools. to discover to what extent the goals are meant to deal with the problems facing the school. to investigate problems not mentioned.
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## Stage 2: Targets (who is PR aimed at ?)

The aims of this stage of the research were: To discover how schools select and prioritize their publics especially the parents or pupils. To discover to what extent internal publics such as the school staff are involved. The role of the pupil needs special attention.

The questionnaire aimed to discover the range of publics involved in the PR process. The questionnaire helped to prompt the mentioning of other publics.

Another aim was to discover to what extent schools have a planned PR programme and practice PR as a planned to-way process.

5: What groups of people do you aim your PR at ?	aim: To discover whether only external publics would be mentioned . To discover how many publics are involved.
6: Is this list in order of importance ?	aims: to prompt a less random mentioning of publics. To discover whether the parents and pupils are the most important.

	To discover which publics are not mentioned and to discover whether internal or external publics are most important.
7: Can you explain this ordering ?	aims: to discover how and why certain publics are prioritized and chosen. To discover if this ordering changes over time.
8: If I give you a list of publics involving a typical international school, which would you say you aimed your PR at ?. (Questionnaire 3 handed out).	aims: to discover how many publics the PRP would identify as important for their school. To discover which publics are seen as important.
9: What PR activities do you aim at these publics ? <b>Questionnaire 3 handed out</b> <b>-see Appendix C</b>	aims: to discover what PR activities are aimed at individual publics. To make possible an assessment of how planned and systematic the PR programme is.
10: How and to what extent are the following publics involved in the PR Programme? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• parents</li> <li>• embassies</li> <li>• relocation agents</li> <li>• pupils</li> <li>• staff</li> </ul>	aims: to prompt the mentioning of these key publics and discuss in more depth their significance to the school's PR programme. to discover how key internal publics are involved in the PR process.
11: How and to what extent do you involve the local community ?	aim: to focus upon this major problem highlighted by the pre-pilot and pilot surveys and to discover how schools attempt to overcome the specific problem of not being understood by the local community.

### Stage 3 : Message (what does the PR say ?)

This area of activity is shown by the Literature Review to be of less importance although there is a need to discover how schools decide what to say and to whom as well as an investigation into what messages they send.

An aim were to discover to what extent schools target their message, and in particular, to discover whether they produce different material for different cultures and languages . An analysis was made of the web-site, but there was also a need to discover to what extent schools decide their messages based on research or surveys.

12: Who decides the content of communication to your publics ?	aim: to discover to what extent the PRP decides the content and who else in the school is involved.
13: To what extent do the messages you send out differ according to whom they are sent to ?	aim: to discover to what extent the PR Programme is planned. To discover how schools see the publics as needing different messages and to what extent they recognize that certain groupings of publics are more important than other groupings.
14: What research or surveys do you undergo ?	aim: to discover what research schools do in order to discover how they decide what to communicate and to whom.

#### Stage 4: Methods (how is PR used ?)

This is a large area of enquiry aiming to examine the extent to which schools use particular tools to meet particular goals as well the extent to which schools are making use of modern technology. Contact with the local press was examined. Also, an examination of what resources and formal marketing models the PRP uses will enable a better assessment of PR practice as a subjective activity.

15: What resources /material do you use ?	aim: to discover which and to what extent handbooks or journals are used .
16: What specific PR tools or models do you use ?	aim: to discover to what extent marketing and PR techniques are used especially to meet the main PR goals as identified by Stage 1.
17: How do you attempt to tackle word-of-mouth and the grapevine ?	aim: to determine how important these informal PR tools are and the extent to which they are used and seen as part of the PR process.
18: Do you have a PR budget as such ?	aim: to discover the extent to which PR is seen as important by the school and how the budget differs from school to school . It is aimed to get it expressed in actual numbers or as a % of the school's total expenditure.
19: What material do you have in your reception area ?	aim: to discover what first-impression material is seen by visitors and what mechanisms are involved in it being changed or checked.



20: What use do you make of the internet?.	aim: to examine mechanisms involving the internet and to what extent schools are using modern technology as a PR tool . To examine its use and problems.
21: How would you say your practice has changed over time ?.	aim: to discover to what extent PR practice is monitored and adapted or changed over time to meet changing needs and circumstances.
22: What PR activities do you normally undertake in an academic year ? (Questionnaire 4 handed out).  <b>See Appendix D</b>	aim: to discover what activities schools regard as PR activities plus to discover to what extent schools share common practice.  to encourage a discussion of a wide range of activities.
23: What sort of people visit the school ?	aim: to discover what sort of external publics are involved in the PR programme and to what extent the school is isolated within the local area.

### Stage 5 : Programme (when is PR used ?)

This is a small area of concern although an investigation of the school's PR Calendar and how it is drawn up helps with an assessment of how ad-hoc or planned PR activity is. It will examine how objective practice is and how schools decide when to do a particular activity.

25: Do you have a PR Programme as such ? if so, what are the various stages?	aim: to discover to what extent PR is a planned process involving the sort of PR Audit being carried out by this research.
26: How is your calendar of events drawn up ?	aim: to discover to what extent activities change or are merely a matter of tradition and to discover further the extent to which PR is a planned process.

### Stage 6 : Implementation (how do they do it ?)

This was one of the most important stages to be investigated as it examined the school organizational set-up. It looked at the position of the PRP in the school and how they operate within the management set-up. It also investigated the extent to which the PRP felt this present system works and could be changed to work better. It also looks at the role of other senior management and staff within the school .

This stage examined what outside help and guidance the PRP gets as well as what use the PRP makes of training and conferences. This made it possible to assess how confident PRPs feel about doing PR and what areas they feel they need assistance.

27: Do you use consultants ?	aim: to discover to what extent schools bring in outside help and how confident and competent they are at doing their own PR without help. To discover what help is given and when .
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28: Do you ever carry out a PR Audit like this one ?	aim: to discover to what extent review, change and criticize their practice. To discover how systematic the process of PR is.
29: What role do others in the school play ?.	aim: to discover more fully who is responsible for PR and whether a team approach is used. To help assess to what extent the PRP acts and works in isolation or is helped . To discover what problems and barriers the present organizational structure has and how the PRP would make changes to make it more effective.
30: What is the organizational structure for implementing PR ?.	aim: to discover more fully who is responsible for PR and whether a team approach is used. To help assess to what extent the PRP acts and works in isolation or is helped. To discover what problems and barriers the present organizational structure has and how the PRP would make changes to make it more effective.

### **Stage 7 : Monitoring ( how successful is PR ?)**

This stage examined how schools assess, monitor and judge their performance. It examined what research and surveys are undergone and with whom as well as what data is collected .

An examination was made of the extent to which schools assess the views and attitudes of their various publics, which publics they use for this purpose and well as an examination of what use they make of this data. This area is important as it is likely to be the least done.

31: How do you evaluate your current PR practice ?	aim: to examine how schools monitor their practice, how often and with which tools.  This will also help to examine how activity is determined by evaluation.
32: Do you regard your PR programme to be a success ?	aims: to assess the extent to which see their PR practice to be successful whilst identifying which areas they regard to be not a success and reasons why.
33: If I give you a list of data collected by a typical international school during a normal academic year, which would you say you collect ? (Questionnaire 7 handed out). <b>See Appendix E</b>	aims: to discover what use schools make of data and research and what surveys they actually do.
34: What sort of material do you send to staff ?	aims: to examine how schools deal with the problem of high annual staff turn-over and what internal PR is aimed at the staff.

### **Stage 8: Shared PR (is success shared ?)**

This is a stage usually overlooked by PR audit models but is an important stage aiming to examine the extent to which schools work and compete with each other .

35: What contact do you have with other schools ?.	aims: to examine the extent to which the PRP acts in isolation and to what extent they see other schools as competitors. To discover what level of co-operation operates and how .
36: Are you active within a consortium of some sort ?	aims: to discover what formal and informal links schools have with each other and how they operate within these links .

#### 4.6.1.2) About the PRP

The Literature Review clearly showed that much information needs to be sought directly from the PRP about themselves and in particular their experience, training and views.

37: How would you define PR ?	aims: to discover the definitions of PR being help by the PRP and thus enable an analysis of the effect this has on practice. To discover their understanding of PR.
38 : How would you define marketing ?	aim: to discover whether the PRP confuses PR with marketing or other terms.
39: Do you regard yourself as a 'marketeer' or a PRP ?.	aim: to further examine how the views of the PRP affect their practice.
40: what formal marketing qualifications do you hold ?	aim: to examine the extent to which the PRP is trained and qualified .
41 : What PR experience have you had ?	aim: to investigate the life history of the PRP and in particular their experience of PR in both an educational and business context.

42: What are your views on PR ?	aims: to investigate the extent to which PR is liked and respected and to investigate the views of the PRP around both PR and marketing. Also, to investigate the extent to which PR has been tainted .
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#### 4.6.1.3) Other information gathered

It was intended to gather as much information as possible from the visit to the school. In order to do this, certain material would be sought after and taken away from the visit;

<b>Further background information to be sought regarding factors that might affect PR practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brochure /flyer</li> <li>• newsletter</li> <li>• copy of web-site</li> <li>• pupil/staff/parents' handbooks</li> <li>• curriculum guides</li> <li>• copy of school calendar</li> <li>• copy of school organizational structure</li> <li>• copy of school video</li> <li>• copy of Faculty List</li> <li>• copies of parent newsletters</li> <li>• copy of questionnaires /surveys</li> </ul>
<b>Further information required about the school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• size of the school</li> <li>• development history of the school</li> <li>• cultural background</li> <li>• organizational structure</li> <li>• curriculum details</li> <li>• ownership details</li> </ul>

#### **4.6.2) The Pre-pilot study**

This was carried out in August 1998 using a 2 hour meeting with the PRP of a large American oriented school in London.

It was clear that obtaining some information would be difficult. Obtaining details about ownership of the school was an especially difficult area as was specific information regarding the PR budget. All other information seemed relatively easy to collect.

The pre-pilot helped to outline what material and information might be a problem to obtain and what could be easily obtained. It highlighted areas that involve sensitive data and highlighted areas that would be difficult to examine in a one hour school visit. It highlighted areas that would be time-consuming and would necessitate prior warning or work by the PRP.

It was also found that asking 'what data do you collect' was too intrusive and difficult for the PRP to answer without prior thought. Again, it was decided to draw up a questionnaire with a list of possible data that a school might keep and ask the school which they collect in an average academic year. It was also noted that it must be made clear that the research was not looking for specific answers in terms of facts.

The pre-pilot showed that the questions regarding the PRP were not considered to be too intrusive and ought to elicit a response. The interview schedule proved to be too vague and general in parts with some questions requiring prior notice and thought whilst being too long for a one hour meeting. To overcome these faults, it was decided to have 6 questionnaires with lists from which the PRP could rank answers according to importance. These could be tested out via the pilot stage.

The pre-pilot was useful in also highlighting the fact that compiling a list of publics, for example, that would relate to all international schools is difficult and so the lists ought to be as comprehensive as possible. Doing the pre-pilot with an American oriented school also proved to be useful in highlighting areas that I had not previously thought of and helped to make the interview schedule more relevant for such schools. It raised the interesting issue that American oriented schools are likely to be more hesitant about the giving out of information and data than other types as they are more in competition with other American oriented schools. They are also more wary of their role within the market and the concept of competitor advantage. Thus, extra sensitivity is required when visiting American schools.

Another relevant fact gathered from this pre-pilot was that such schools are not used to being involved in research and this may explain their wariness. Other more generally 'international' schools such as IS Geneva are likely to be more used for such research and thus are more relaxed and prepared for it and may even see it as a 'service' that they are happy and used to providing. Thus, gaining access to certain international schools is always going to be easier than others and the data gathered may be more detailed.

The main conclusion was that as a researcher, one needs to 'spoon-feed' the PRP much more hence it was decided to gather much of the data using lists from which they could choose relevant responses. It needed to be stressed that I was not after specific facts, figures or data regarding their PR practice. For example, I merely need to know whether the increasing of the student roll is a PR goal or not whilst I do not need to know how many students they aim to get. Once it was made clear to the PRP that I did not require specific confidential data and answers and that I was looking to obtain a general over-view of their PR practice, the information was much easier to obtain.



#### **4.6.3) The pilot study**

This was carried out in October 1998 at a one hour meeting with the PRP of a small boarding school in England. This school was very different from the pre-pilot school in that the school was not only much smaller but was British oriented whilst the PRP was also the Head. It was thus much more representative of a small non-American international school, the majority type of international school.

This visit showed that the interview schedule was easy to answer within one hour and that the newly drawn up list questionnaires were understood and clear. Again, the questions relating specifically to the PRP were not seen as too intrusive and elicited detailed answers.

The pilot study raised my awareness of certain areas of study needing to be considered but not raised by the interview schedule;

4. there was a need to look much more into aspects of internal PR practice especially with regards to the involvement of the school staff:
5. there was a need to analyze material displayed in the reception area.
6. there was a need to focus much more on how such schools involve the local community and what contact they have with other schools.
7. there was a need to focus more on the general problems and barriers facing typical international schools.

The pilot visit also raised the point that there is a need for as much information to be gleaned as possible from the school's web-site before the visit.

#### 4.6.4) Subsequent fine-tuning

The use of the Interview Schedule with the first 8 schools showed that Part B concerning the PRP needed much more depth and analysis thus further questions regarding the PRP themselves were added. Also, a much closer analysis of the problems facing the PRP within the school was needed as was a closer analysis of their organizational role within the school. In particular, an emphasis was placed upon how, in their view, improvements could be made to their current situation.

An attempt was made here to elicit ideas and suggestions from the PRP about how their current PR practice could be improved in order to make the research more useful to other PRPs.

43: Do you attend ECIS conferences ?	aim: to investigate what use the PRP makes of conferences and the extent to which they meet their needs and wants .
44: What sort of workshops would you like to attend ?.	aim: To investigate the extent to which the PRP is involved in on-going training. To investigate the extent to which the PRP operates in isolation.
45: How would you change the organizational structure of the school to improve your PR practice ?	aim: to investigate further the organizational barriers to current practice.
46: What specific problems do you face in carrying out your job as a PR practitioner ? How could they be overcome.	aim: to focus more upon what areas the PRP themselves would identify as being barriers to effective PR practice.

#### **4.6.5) The postal survey**

**(See Appendix F)**

The postal survey consisted of questions about areas needing further investigation and the 5 general questionnaires handed out to the schools visited. This allowed a deeper analysis of factors affecting PR practice than came to light during the visits.

A closer analysis was made of the exact situation that the PRP is operating within such as information about the role of the PRP and their position within the school. Further information was also gathered about factors concerning the PRP such as their job description and career-history. This allowed a closer examination of what type of person is doing the job of PRP.

In particular, information was sought on what areas of their activity they feel they need training and suggestions on how to improve current and future practice. Also, further information was sought on the extent to which the needs of the PRP are being presently met by conferences.

More information was also sought regarding what changes the PRP would propose the schools should make to the organizational structure in order to make the job more effective.

**(See Appendix G-K)**

## **5) Overall Findings**

### **5.1) What organizational structures and processes characterize the nature of public relations in international schools?**

This chapter aims to explore the nature and extent of PR activity in international schools. Chapter 5.2 then aims to use this data to address the second key research question, to draw conclusions as to the organizational behaviour of international schools and to what extent this data reveals international schools to be a distinct class of institution.

Chapter 6 then attempts to summarize these findings and draw-up models of how international schools operate, with relation to PR activity, as a distinct class of institution. If indeed this is true. **(See Appendix M for details).**

#### **5.1.1) Introduction: The Leavett Model**

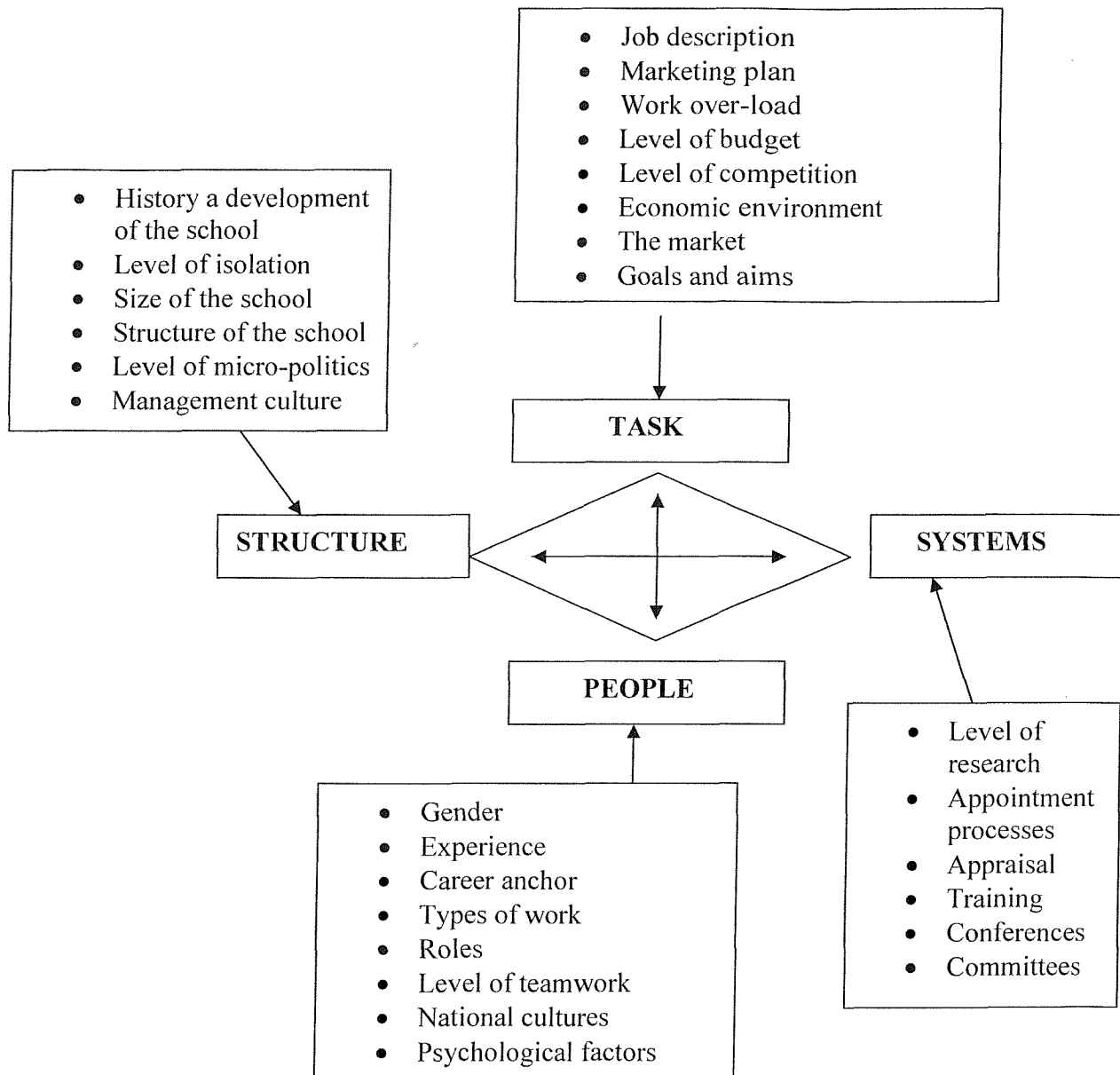
Much consideration was given as to how the data collected through the Research Plan might be analyzed and presented. One method considered was to break down the data according to size of school: small, medium and large. However, the ID Matrix shows that Zone E schools can be both large and small an alternative method would be analyze the data according to placement within the ID Matrix or even by geographical location. However, none of these methods would enable an analysis of how schools behave. One way to do this is to look at schools as organizations with a structure, systems and human resources.

Leavett's 'Diamond Organizational Model' (1985) allows us to do this (see Handy 1985 for an example of its use). This model allows data to be analyzed under four headings: people, systems, tasks and structures. This is a useful conceptual framework for analyzing all aspects of an organization including how the organization functions and what factors affect its behaviour.

A second conceptual framework, the '7-S McKinsey Organizational Model' used by Peters and Waterman (1984) to show the characteristics of 'effective' companies, could have been used. However, this model would involve the analyzing of the data from seven, not four, angles and has less emphasis on the role of people within the organization. Given that this research involved an analysis of the actions and views of PR practitioners, the Leavett Model seemed more appropriate.

The Leavett Model below shows how the data will be dealt with in the chapter. It shows, for example, that the analysis of 'systems' will involve an analysis of data on appointment processes, appraisal processes and the training process offered, both initial and ongoing. The 'structures' sub-chapter will clearly be important as this will reveal data relating to the management and organization culture of international schools. The 'tasks' sub-chapter is likely to be the least useful in terms of categorizing and conceptualizing schools although a study of the goals of PR activity should allow schools to be categorized according to their marketing strategies. The four dimensions used in the Leavett Model will be examined below;

**Figure 5.1: The Leavett Model**



## 5.1.2) Tasks

### 5.1.2.1) A general overview

Schools were given a list of 24 possible PR goals and asked to state if each was a goal or not for them and to rank them. Increasing the student roll, as expected, was seen by nearly all 34 schools as a major goal and was given an average ranking of third, closely followed by the goal of improving the image of the school. The goals of improving the reputation and making the school better known were also given a ranking of generally third or fourth but were mentioned by slightly fewer schools as a major priority of PR activity. All four goals are thus identifiable as 'primary' PR goals. A further 3 categories can be identified. Their position within the questionnaire is contained in brackets.

<b>Primary (seen by nearly all schools as very important goals)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increasing student roll</li><li>• Improving image</li><li>• Improving reputation</li><li>• Making the school better known</li></ul>
<b>Secondary (seen by nearly all schools as fairly important)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• improving teacher-pupil ratio</li><li>• making more use of the internet</li><li>• improving the web-site</li><li>• getting more visitors into the school</li><li>• improving the presentation of material</li><li>• improving home-school links.</li></ul>

<p><b>Fairly important</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing staff turn-over.</li> <li>• Reducing student turn-over.</li> <li>• Portraying exam results better.</li> <li>• Making more contact with the local community.</li> <li>• Improving internal communication.</li> <li>• Improving contact with embassies and companies.</li> <li>• Improving contact with parents.</li> <li>• Getting more visitors.</li> <li>• Improving coverage in local press.</li> <li>• Making more use of ex-parents and students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Minor (seen by many as a goal but unimportant)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• having more contact with other schools</li> <li>• obtaining more data</li> <li>• better contact with non English speakers</li> </ul>

It can be seen that the obtaining of data is not considered to be an important PR goal which explains the lack of data collection in most schools. The isolation of many schools is also explained by the fact that most schools do not make contact with other schools. Press relations and local community relations also came low down the list of priorities and again this is reflected in the lack of activity. A more detailed break-down of these goals shows that only the smaller schools are still aiming at the general goal of attracting more students.



Hence it would appear that many of the larger schools do indeed periodically change their goals and review them depending upon circumstances. Many schools feel they suffer from a poor image which explains why the improving of their image is second to the improving of the school roll as a goal of PR activity. The improving of reputation is next, followed by the goal of making the school better known. The goals of portraying exam-results better, making more contact with the local community, improving contact with embassies and improving coverage in the local press are all ranked much lower and seen by only 20-30% of schools as a goal of their PR activity.

It can be concluded that schools are aiming their PR activity mainly at the secondary goals of improving the web-site and improving the presentation of material, goals that can be met by formal PR activities and the success of which can be measured and evaluated. The primary PR goals of improving the school's reputation, image and making the school better known are more neglected as they involve more informal PR activity that cannot be easily measured and their success is difficult to evaluate especially without data collection. PRPs prefer to deal with goals that are measurable and easy to meet via formal PR activities rather than the more intangible goals even though they may regard them as more important.

A main concern is the view that the local community does not understand what the school is or does. This manifests itself in the view by the local community of 'the posh, exclusive school on the hill'. It more formally manifests itself in the problems some schools have with the local government over planning permission and the problems some schools have with students being attacked in the local area. The image problem is usually worsened by the fact that most students are bussed in rather than living within the local community whilst the international school by and large has better facilities than the local schools.

The lack of formal surveys by schools means that the full extent and reason for this misunderstanding is not known. Some schools seem to prefer to take a 'fortress' stance whilst other schools are trying to build links with the local community. Few PRPs have the time to visit the local community and at least 90% spend the vast majority of their time within the school. This is linked to the fact that few schools engage in local press activity which could at least raise awareness of the school and its activities. Some schools also expressed concern over lack of communication with immediate neighbours who often complain of noise and traffic. This is a common external PR problem and is worsened by the fact that few schools seem to bother to keep the neighbours informed of events nor apologize for them.

The extent and nature of activity can be seen to have a direct correlation with the number of students within the school and the extent to which the school roll is near capacity or target. An interesting fact is that 95% of international schools in Europe are full at present or at least on a record high roll. The others have more students than they have had for many years with 60% having more students than they had 2 years ago. This is as one would expect given the strong state of the US, British and euro-zone economies which leads not only to increased consumer spending but also more growth by Multi-national corporations.

The second edition of 'is', the bi-yearly journal of the ECIS, stated that all international schools were booming. But, this is not the case with many schools in the Far East and Latin America where economic recession and political turmoil have led to their student numbers falling. Indeed, only 41% of non-European schools are actually full (only 33% in the Far East ) although their numbers are steadily rising. Also, only 80% of small schools (with less than 300 students) are full which seems to show that they benefit less from a favourable economic climate. This may be explained by the fact that small schools are much more reliant on individuals joining the school unlike the large schools who have large clusters of company students.

The 'is' journal also stated that this growth was due to the growing popularity of the IB as an international curriculum. However there is little evidence to support this case. There is also little evidence that the growth in student numbers has been caused by increased PR activity. Only 17% of schools feel that greater use of this tool is an explanation for the increase in roll. A further 5% see improvements with the brochure as an explanation. Overall, only 23% feel that marketing activity had been a contributing factor. It should be noted that there are no goals that all large schools feel as being very important. Most large schools are not too concerned about any real PR goal at the moment and the goals they do have are not considered vital. One would assume this might change if they were to start suffering a fall in student numbers when the more general goals of the smaller schools might start to obtain a higher ranking. Small schools have three very general goals: to make the school better known, improve its reputation and attract more students. The specific goal of improving the web-site is not important for small schools but is very important to larger schools.

Improving reputation is a concern to both schools in Europe and beyond although the European schools have the specific goal of improving links with embassies, and companies and non-European schools have a goal of attracting students and improving image. The main aim of Zone B schools is to improve the reputation and image and increase the school numbers but these are shared with more specific goals such as improving the web-site. These schools consider very unimportant a large number of goals that other schools see as important.

Zone C schools have many common general goals and only one or two individual goals. These common goals though are quite diversified such as the general goal of making the school better known and the specific goal of improving press coverage. The interesting point to note is that despite the diversity of school found within this Zone, these type of schools have much in common in terms of PR goals and aims.

Zone D schools are clearly very similar to Zone B schools in having a large number of goals that are important to individual schools. They also share the same common major goals of, increasing the roll, improving reputation and making the school better known but also have a different major aim in getting more visitors to visit the school (goal 15). The large number of specific aims that individual schools are concerned about, though, shows that Zone B and D schools are similar in having moved beyond the aim of simply increasing the student roll

Zone E schools are very different in having a large number of aims that are seen as being not very important to any school. Only 2 goals are shared as major aims and one of these, the goal of portraying exam-results better is a very different goal not mentioned by other schools but reflecting the more competitive nature of these types of schools who are much more in competition with the larger Zone B and D schools. They also find it much harder to compete in terms of reputation and image and hence seem to aim to use exam-results as a niche although the goal of improving reputation is also very important and is clearly linked to exam results.

This type of school can clearly be seen to be a much more diversified grouping in terms of PR goals and aims reflecting the specific marketing situation of each school and the varying strategies adopted by each school. An interesting point is that all schools see the goal of obtaining more data to be an unimportant goal of PR activity as is the need to make more contact with other schools. Yet, both these issues were identified by this research as areas that PRPs ought to be working on to improve current practice

A major finding of this research was the extent to which schools regard the 'school roll being determined by economic conditions within the world economy' to be a major problem and issue affecting PR activity. Ninety-five percent of all schools said this was a major concern and this issue received an average ranking of third. A closer break-down reveals a more complex picture;

**Figure 5.2: To what extent do you regard changing world conditions to be a major problem for your school?**

<b>Type of school</b>	<b>Major concern?</b>	<b>Average ranking?</b>
<b>All schools</b>	95%	3
<b>Large</b>	100%	2
<b>Medium</b>	100%	1
<b>Small</b>	95%	3
<b>Schools in Europe</b>	90%	4
<b>Schools outside Europe</b>	90%	2
<b>Zone B</b>	95%	4
<b>Zone D</b>	90%	3
<b>Zone C</b>	80%	8
<b>Zone E</b>	70%	1

It can be seen that it is much more of an issue with larger schools than small schools and is more of an issue outside Europe. In particular, the medium sized schools regard it as a major issue. It is an issue for all Zone B and D schools. For small Zone E schools it is especially an issue as they tend to be more dependent upon particular small national groupings. For the larger schools it is likely to be an issue as they are more reliant upon large multi-national companies for providing the bulk of their intake. This explains why large schools are much more likely to collect data and are concerned to make contact with local government. Schools outside Europe, especially in the Far East, have recently felt the forces of recession and are thus more concerned with student numbers.

### 5.1.2.2) Issues affecting the fulfilling of tasks

Schools were asked to identify what issues they saw as affecting and determining their PR practice. The answers fall into 4 categories;

<b>Mass Issues (seen as very important by almost all schools)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobile international communities</li> <li>• School roll dependent upon world economic conditions.</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary Issues (seen as important by most schools)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High concentrations of certain national groupings</li> <li>• High annual turn-over of pupils</li> <li>• Clashes between the culture of the school and parents</li> <li>• The large range of publics involved with the school</li> <li>• Roll being affected greatly by the grapevine and 'word-of-mouth'</li> <li>• Certain parents having much contact with others</li> <li>• Difficulty in publicizing the school's achievements</li> <li>• Many prospective parents are presently living abroad</li> <li>• Falling roll</li> <li>• Poor communication between internal publics</li> <li>• Lack of data and knowledge of views and attitudes</li> <li>• Poor attendance at school functions#</li> </ul>

<p><b>Pet Issues (not an issue for many but important to those it affects)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High annual turn-over of staff</li> <li>• Much competition between schools</li> <li>• Difficulty in portraying exam results to consumers</li> <li>• Lack of contact with local community</li> <li>• Wide range of area that contains target market</li> <li>• Lack of contact with the local press</li> </ul>
<p><b>Consensus non-Issues (an issue only for a few schools and not important)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pupils having much power in choosing the school</li> <li>• lack of feeder schools</li> <li>• certain classes being very small</li> <li>• lack of contact with other schools</li> <li>• difficulty in keeping up with technology such as the Internet.</li> </ul>

The main 'mass' issues revolve around the notion of 'disruptive communities' and the fact that the roll and annual turn-over of international schools depends greatly upon the movements of communities, which reflect, in turn, previous economic conditions. These are by far the major issues of concern to most schools. There can also be seen to be a large number of secondary issues that are an issue to most schools but they are not considered to be serious. These include the high concentration of certain national groupings and the role of the grapevine/ word-of-mouth. The 5 issues seen as unimportant concern the role of the child and the parent in having power to choose a school.

Small schools share 5 major concerns although the effect of economic conditions is easily the main one. Issues such as improving the web-site are of no real concern to small schools who are much more concerned with broader strategy and issues affecting their economic 'survival'. Medium sized schools have one major concern: the affect of economic conditions on the student roll. Many medium sized schools are very reliant upon one or two large companies for most of their students unlike the larger schools who also have a large proportion of individual national groupings. The unpredictability and volatility caused by companies moving in or out of the local area is a much bigger concern although they are also affected by the movement of national groupings. For one or two medium sized schools there is also a further main issue one of which is lack of contact with the local community, an issue shared with smaller schools.

For large schools the most major concerns also revolve around the notion of 'disruptive communities' and the affect it can have on the annual turn-over of students. Another interesting major concern is over the large number of publics involved in the PR process, a reflection on the feeling by many PRPs in large schools that they have to neglect certain activities due to lack of time and resources. It is interesting to note that there are 7 issues of concern to some schools with 'poor communication with internal publics' being to the fore.

A striking point is that large schools have more specific concerns surrounding actual PR practice and tools such as improving the web-site whereas smaller schools tend to be concerned with the broader and more general concerns of improving the school image, reputation and attracting more students. For large schools these latter issues are not really a PR concern.

All schools are concerned about the effect of economic conditions but schools outside Europe also have other major concerns including poor communication among internal publics, high concentration of certain national groupings and a falling roll reflecting the nature of economies in many countries outside Europe.



However, it should be noted that for some schools in Europe, a falling roll is a major issue although it is more likely to be the fear of a future fall rather than the current situation. All schools in Europe also have a large number of issues of secondary concern whilst the lack of contact with other schools is universally seen to not be a problem .

Zone B schools have 3 main 'consensus' issues revolving around concerns over the effects of economic conditions. It can also be seen that this lack of diversity and the fact that these school are dominated by either American or British students (Issue no. 3) is a further major concern. Zone E schools have no common shared concern of any major importance. High annual turn-over of students is the biggest concern but only to 80% of schools and was mentioned mainly by the bigger Market Opportunist schools and was ranked only second on average followed by concern over poor internal communication. Instead, Zone E schools tend to have individual major concerns. It can be seen that 9 were mentioned in total and these were more from the smaller schools. Unlike the Zone B schools, the lack of diversity is not a concern as these schools are very diverse in terms of student and staff body .

There is a large difference between the concerns of large and small schools with the larger schools being more concerned with specific issues which are of general concern to most schools whilst the smaller schools tend to have very individual concerns and have few shared concerns.

Zone C schools are very different in having no major shared concerns. Only 50% of schools are concerned about the effect of 'disruptive communities', a reflection on the fact that these types of school suffer much less from the sudden movement of large communities and have a fairly static roll. Instead, these schools have a large number of specific individual concerns, like Zone E schools, but many of which are different such as the concern over some parents exercising too much power over other parents.

Zone D schools are much more similar to the large Zone B schools in having several shared major issues mainly to do with the effects of economic conditions. All other issues are of no real concern. Unlike other groups of schools these schools have no specific individual concerns.

#### **5.1.2.3) PR as a planned task: the marketing plan**

Only 50% of schools have a marketing plan although 20% have a detailed plan with formal targets and strategies. This falls to 33% with small schools. Furthermore, some schools (about 10%) used to have such a plan but had now dispensed with it owing to the fact that their student numbers are so high. Only 5% of small schools in Europe have any form of contingency plan for a possible future fall in numbers due to the fact that they do not see it as necessary unlike schools in the Far East where 50% of schools have a plan although this can be expected to fall as their numbers rise. Another fact is that only 50% of small schools have any sort of short term Development Plan as compared to 67% of all schools. However, only a further 10% have a longer term (typically 10 year ) plan .

Schools tend to draw up a marketing plan when their numbers are falling rather than rising- the student roll greatly affects the degree of development planning . Moreover, these figures raise the interesting paradox that international schools dispense with marketing and development planning at just the moment when they might be argued to most need them – when their numbers are rising or full. There is an argument to be had over whether small schools in particular ought to have a Marketing Plan especially at a time of rising numbers as, paradoxically, they have the most to lose by the rising student number phenomena.

Despite the fact that most schools in Europe are full or have rising numbers, at least 80% of all schools still see the increase in student numbers to be the major goal of their PR activity followed by the improving of the school's image and then the improving of the school's reputation. Furthermore, schools are three times more likely to see the goal of increasing the student roll as their main PR goal as compared to the arguably more relevant goal of reducing the turn-over of staff and students.

Thus, the primary goal of PR activity seems to apply no matter what the economic conditions are and no matter how well schools are doing in terms of student numbers whilst the goal of retaining students, which might be argued to be equally important, is always seen to be a much lower priority. There is little evidence that the increase in student rolls has led to schools shifting the aim of their PR activity away from the further increasing of the student roll although two did view the increasing of the student roll as number 10 on their list of priorities which shows that for some schools, other PR goals have now become the priority.

Reducing student turn-over was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> overall out of 24 PR goals mentioned by schools whilst the reducing of staff-turnover, a significant feature in many large schools, was ranked 16<sup>th</sup>. This is despite the fact that the average small school shows a turn-over of 30% and the average large school 10-15%, equal to 150 students for many Zone B and D schools.

Only 5% of all schools show any evidence of producing material either wholly or in part in a language other than English, a figure which rises to 10% in small schools but falls to 3% in large schools. It is not felt necessary to publish PR material in any other language whilst it is difficult and costly to do so.

#### **5.1.2.4) PR as a planned task: the job-description (see Appendix N and O)**

Only 2 practitioners were able to produce a full, written job description whilst a further 4 were able to produce a job description that made a passing remark to PR practice : usually a 3 or 4 line reference along the lines of ‘the PR Officer is responsible for PR and marketing activity within the school’. The remainder of practitioners were unable to produce any written job description.

It is not known to what extent the 30% of practitioners who said they have no job description are linked to the 33% of all practitioners who expressed being seriously over-worked but this link might be significant. Certainly, many PRPs feel that the absence of a job description leads to their being given tasks to do simply because no other person is delegated to do it and hence these practitioners, mainly Heads, felt that a detailed job description would reduce this sort of ‘overspill’ of responsibility. Forty-two percent of all practitioners feel that a more detailed job description would be beneficial to them, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and 50% among Heads.

However, a further 12% of practitioners feel that they have a job description that is too detailed and wish to see it simplified: 20% in small schools and 25% of Heads. They feel that their over-work is linked to having an over-complicated job description.

#### **5.1.2.5) The role of increasing student numbers as the key task**

The major factor affecting PR activity is the volatility of the school roll affected largely by economic conditions. This is the main catalyst explaining PR behaviour in all types of school. The extent and nature of activity can be seen to have a direct correlation with the number of students and the extent to which the school is near capacity or target.

There is also little evidence that this growth was due to marketing/ PR activity with only the web-site being seen by 17% of schools as being a contributory factor whilst 5% felt that their improved brochure was a factor. Overall, only 23% of all schools felt that their marketing activity had been a factor. Few PRPs attribute the rise in their student numbers over the last 3 years to their PR activity; the economic conditions of the host and mother country are seen as the causes. This leads to a strong feeling of complacency, a factor which operates at two significant levels.

- The PRPs in small schools are especially prone to feeling the lack of a need for a PR Plan. This is a paradox given that these schools are most likely to suffer from a downturn in economic conditions.
- Because the school finances are good, the school management tend to see no need for any form of formal written plan.

This second point may be because management do not see PR as being important, certainly not at the present time. In fact, 24% of PRPs feel that their senior management do not fully understand the role and importance of PR to the school, this rises to 60% in small schools. A total of 58% feel that management do not take PR and marketing as seriously as they ought to, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and in schools in Europe, where the roll is likely to be very high.

There is a distinct link between complacency and importance attached towards PR activity and the student numbers, with PR being seen as something to be done when the numbers are falling. Due the good student numbers, 12% of PRPs across all types of school feel that their management take PR less seriously than they used to.

Many PRPs express concern that the school teaching staff fail to understand the importance of PR and marketing. This may be because the staff tend to not understand the tenuous nature of the school roll and assume that the student numbers will remain constant, a point that heightens the need for more communication between PRP and ordinary teaching staff.

At present, contact with the teaching staff is seen by the PRP to be an academic job and hence one left to the Head to perform. No less than 60% of all PRPs (80% of all non-Head PRPs) expressed a desire to see the staff take more interest in PR activity, a figure which rose to 80% in small schools.

#### **5.1.2.6) The task of competing with other schools**

This research revealed little evidence of schools practising any degree of marketing differentiation despite the fact that almost all schools have at least one school whom they consider to be a 'serious' competitor and at least 2 other schools which are 'fairly serious' competitors. Few schools adopt different strategies aimed at competing with different schools. Schools tend to adopt a general marketing strategy with no attempt made to adapt to different competitor situations. Little evidence was found of any link between PR activity and the level of competition between schools. Schools in 'high competition' areas, in cities or countries with clusters of international schools appear to carry out the same degree of PR as isolated 'low competition' schools.

The visiting of the 17 schools revealed a very complex picture in terms of competition between schools although four distinct models of behaviour can be identified;

- The Isolated Cluster Model: Many schools have no international school competitor but instead compete with local schools on the basis of ideology or curriculum. This is common in Scandinavia but is also evident in Japan and Australia.
- The City Cluster Model: Many European cities such as Vienna and Madrid have three or four schools, usually one small Zone E type school and three larger Zone B and D type schools.

- The Small Country Model: Some small countries such as Singapore and Hong Kong have a number of schools, all in competition with each other. This sort of large cluster is also found in cities such as Brussels and London.
- The American School Cluster: Many of the American oriented schools compete with a small cluster of other American type schools. This is found in London and in the Netherlands. Here, competition between the schools is often quite intense.

The only significant difference involves the type and direction of this activity especially between large and small schools. The PR activity of many schools depends upon the degree to which they are situated within the cluster. Also, many large cities have a cluster with one small school and several large schools. In this situation the small schools adopt a strategy of finding a niche with which to compete, normally based on ideology as a 'proper international school' or size of the school and their niche as a 'family' school. Small schools in a cluster of larger schools realize that they are not in a position to compete head to head with large schools who promote their facilities and buildings and so they cannot adopt aggressive PR strategies. Instead, their PR strategies tend to be aimed more at publicizing their existence and keeping their present consumers happy in order to rely on word-of-mouth networking.

Several large schools feel that they do not have to promote or publicize the school much whereas several small schools feel under threat by the existence of large schools. However, they do not compete in an aggressive manner. Of course, this research was carried out at a time of rising and full school roll for many schools so there may be a lessening of the view of seeing other schools as competitors.

Data collected regarding the marketing strategy of schools reveals one of the reasons why schools tend to not compete in practice with each other. This is because each school tends, to one degree or another, to have a niche market within which it operates and may only see one or two schools to be 'competitors'.

It also depends upon the degree to which schools are 'first preference'. Information gathered about the marketing strategy of schools allows for a further placing of schools within the ID Matrix;

- Zone A schools tend to monopolize a particular national community. Thus, they are 'first-preference' for that community and can be identified as 'Market Monopolizers'.
- Most Zone B schools tend to focus their PR upon the 'mother' country. Some American oriented schools are even able to focus upon particular US States. These schools can be identified as 'Market Providers' as they exist to serve the needs of a particular market. Again, they tend to be 'first-preference'.
- Most Zone C schools use PR activity to create a particular niche market based usually upon ideological or academic achievement grounds. As they tend to 'make' a market they can be identified as 'Market Makers'.
- Many Zone D schools have changed their PR activity over the years and have moved away from merely existing to serve a particular market. They have aimed to become more 'diversified' and can be identified as 'Market Providers'.
- Many Zone E schools are small schools in competition with several other schools. They have no particular single market but instead aim to serve different markets at a different time. They depend much upon taking the opportunity to serve a market and hence can be identified as 'Market Opportunists'.

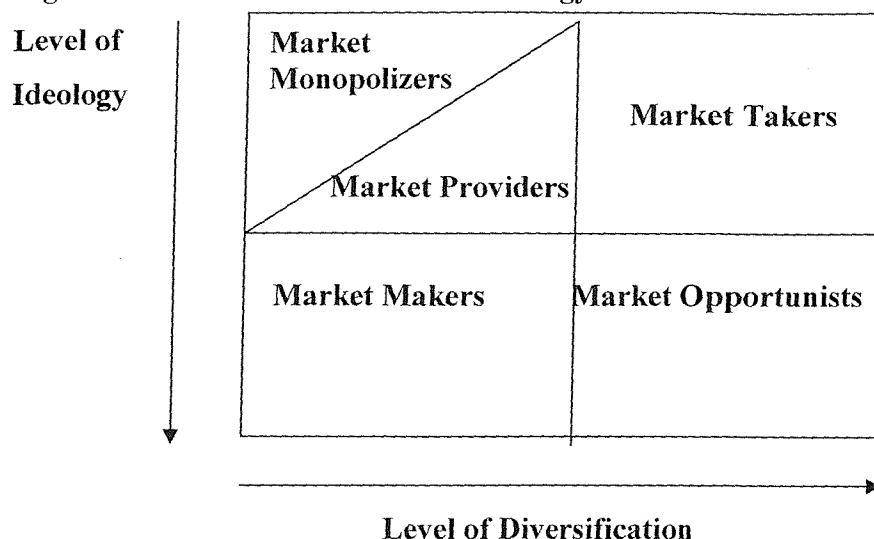
The link between the categorization of schools and their PR activity is summarized on the next page.



**Categorizing international schools according to PR activity**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Categorization</b>	<b>Degree of advertising and Press Publicity</b>	<b>Typical features of PR activity</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Market Monopolists</b>	Very low, no need	Sole market Known by insiders but not by outsiders Little contact with outside world No marketing officer or marketing plan Very stable student roll. Sole preference No close competitor. No publicity
<b>B</b>	<b>Market Providers</b>	Little or no activity	Aim at national market Aim at particular areas and use local contacts in 'mother' country. Selective with quotas on nationalities. Have a marketing Officer and Development Officer First preference. Formal publicity
<b>C</b>	<b>Market Makers</b>	Medium to high	Build a niche market. Little competition. Well known. Have as catchment market Selective and have market advantage via exam results
<b>D</b>	<b>Market Takers</b>	Medium	Trying to diversify away from main market and attract more ESL students. First preference. Still aim at main market . Much competition with Zone B schools.
<b>E</b>	<b>Market Opportunists</b>	Very high	Aim to seek out new market. Aim to capitalise on world events. Second preference Over-spill schools. High annual turn-over, highly volatile. No marketing or development plan. Small, friendly, family school. Unknown/ less known Emphasis on publicity and promotion. Emphasis on informal marketing

**Figure 5.3: The ID Matrix and PR strategy**

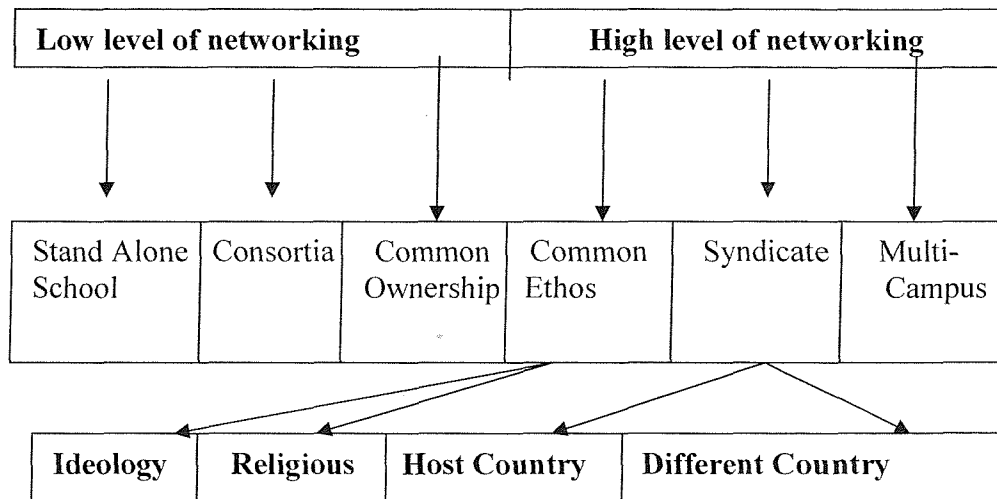


It is also interesting to note that it is easy to assume that international schools operate as single units with little contact with others. However, this research gathered information about the history of each school and about the extent to which schools 'share' marketing. This revealed a very complex picture in terms of the level of PR networking among schools;

- Some schools have no links and hence can be identified as 'Stand Alone Schools'.
- Some belong to a loose consortia such as LISA and share a common web-site and brochure.
- Some have a closer relationship with another school, maybe being owned by the same owner. Again, they tend to share a common PR strategy.
- Some share a common ethos or ideology such as the UWC schools. Again, they have a common PR strategy.
- Some have 'sister' schools in other countries and have a common founding ethos. Examples include the TASIS schools. These schools have a common PR strategy and a single Development Office.
- Some schools, not many, have more than one campus with each being marketed as a single entity. For example, ISGeneva.

The model below summarizes this;

**Figure 5.4: The Level of PR Networking**



#### 5.1.1.2.7) Conclusions

Five key Organizational Culture features can be identified;

- There is no culture of competitive marketing practice among international schools. Although each school may regard other schools as a competitor in some form or other, this does not lead to a marketing strategy. Instead, all schools are treated as the same: in a sense all schools are seen as competitors. This may be partly explained by the fact that most schools are presently full and are not a competitive threat.

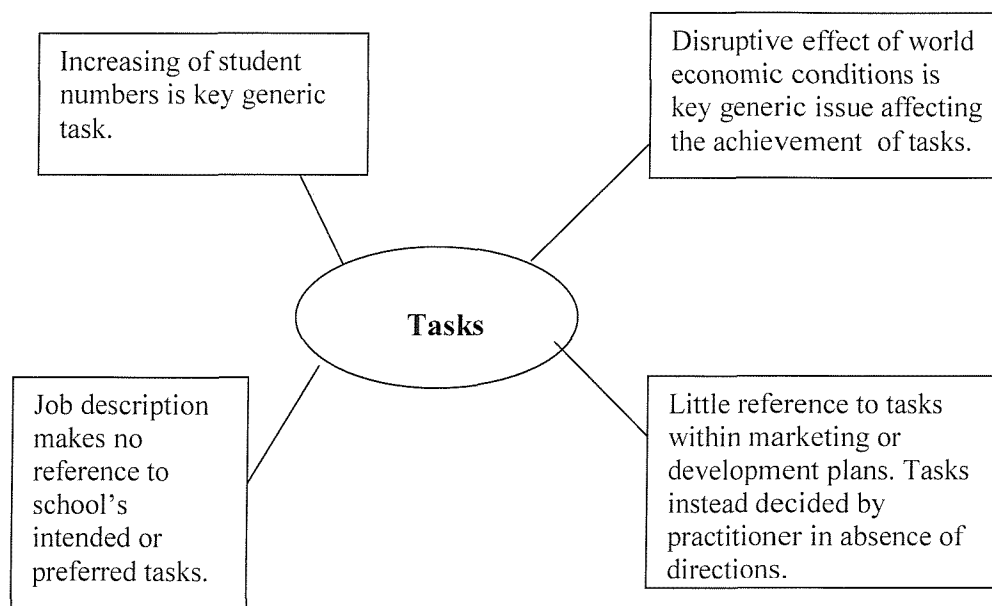
- The fact that most schools are full or at a satisfactory level of student roll leads to a very evident culture of complacency. As the increasing of student numbers is the key task, it is to be expected that schools will relax their marketing activities when their student numbers are satisfactory. However, the nature of international schools means that student numbers could suddenly fall especially if local and worldwide economic conditions were to worsen.
- There is no culture of written and directed tasks regarding PR activity. The job description rarely contains any detailed reference to PR activity and few examples of written strategies or policies exist.
- There is no culture of experimentation regarding PR activity. Instead, the increasing of student numbers is taken as the safest and easiest task. Little effort is made to collect data, for example.
- The problem of the student numbers being prone to disruption through economic change leads to a lack of long term or even medium term planning. Few schools have a Development Plan that makes any reference to PR and marketing activity. Most schools feel that it is difficult and futile to try to draw up any sort of long term strategy or target setting hence there is very little evidence of a Marketing Plan.

The main task of PR activity is to attract more students in order to ensure that the school roll is constantly full. Many other goals were also identified but this, as expected, was the main task despite the fact that most international schools are presently full. It was also discovered that these tasks are very much decided by the PRP with little evidence of a written PR /marketing plan nor of any target setting by management. Furthermore, no job description makes any reference to goals or intended targets. It would appear that the task of attracting more students is a task set by the PRP in absence, and maybe because of the absence, of other specified tasks.

It would appear that schools see the main tasks to be those that can be pursued in isolation without support or contact with other bodies. To this extent, little attention is made to competing with other schools. Instead each school prefers to set about achieving similar goals without reference to each other even though they are in fact competing for a limited number of students.

This research also revealed the main factors affecting the pursuit of these objectives with the key generic issue being the disruptive effect of economic conditions. This raises the fact that most international schools face a constant uphill task of maintaining and increasing student numbers in the face of world economic conditions, a factor which they can neither fully predict nor solve.

**Figure 5.5: A summary**



### **5.1.3) Structure**

#### **5.1.3.1) Communication factors**

Within the school, the PRP is isolated from other staff, from the senior management and from the students. Outside of the school there is the issue of the PRP being isolated from other schools and other fellow practitioners.

The PRP in small schools feels more isolated than the PRP in larger schools . One would expect to find that the PRP in a large school would have little time to make contact and meet people yet only 5% of PRPs in large schools compared to 20% of PRPs in small schools feel isolated within the school (15% in medium sized schools). This may be because the PRP in large schools is more likely to have a secretary and make less contact with parents unlike the PRP in small schools who is likely to be operating alone and particularly busy showing parents around the school.

In general, 12% of all PRPs feel isolated within the school with this being a problem for the PRPs who were not also the Head. This clearly is linked to the extent to which the PRP is able to get out and about around the schools. In small schools this movement around the school is mainly to do with showing parents around and is not linked to direct contact with staff. In fact, 47% of all PRPs said they would like more contact with the staff although this was 80% in small schools. Even 45% of the Heads said they would like more.

The issue of isolation from other schools was a much bigger issue with one third of all PRPs expressing this as a problem. This was a slightly bigger problem in schools outside Europe and much more of a problem with small schools who tend to act more in isolation from the other larger competitor schools. Only 20% of PRPs in large schools saw it is an issue.

Many practitioners have very little contact with other practitioners. At least 33% have never had any contact with another practitioner in another school. Most have had no contact with a more experienced peer and have no means of contacting a peer for advice. The average experienced PRP has regular contact with only 3 other practitioners, persons whom they had met at conferences.

The lack of contact with other PRPs was seen by 23% of the postal respondents to be an issue. Twice as many saw this as an issue in schools outside Europe and again, it was more of an issue with small schools. This may be due to the fact that schools in Europe have more contact with each other at conferences but is otherwise difficult to explain. In fact, 41% of all PRPs expressed a desire to have more contact with other peer practitioners, a figure which rose to 50% in schools outside Europe and 60% in small schools. Seventy-seven percent of all non Head practitioners expressed a desire to have more contact with peers as opposed to only 20% of Head PRPs, a fact which may be explained by more Heads going to conferences where they are likely to meet other Heads. The issue of lack of peer contact is one that mainly affects practitioners in small schools who are not the Head. An issue linked to the haphazard development of many schools and the complexity of their organization is the fact that many PRPs visited felt that micro-politics was a barrier to their activity. This was especially the case where the school also had a Development Officer and revealed itself in the main by the way that the PRP and Development Officer both had separate data-bases which they refused to share for marketing purposes. It was also worsened in some large schools where the PTA and Alumni Office had legal standing and operated as separate entities to the school.

The feeling expressed by many PR practitioners was that they felt threatened and lacking in status and importance, a fact worsened by the fact that many schools are full at the moment and hence marketing and PR are likely to be seen as less important. Some PRPs also felt their role in this increasing of the student roll was under-recognized by both the staff and senior management and they are now seen as less important than the fundraising Development Officer.

This research showed that the PRP in a school needs communication from the other staff that implies that their work and value to the school are recognized and appreciated; otherwise their morale and enthusiasm may be affected. These psychological factors require further attention and may be met by more internal communication between the PRP and the management and by more involvement in the appraisal system which would allow the PRP to show their value and express their feelings.

An interesting finding was the lack of contact that the PRP has with internal publics, especially students and staff. This was felt by many practitioners to be a weakness and an area that they wished to rectify and added to the high degree of isolation felt by many. At first glance it appears to be a factor linked to overwork and the need to prioritize activity but closer examination revealed it to be more closely linked to the job-description and the views of the PRP.

Twenty-nine percent of all PRPs feel that their job mainly involves external publics. This rises to 40% in small schools. Seventy-two percent of Head PRPs express this view. These practitioners leave all contact with internal publics to the academic staff. This lack of contact with internal publics such as the staff and students may be due to a misunderstanding as regards the role of the PRP within the school or may be due a lack of time.



### **5.1.3.2) Historical factors**

The organizational structure is often a factor of the school's history of development, size and type of ownership. The adhoc and unplanned nature of this development has led to many schools having what might be considered to be an 'over-complex' organizational structure although there is evidence that some schools are now starting to deal with this .

Seventy percent of all large schools have a separate Development Office with an officer who is usually responsible for fund-raising and alumni relations. In some cases, they are also responsible for external relations. This person not only has a separate office but may even have his/her own secretary and may even be situated on a different campus. They also tend to have their own database, in some cases on students going back over 20 years.

The PRP however, will be left with admissions and communications or even just internal communications. There is much evidence of this arrangement in large schools leading to much competition between the two offices and much micro-politics. There is often no sharing of data nor any mixing of data nor is there much contact between the two officers in some schools, a factor which leads to the isolation factor mentioned earlier.

Almost sixty percent of schools also have a separate Admissions Office with an officer responsible for admissions and showing parents around the school however only 33% in schools in Europe have one as against 80% outside Europe; thus most of the schools visited had a PRP who was also responsible for admissions. As one would expect this figure is much higher in large schools; the Head PRP in a small school is much more likely to not have a separate admissions officer.

One third of all schools also have a separate Alumni Office with an officer responsible for maintaining contact with ex-students and staff. Again, this figure is much higher outside Europe at 55% and, as expected, much higher in large schools. Few schools have a separate Alumni Office although the ones who did complained of very poor relations between the marketing officer and the alumni officer with the main source of tension being over the sharing of data. Also, the Alumni Office can be seen to have more importance in some schools and can lead to the PRP feeling isolated and undervalued.

Some schools have a very complex organizational structure which can be a source of tension and micro-politics especially where there is a separate Alumni Office and a separate Development Office dealing with large-scale fund-raising. Here, the marketing officer, often also acting as admissions officer, feels threatened, undervalued and marginalized, a main source of tension being the non-sharing of data.

#### **5.1.3.3) Responsibility factors**

The lack of job description and complexity of organization leads to the PRP being overloaded in terms of responsibility. This leads to the neglect of certain areas of activity. In small schools there is one person trying to do all the many jobs expected of a PRP as well as being the Head in many cases the debate is over splitting the job and sharing the work-load

At least half of all PRPs are also the Head, a figure which rises to at least 60% in schools outside Europe and is much higher in ECIS member schools than non-member schools. The Head PRP is a feature in all types of school although it is more likely in medium sized schools outside Europe.

At least two thirds of all PRPs are also responsible for Admissions and the subsequent showing around of parents. This is equally shared between Head and non-Head PRPs and between types of school although it is more likely in medium sized schools and is much more the case in schools in Europe.

Almost half of all PRPs are also responsible for fundraising although this is only 15% in Europe and almost 80% outside Europe and is much more likely to happen in large schools. It also applied to 90% of the non ECIS member schools. In schools in Europe this job would, in large schools at least, be done by the Development Officer whilst many small schools do not do any fundraising anyway.

As PR is nearly always linked to press relations it is not surprising that 95% of all PRPs are also responsible for press and media relations, skills that they often feel ill equipped to deal with. This figure is 100% in small schools but only 60% in large schools where the PRP is more likely to have a secretary or where the school is less likely to engage in press activity.

Forty percent of all PRPs are also responsible for alumni relations although this figure is only 5% in Europe, again because large schools are likely to have a Development Officer who deals with this as well as fundraising. As one would expect, this figure is 60% in large schools and almost zero in small schools where there is usually little or no alumni relations activity.

It can be seen that it is not usual for an international school to have an officer merely responsible for PR and marketing. Outside Europe they are also very likely to not only also be the Head but also be responsible for press relations, fundraising and alumni relations. In Europe they are much less likely to be the Head but are very likely to also be responsible for admissions as well as well as press relations. The responsibility for alumni relations is more of a factor in large schools as is the responsibility for fundraising.

The link between the PRP and fund-raising, although very uncommon in schools in Europe, is an area of major tension and concern. Some PRPs express concern at being expected to raise very large sums of money by the end of the academic year in order to finance building work yet had very little idea of how to do it. This places many PRPs under much pressure and leads to the PRP neglecting activity at the end of the academic year. This also leads to the PRP isolating themselves within the school.

Most practitioners are concerned about this overload, especially the PRPs who were also acting as Admissions Officers which is two thirds of all PRPs. A further 7% are not actually responsible for Admissions but do show parents around the school which means that 70% of all practitioners bear this time consuming task.

This figure rises to 90% in schools in Europe and is much more of an issue in small schools where 80% of practitioners have the responsibility of showing parents around as against only 60% in large schools. Surprisingly, 65% of PRP Heads do the job against 50% of PRPs who are not Heads which further strengthens the issue of overload and shows the issue to be a particular issue in small and medium sized schools where the Head is more likely to be the PRP. Some Heads see this as a marketing tool, making the parents feel important and special. Some would rather do the job as they feel that it gives them access to the potential consumer and also allows them to be in control of what the parents see and visit.

Certainly, though the extent and nature of PR activity in many schools is directly determined by the overload connected to showing prospective admissions around the school, a job that could be done by another person but which many Heads prefer to do themselves for marketing purposes

#### 5.1.3.4) Reorganization factors

Some schools are beginning to re-organize their school for marketing and PR purposes, especially large and medium sized schools where there is likely to be an Admissions/Marketing Officer and a separate Development Officer. Sixty percent of all schools seem to have a Development Office at present but this figure is much lower at 30% in schools in Europe. However, 18% of all schools are in the process of setting up such an office, an equal number in Europe and outside Europe. This will bring the two persons under one roof and within one data base and within one secretarial base. In small schools, the need is seen to be less relevant.

Some PRPs express a fear that this might lead to a 'take-over' by the Development Officer rather than a sharing of resources and responsibility. In order to overcome this source of possible tension one school has set up an 'Advancement Office' a term which may prove to be more diplomatic and politically correct for some schools.

The complex organization and lack of job description lead to the effect that most PRPs feel they do not have enough time to do all that is expected of them which leads them to having to prioritize some activities and neglect others.

Seventy-seven percent of all PRPs do not have enough time to do the job properly, twice as many in schools outside Europe. This rises to 85% in small schools and falls to 40% in large schools as many PRPs in small schools are also the Head. This leads to 65% expressing that they neglect certain areas of their activity, a figure which rises to a startling 90% in non European schools as against 33% in European schools. Again, as one might expect, this figure is much higher in small schools than large schools (95% as opposed to 40%).

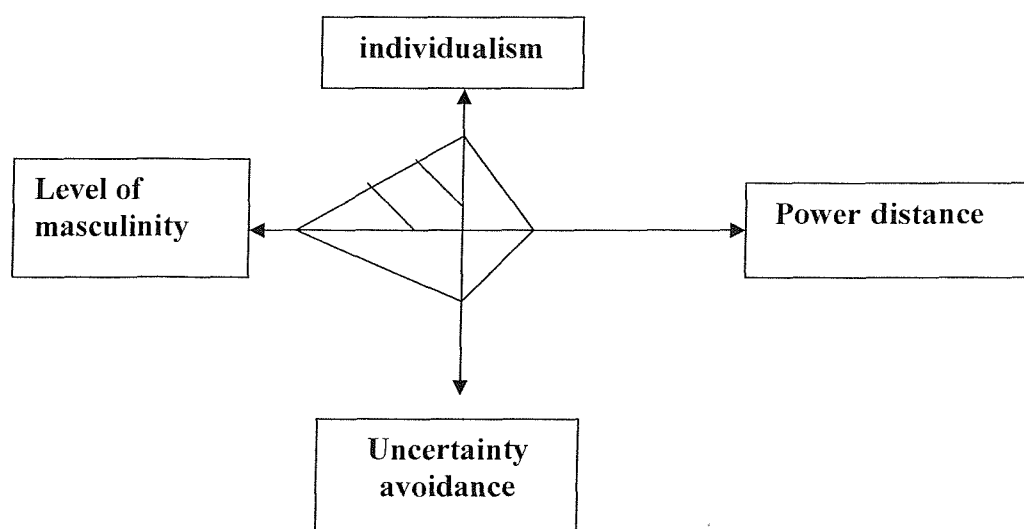
One third of all PRPs expressed the feeling of being significantly overworked, 65% in non European schools, which may be linked to these schools being undersubscribed at present. Again, as expected, this is much higher in small schools than large schools (60% as opposed to 15%).

### 5.1.3.5) The management culture

The evidence that the PRP is very much isolated within the school leads us to conclude that international schools have a strong Anglo-American management culture (according to Hofstede 1978): the PRP has much freedom based upon the assumption that they are fully qualified and competent to do the job and so do not need much contact with others (so they have a high degree of individualism). They also should have a much lower degree of power distance and uncertainty avoidance. In other words, the PRP ought to be willing to take risks and experiment. However, this research revealed that PRPs are unwilling to do this.

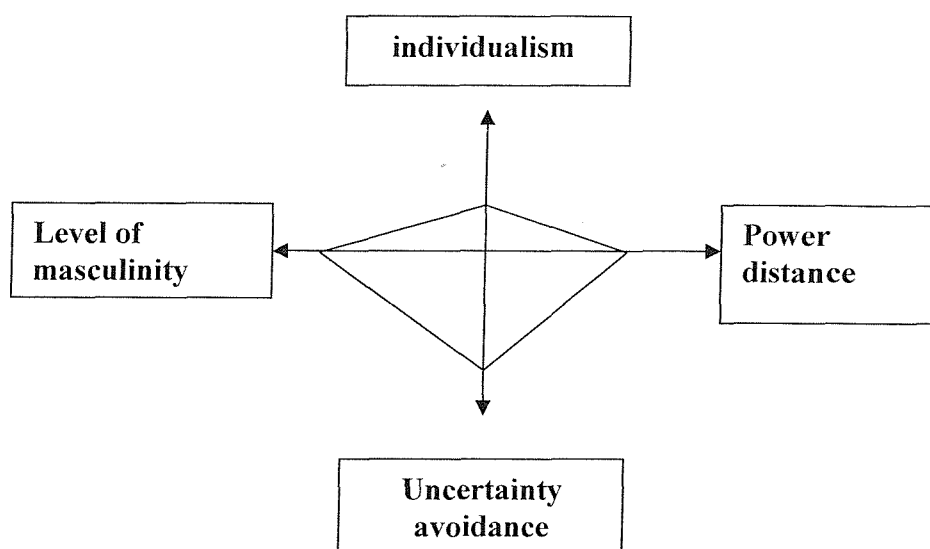
Given the high level of individualism, we can begin to conceptualize the management culture of international schools;

**Figure 5.6: The Anglo-Management culture in theory (Hofstede 1978)**



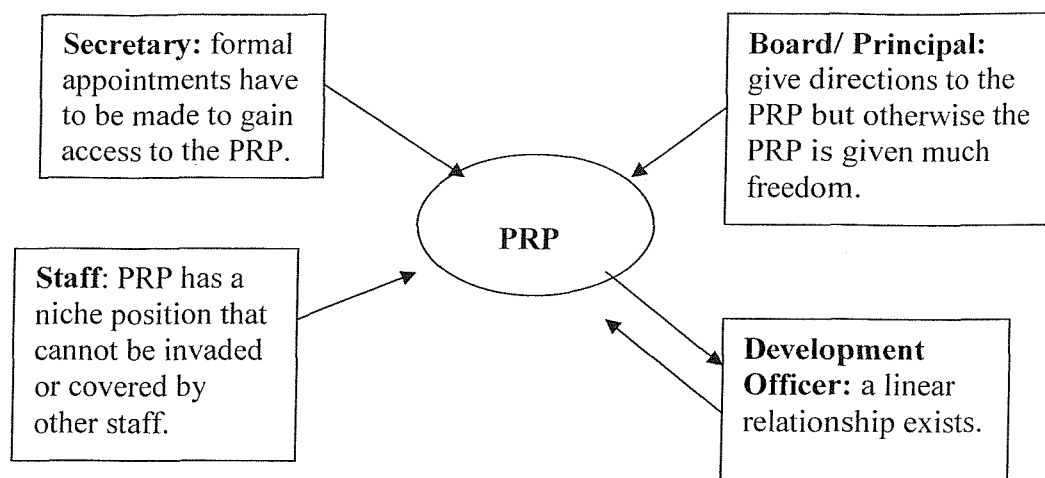
However, a typical Japanese oriented school would be expected to allow much personal freedom to the PRP, should be less prone to allowing the PRP to experiment, would exert more senior management pressure on the PRP and would expect the PRP to operate more in line with other staff. Of, course this needs to be tested out by research but, in theory, the following model ought to apply;

**Figure 5.7: A typical Japanese oriented school**



Of course, one needs to be careful when applying Hofstede's theories to educational institutions as his findings, although large-scale, only concerned the global IBM network. However, the findings are of interest when applied to American oriented international schools and could be a useful way of distinguishing between 'international schools' and the other lesser American-oriented 'schools in an international context'. The strong Anglo-American management culture of international schools also leads us to identify these schools as being organized along the lines of Organization B (Schein 1985).

**Figure 5.8: The management culture and Organization B (Schein 1985)**



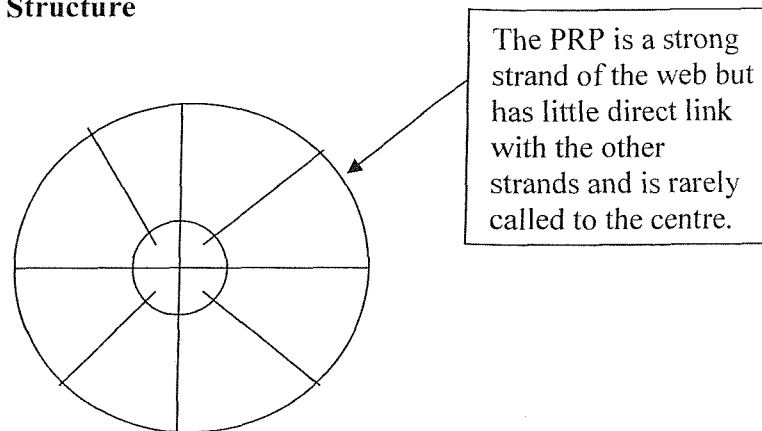
This sort of organizational structure creates much freedom but isolates the PRP as the structure has the following features;

- Strict linear and vertical relationships exist
- The PRP is assumed to be fully competent and is given much freedom.
- The PRP has a niche position that cannot be invaded or replicated. They are perceived to hold much Expert Power.
- There are strict formal appointment systems in place to gain access to the PRP although this does not necessarily involve a secretary.

This sort of structure can also be conceptualized through Handy (1985) and his 'Gods of Management'. Most schools who have a PRP who is not also the Head can be conceived to have a 'Web Structure' with senior management at the centre and the PRP on the edge. This sort of structure is found mainly in larger Zone B and D schools where the senior management is likely to be a Trust or Board. It is characterized by a lack of rules and procedures and the PRP having much power and little contact with the centre and the other strands of the web.

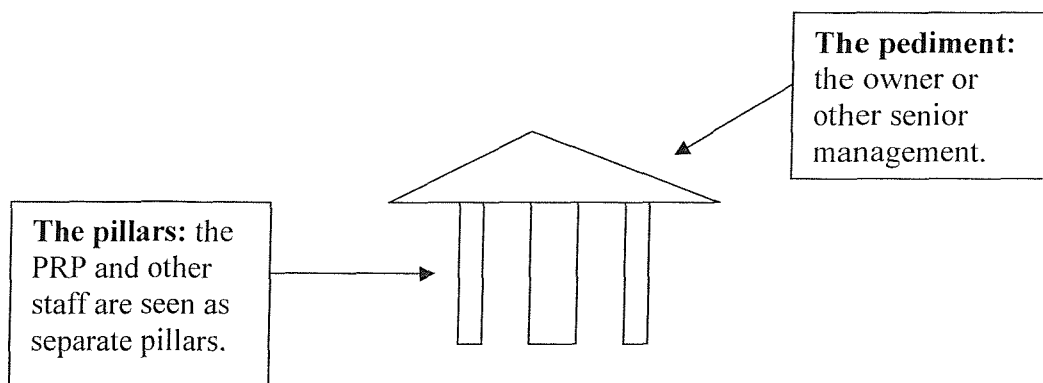


**Figure 5.9: The Web Structure**



About 20% of schools with a non-Head PRP have a 'Greek Temple' structure, common in the smaller Zone C and E schools where there tends to be a sole proprietor. Here, the PRP has much Position Power where it is assumed they can get on with the job with little formal contact with the owner, the pediment. Again, this sort of structure leads to isolation not only from the senior management but also from the other pillars. However, all schools have what Thompson (1967) calls 'Pooled Interdependence' where the work of one department is not directly connected to the others but is a discrete contribution to the whole. Yet, the success of the organization as a whole depends on the success of each pillar. Hence, the 'Greek Temple' analogy can be used much more widely to conceptualize the role of a pillar such as the PR/marketing department. The 20% of schools where the Head is also the PRP have a different structure, that of the Person Culture.

**Figure 5.10: The Greek Temple Structure**



Lastly, it can be claimed that international schools operate along the lines of an ‘ideal’ or ‘pure’ form of bureaucracy as outlined by Max Weber (see Pugh 1963). However, there are major differences and these are summarized below;

**Figure 5.11: International schools and ‘pure bureaucracy’**

<b>Pure Bureaucracy</b>	<b>International Schools</b>
The practitioner has clearly defined, distinct and routine tasks.	The PRP has some defined and routine tasks show as showing parents around the school but otherwise their tasks lack clear clarification and are rarely continued in writing.
Practitioner follows strict rules and regulations.	The PRP is free to follow their own path except when requesting expenditure. The only restrictions are financial.
There is a clear hierarchy with a multi-level of authority.	Some PRPs do operate in a Temple Structure but operate in a much looser Web Structure.
The role of the practitioner is clearly defined and different from others.	The role of the PRP can lack clarity whilst confusion and a merger of roles with others such as the Development Officer exist.
The selection of the practitioner is based upon public criteria.	Many PRPs are appointed through internal channels and some by the unexplained preference of senior management.
The practitioner has a secured tenure.	PRPs are nearly always secure although several are employed on short-term contracts.

### 5.1.3.6) Conclusions

It can be seen that a study of the structures regarding PR activity seems to reveal several factors that might explain the apparent isolation of the PRP. Using the models of Handy (1985) we might interpret these factors as being;

1. In schools with a web-structure, the PRP is rarely called to the centre.
2. In schools with a Temple structure, the PRP has little formal contact with the other pillars and has little contact with the 'pediment'.
3. The Temple structure leads to competition with the other pillars and hence explains the large of micro-politics between the PRP and Development Office and the Alumni Office. However, some schools are now resolving this feature.
4. The 'office bound' aspect of the PRPs job seems to lead to a degree of low morale and low motivation, and leads to them not meeting other staff.

It can be argued that it is the strong Anglo-American management culture that leads to the adoption of the Temple structure. Here the PRP is a separate and distinct officer who makes little contact with the other 'pillars' and instead has much freedom to get on with their role. The assumption held within Anglo-American management cultures is that all the pillars do what they are meant to do, the pediment will be supported and the organization should have a sound structure. However, international schools can suffer shocks such as economic recession which can shake the Temple and cause damage. Thus, it can be argued that perhaps this type of structure is not the best for international schools.

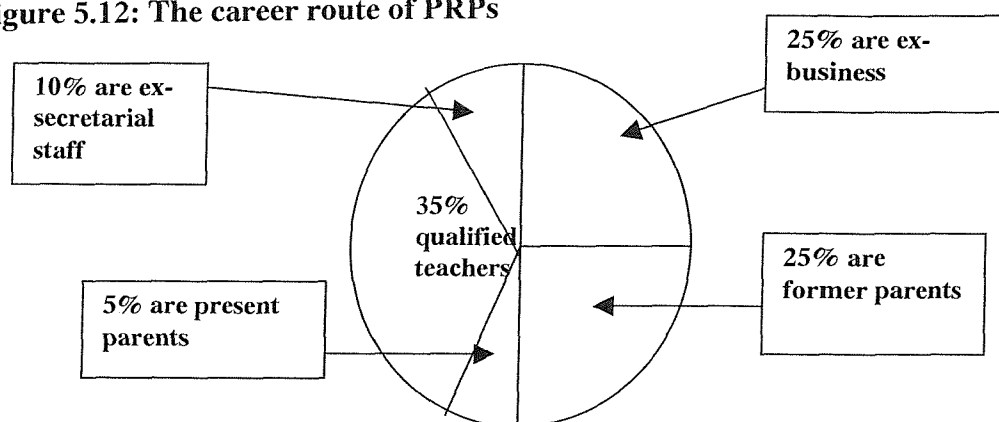
It is the degree of freedom given to the PRP which equates most with the concept of Anglo-American management culture. This is true of schools with the traditional Temple structure and some of the smaller type of schools who have what Handy (1985) would call a Web structure. Here the PRP (usually the Head) operates on the outer rung of the web with little contact with centre. Either way there is a large degree of 'isolation'. With the Temple structure in particular there is an inevitable degree of competition and rivalry between the different and separate pillars. In large schools this is evident between the PRP and the Development Office who quite often are based at separate campuses.

## 5.1.4) Systems

### 5.1.4.1) Introduction

This research revealed the 4 main routes taken by PRPs in attaining the post in international schools which are found equally in all 4 zones of the ID Matrix.

**Figure 5.12: The career route of PRPs**



These can be categorized as ;

- The Professional Educationalist: usually the Head and a qualified teacher , 95% of whom have no PR/ marketing experience and are found in all Zones equally except outside Europe where they tend to be in Zone B and D schools.
- The Ex-business Practitioner: a person with previous experience in marketing in a business context, found equally across all Zones.
- The Experienced Consumer: either an ex-parent or present parent either at the present school or a previous international school.
- The Internal Appointee: a person who has come through the internal workings of the school, usually an ex-secretary who has inherited the job or been moved up to it.

The decision making process of PRPs, acting in isolation and with much freedom, can perhaps be conceptualised as 'A1 Decision Making' (Vroom 1974), a form of 'designated autocratic process'.

Here, you solve the problem or make the decision yourself using information available to you at the time. Some schools do have a Marketing Committee where ‘G2 Decision Making’ model is in operation but this sort of group activity is more likely to occur in more collectivist cultures such as Scandinavian schools.

The decision making process appears to be largely based upon ‘Inspirational Strategy’ (Thompson 1967). Possible reasons being that there is little formal knowledge of how and why parents/ consumers choose an international school hence there is a large degree of uncertainty over the effect of any PR activity. This can be shown by the ‘Beliefs-Outcomes Matrix’;

**Figure 5.13 : The ‘Beliefs-Outcomes Matrix’**

<b>Beliefs about causes</b>	certain	Computational Strategy	Compromise Strategy
	uncertain	Judgemental Strategy	Inspirational Strategy
		certainty	uncertainty
		<b>possible outcomes</b>	

For example, it is not certain to what extent parents use the web-site to make a decision on choosing a school nor is it certain what the outcome would be if schools were to publish more newsletters in languages other than English. Would this help to retain students ?.

Thus, the PRP operates in a field where little formal knowledge is known of causes and outcomes due to a lack of research and publications. This appears to lead to an inevitable lack of confidence and unwillingness to experiment and is worsened by the lack of initial and on-going training given to the PRP. More knowledge about Consumer Choice in particular might help to move the decision making process towards ‘Judgemental Strategy’ or the ideal ‘Computational Strategy’.

#### **5.1.4.2) Career anchor**

Some PRPs have a 'self-made' job. Fifteen percent had contacted the school and suggested the post be created, 10% were parents with children at the school and 5% are ex-parents. Very few have any formal marketing qualification or experience. In large schools, 20% of PRPs have a 'self-made' job, raising an interesting paradox that the larger the school is the less likely they are to employ a qualified marketing practitioner and the less formal the appointment is. This proves how the post is not considered to be as important as other posts.

In all, 23% of practitioners are former parents at the school they are working in (30% outside Europe, 60% in large schools). This rises to 50% in non ECIS member schools, a fact that is the only significant difference between ECIS member and non member schools. In all small schools it is only 5%. Thus, in large schools the PRP is not only likely to be inexperienced in terms of having no experience of working in a school before nor in another school but is also unlikely to have any formal marketing experience. The only relevant experience they have had is as a parent of a pupil at the school which means that they know the school well from a parental and possibly student point of view and understand the anxieties and concerns of parents when they join the school. This is useful and relevant experience for a practitioner who is responsible for admissions and is useful for making contact with parents but does not fully supply the practitioner with the range of skills needed to do the job of marketing and PR officer.

A further 6% of practitioners were parents of a child at another international school which at least gives them more outside experience. This figure is again much higher in large schools at 20% and outside Europe. Again it was only 5% for small schools.

Another career path followed by some practitioners that was very prominent in the schools visited, again largely female, is via secretarial jobs. Six percent of all PRPs appear to have been a former secretary either at the school or another school. Again, this figure rises to 20% in large schools and is higher outside Europe.

The movement here tends to be a person who was responsible for dealing with enquiries and sending out material to prospective parents and who acquired the post of PRP when the job became vacant or was created. The view here is that this sort of 'front of house' experience was relevant experience especially for dealing with Admissions.

The fact that the PRP especially in large schools tends to be either a former parent (mother) or school secretary explains why the vast majority of PRPs in these schools are female and explains why few possess formal qualifications. There is clearly a view that a former parent can empathize much more with other parents but there is a view that the job of a PRP involves many more publics than just present or prospective parents and that perhaps these persons are not sufficiently trained to do the job, a view which is shared by many of the actual practitioners. It certainly strengthens the need for formal induction and the training needs of many practitioners, especially females in large schools who are very unlikely to have followed a professional career path.

Many PRPs have been appointed after approaching the school or via an internal career ladder. No less than 42% of all PR/ marketing officer posts were not advertised nor competed for, a figure which rises to 80% in large schools. This is more likely the case with schools in Europe and in non ECIS member schools. It is the case in only 40% of small schools, probably because the Head is likely to be doing the job and was thus more likely to be appointed via formal mechanisms.

Most PRPs seem to have an Autonomy Career Path as defined by Schein (1980), where their career is organized around the search for an occupation which allows the individual to determine their own work-hours and life-style. It is not a Managed Competence career anchor, where the career is built upon the ascent of a career ladder. The career structure is much more informal in international schools.

This is linked to the fact that 47% of all PRPs are the first person in the school to be doing the job; one would expect the internal appointment syndrome to decrease as the school employs a second person through more formal mechanisms. However, there is recent evidence of a large international school employing the secretary to the PRP to take over from the retiring PRP. This appears to be very common in large schools in particular where the retiring PRP is succeeded rather than replaced.

They also have little contact with other PRPs or other schools and who have only experience of their own school. There is also evidence that the job description, which 70% of all PRPs say they have, may not actually be a formal, written description and may merely be contained within a small passing reference within a school document.

Some practitioners are able to draw up their own job description. This in turn raises questions about accountability and appraisal with the paradox that these 'self-made job' appointment practitioners are less likely to be involved in the appraisal process despite the fact that they are likely to be the most in need. Only 10% of practitioners are able to produce a full, formal, written job-description. A further 20% are able to produce documentation which contained reference to job details although in the case of many this amounts to a 3 line reference along the lines of 'the PR Officer is responsible for public relations and marketing within the school'. The rest are unable to produce a formal job description.



This shows how the organizational structure of international schools is at odds with the organizational culture since organizations, like schools, with Role Cultures, require precise role allocation and regulations. A Net Culture ( see Handy 1985) would be a more appropriate description for the more 'informal' international school.

It is not totally clear if the 30% who express not having any sort of formal job description are linked to the 35% of all PRPs who feel significantly overworked although the link is likely to be significant. Certainly, many practitioners feel that they were given jobs and tasks to do simply because no other management role was suited to do it and thus feel that a detailed job description would help to reduce this 'overspill' of responsibility. In fact, 42% of all PRPs express that they would like to see much more detailed job description, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and 50% among non-Head PRPs.

There is also the fact that at least 12% of practitioners feel that their job description is too detailed and wish to see it simplified . This includes the other 20% of PRPs in small schools and a further 25% of non-Head PRPs. Again, it is not clear to what extent this grouping is linked to the 35% of practitioners who feel overworked but it appears that some practitioners may feel that they have too many tasks .

#### **5.1.4.3) Experience factors**

A major factor appears to be the inexperience of the PRP not only in the job of being in charge of PR and marketing but inexperience of working in a school. Several practitioners said that a newly appointed person requires knowledge of how not only the particular school works but also how any international school works. Although 76% of all practitioners have worked in a school before, this figure is much lower in European schools than other schools and is much lower in small schools.

This figure is 85% when one takes Heads out of the equation. It was found that the middle sized schools were more likely to have a practitioner who had worked in a school before.

Thus the vast majority of practitioners appointed in schools in Europe are likely to have little or no prior experience of working in a school and will require much more induction than other practitioners most of whom will also be acting as the Head. This strengthens the need for schools to provide a detailed induction and information pack for newly appointed practitioners.

Of the 76% of practitioners who had worked in a school before the vast majority (65%) are trained and experienced teachers. There seemed very little evidence of this in the schools visited where only 5 out of 17 appeared to have any teaching experience, a fact backed up by the finding from the postal survey that only 33% of practitioners are likely to be a trained teacher as opposed to 90% of non-European schools. This is one of the most distinctive differences between activity in European and non-European schools. Thus, the induction process is clearly more needed in European schools where the newly appointed practitioner is very unlikely to be an experienced teacher unless they are the Head.

- Length of service: Forty-seven percent of all practitioners have been doing the job for more than 3 years, 66% in European schools. Half have been doing the job for more than 3 years and they are mainly in the larger schools. 90% of practitioners in medium sized schools have been doing the job for more than 3 years but only 5% of PRPs in small schools. The 47% of all practitioners falls to only 20% when only the non-Head practitioners are considered.

Only 12% have been doing the job for more than 10 years, 20% in large schools and again only 5% in small schools. Most of these are Head practitioners. In total, 5% have been doing the job more than 15 years. Thus, the vast majority of PRPs, especially the non-Head practitioners are very inexperienced in terms of time spent doing the job with the average experience being only 2 years. A very small number of practitioners mainly in larger schools have been doing the job for many years whilst a significant number can be considered to be 'new' to the job, especially in small schools. At least 8% are in the first year of the job (1999-2000), which shows that schools are beginning to take the post more seriously although this is mainly the larger schools.

- Scale: Most of this experience has been spent in only one school although most practitioners have had previous experience of working in a school: 65% of all practitioners are trained and experienced teachers although this is the case only with only 30% of practitioners in Europe as opposed to 80% of practitioners in non-European schools. This is partly explained by the fact that the majority of practitioners in non European schools are also the Head. This level of experience of working in a school as a teacher is equal across all sizes of school.

Most schools have had little or no previous experience of such a post holder and are thus unsure of what to expect. In fact, 47% of all PRPs say they are the first person in their school to hold the post, a figure which rises to 60% in schools outside Europe who only recently seem to have considered the post an important one and have begun appointing post holders. These figures are very misleading since obviously the PRP who is also the Head is very unlikely to be the first person to be the Head unless they are in one of the 20% of schools sampled who are 'new'. If one takes out the Head, the figure of who is the first person to do the job in their school rises to 90%. These people are evenly spread among the different sizes of school.

#### **5.1.4.4) Appraisal factors**

Two-thirds of all practitioners are a part of an appraisal system but only 33% in schools in Europe, a fact borne out by the visits where few practitioners seemed to be involved in the appraisal system. This figure is also much smaller (40%) in small schools, a fact which at first thought would be a reflection on the fact that many PRPs are also the Head but the evidence shows that many more Heads are appraised than non Head PRPs. Thus, the evidence seems to be that the non Head PRP in small schools is the least likely to be involved in the appraisal system which may be due to not many small schools having an appraisal system.

However, this involvement in the appraisal system may not be as formal as for other school staff as only 47% of all practitioners say they are appraised on a regular basis, again a figure which is much lower in schools in Europe. Conversely, though, this figure is much lower in large schools than small schools and is much lower for Heads than non Heads.

Thus, the majority of practitioners who are involved in the appraisal system, especially in large schools, are not actually appraised on a regular basis which raises the possibility that this appraisal may take a more informal form. Given that many practitioners do not have a formal job description this is not an unfair assumption. On the other hand, the minority of practitioners in small schools who are appraised are likely to be involved on a much more formal and regular basis, possibly each year.

What is not known is what form this appraisal takes nor who actually carries it out although one would expect it to be Head or a member of the Board. It is most unlikely to be another practitioner in another school as suggested by appraisal experts.

#### **5.1.4.5) Freedom factors**

The PRP has much freedom in undertaking PR and marketing activity: 82% of all persons say they have freedom in what PR activity to undertake whilst 65% are free to do whatever they like as long as they remain within the budget. In large schools, 95% of practitioners say they have much freedom to do whatever activity they wish as against only 60% in small schools. However, in small schools the practitioners who have most freedom are likely to be the practitioners who are also the Head as only 75% of non Head practitioners say they have much freedom as opposed to 90% of Heads. This means that in most schools the PRP is very much in control of what PR activities are to be done and need report to higher management only when and if they go over budget. In fact, 80% of practitioners in large schools are free to do whatever they wish as long as they stay within the budget.

This does not mean that they are solely responsible for PR activity. Only 35% say they are solely in charge of activity, a figure which falls to 20% in small schools and is, as expected, much higher with Head PRPs. Very few schools have a PR or marketing committee that might be made up of students, parents and other staff. Instead, most practitioners make decisions in consultation and agreement with the PTA and the Head.

Sixty percent of all practitioners feel that they are very much able to carry out any PR/ marketing that they so wish without any real consultation or permission, 80% in large schools and 75% of Head PRPs as opposed to only 30% of non Head PRPs. In terms of accountability to senior management, 70% of practitioners say they are accountable to the Board and only 47% feel accountable to the Head. This is mainly in the form of keeping within the budget and occasional reports to the Board or Head.

Only 23% of all practitioners make a regular report, a figure which ranges from 40% in large schools to only 5% in small schools. This regularity can be either a weekly or monthly report. This shows that the Head when acting as PRP not only has a lot more freedom but is also less required to make a regular report. In a large school, the practitioner is more likely to act alone but has to make more regular reports to senior management especially the Board. In a small school, the PRP is likely to have much less freedom and is likely to encounter more interference which leads them to be required to report their activities less.

Thus, the larger the school, the more day to day freedom and the less interference but the more the person is held accountable. In small schools especially the Head seems to have not only freedom and isolation but also is not held accountable by regular reports. This freedom places much importance on the person having a knowledge of what to do especially Heads. At the same time, the extent and nature of PR activity depends very much on the degree of knowledge and experience of the PRP who in many cases is acting alone or at the most, with only a small degree of intervention as long as the PRP remains on budget.

The reason for this may be that the Head, as a qualified and experienced teacher, is seen by the Board as more qualified and capable to be in charge of PR and marketing. This raises an interesting paradox in that the persons who are most likely to be overworked and unsure of what being a PRP involves are given the most freedom and least supervision and monitoring.

Even when the Head is not the PRP, they seem to have a large role in overall PR activity. Sixty percent of all practitioners say that the Head plays a large role, a figure which rises to 80% in large schools where the Head is less likely to be the PRP. Thus, this raises the issue of the training that a Head needs in terms of marketing and PR.

Many Heads felt unsure of what their role was meant to be which raises the question of whether the job description of Heads with a non-Head PRP need to be made clearer and more detailed. Or, it may be that the role of the Head is simply to act on behalf of the Board to make sure that the PRP remains within budget and is accountable on a regular basis for their activity. The role of the Head may merely be to have a regular meeting with the PRP who is likely to need to explain their activity to a person who is unsure what PR is and does.

#### **5.1.4.6) Training factors**

A major concern of practitioners is that they are expected to come into the job fully prepared and trained despite the fact that the job is often foreign to them. Schools expect a person to be 'fully skilled' even though they will need advice regarding the school's history and ethos.

Many schools have an unrealistic and even perhaps unfair expectation of what to expect a newly appointed PRP to know and be able to do, leading to the PRPs being isolated within the school and without contact with other peers.

Only 32% of all PRPs receive training after appointment, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and 85% among schools where the Head is not the PRP. Only 45% of Heads said they have not received enough training; this raises the debate of whether being a trained and experienced teacher is actually adequate and proper training for being a PR/ marketing officer and admissions officer. Some practitioners may feel more trained than they actually are. Although it is certainly true that the non -Head practitioners in small schools are much more likely to need training and induction yet these are the persons least well served by conferences and ongoing training.

Another area of concern facing PRPs is the conflict between the school believing them to be and expecting them to be fully skilled and knowledgeable and their need for training whilst actually in the job. There are several areas where PRPs feel ongoing training is required. But lack of time and the fact that the school does not see the necessity of such training means it is difficult for the practitioner to obtain such ongoing training. There is little realization by school management that the job of PR / marketing and development require skills that need to be regularly refreshed and built upon.

The fact that PRPs are likely to be either former teachers, parents, school secretaries or to have contacted the school to suggest that the post be created also means that few practitioners possess formal PR or marketing experience or qualification. There is a valid debate over what degree or experience or training a person needs. Few practitioners have had any previous experience, either in a business context or working for multi-national organizations. Only 23% of all practitioners have had some previous experience, although this is much higher outside Europe at 60%. Only 15% of practitioners in Europe have had any previous formal experiences, a finding much closer to my finding during the visits. This is 40% in small schools whilst practitioners in large schools are more likely to have pursued the parent/ secretary path rather than switched from PR work in a business context.

Forty percent of all practitioners have no formal PR or marketing experience at all, a figure which rises to 60% outside Europe and 40% in small schools. Furthermore, a total of 47% of all practitioners have no formal PR or marketing qualifications, a figure which rises to 70% outside Europe and 60% in small schools. The figure was only 15% in schools in Europe but very few practitioners seemed to have any formal qualification other than having pursued a marketing module at BA level. Thus, the PRP is very unlikely to have had any previous experience of the job outside an educational context nor to have any formal marketing qualifications. The only relevant experience they are likely to have had is either of working as a teacher, a school secretary or having been the mother of a child at an international school.

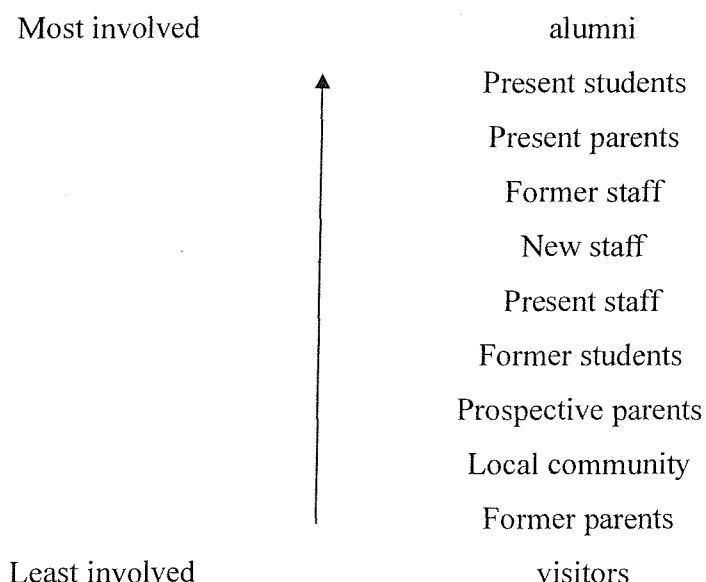


#### 5.1.4.7) PR activities (see Appendix P)

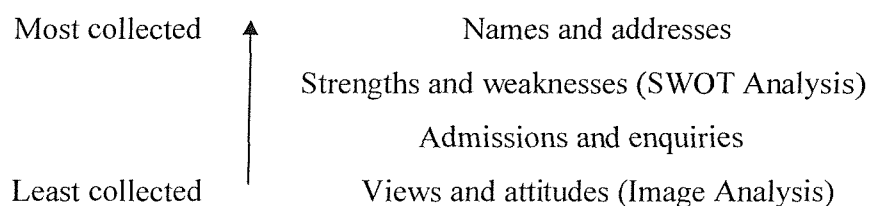
There is very little difference between activity in different types of school. Neither size nor location seems to have a large bearing on the type of activity. The only differences are with frequency and quantity. Most activities are done with equal frequency except the following;

- Advertisements: some schools do much in the local press whilst others do nothing at all.
- Press releases: some schools have no contact at all whilst 10% make contact at least once per month.
- Data Collection: the most common data collected is the name and addresses of alumni going back two years. Eighty-four percent of schools collect this. Very few collect data on the views and attitudes of visitors. (see Appendix Q)

There are significant differences in the degree to which schools collect data with the large and medium American oriented schools collecting the most. Small Zone E schools collect the least. From this information one can draw up a Scale of Involvement with internal parents being the most involved and external and 'ex-publics', such as ex-parents, being the least;



According to the type of data one can also see that schools rely upon the collecting of quantitative rather than qualitative data;



a) Visitor surveys: This is the least used PR activity. Few schools collect data on the views and attitudes of visitors in the course of a normal academic year. As with all data, it is not clear to what extent this is kept formally by the school in data base form or merely a summary of anecdotal evidence. Generally, this is seen as an area of activity that is not useful whilst visitors themselves are seen as unimportant publics despite being a good source of first impressions and being more likely to give an honest account of their views than other more connected publics.

b) Enquiries: This is an area of data collection that few schools bother with. Only 47% of all schools collect data on the names and addresses of all enquiries over the past year and only 37% have data going back more than one year. A further 20% of all schools said they do not store any data on enquiries. The main reason given is lack of time to input the data, an issue which is linked to the lack of secretarial assistance given to many PRPs.

c) Views and attitudes: The area of Image Analysis is another area of data collection that many schools ignore despite its usefulness. Seventy-five percent of all schools collect data on the views of present parents although this is mainly anecdotal evidence from the PTA rather than formal survey. 50-70% of schools do at least one parental survey per year but at least 10% confessed to only doing one every 2 years.

Only 53% seek the views of past students and only 28% seek the views of parents who are leaving the school. At least 50% of schools collect the views of newly appointed staff but otherwise this is an area overlooked by schools. Only 37% of all schools collect any data regarding the views of the local community although many schools feel that the local community does not understand nor like them. Lack of formal data means they cannot quantify this nor explain it.

The area of SWOT Analysis is another area neglected by many schools. Seventy-two of all schools collect data from present parents but only 50% collect the data from the students, the direct consumers. Surprisingly few small schools seem to collect any data on the names and addresses of former students. Eighty-four percent of all schools have this data going back over 2 years and 72% have it going back over 5 years. These are mainly large American oriented schools and the data is largely for merely graduates rather than all students. Only 62% of all schools have data on the names and addresses of all students who had left the school over the last 2 years, a figure which in some schools could be over 500 students. Only 60% of all schools collect any data on former staff.

d)Enrolment reasons: Many schools express a view that the hardest data to collect was reasons why parents either did not enrol at the schools or had left the school. Only 28% of all schools make any effort to find out why parents had been sent material or shown around the school and subsequently not enrolled and only 10% said they made any effort to find out why parents left the school. However, at least 50% said they collected data on why parents had chosen the school.

e) Admissions data: Surprisingly few schools collect simple admissions data on how many parents visited the school or enquired about the school. Only 47% of all schools collected this sort of basic raw data over the academic year 1998-99.

There is much evidence to suggest that the lack of mechanisms and systems for gathering data means that many schools are reliant upon anecdotal data or partly revealed data. Only two thirds of all schools are confident enough to give exact answers of yes or no to the questions of what data they collected or held. The other third confess that much data is not systematically collected and was revealed by anecdotal evidence. One school even confessed that 50% of all their data was anecdotal with a further 20% of all schools saying they 'partly' collect data. In particular, schools rely upon anecdotal evidence for data on the views of attitudes of publics especially of former parents and reasons why parents left the school. PRPs feel that this sort of data was the most difficult to collect but none showed any signs of having systems in place to collect it. Instead they either ignore it or rely upon the evidence of one or two parents whom they knew well.

The other area of PR activity that is rarely carried out is SWOT Analysis. In particular, the collecting of data on the strengths and weaknesses of the school according to the present parents and students is rarely undergone and is very reliant upon anecdotal evidence.

To conclude, two areas of data collection involving two distinct groups of publics seem particularly prone to the reliance of anecdotal evidence;

- ex-publics: The collecting of data from ex-staff, pupils and parents is an area of that involves little formal activity. In particular, little attempt is made to discover the views or attitudes of these publics.
- Local community: This important external public is rarely involved in the data collection process. Few schools have a formal method for discovering the views of this public despite the fact that many schools worry about their image in the local community and feel disliked and misunderstood by the local community.

Schools tend to rely upon the PTA and Student Council for data analysis thus the data is incomplete and may not be accurate of the entire body. Schools tend to have no planned programme for collecting data, instead they engage in it when the need arises or when they have time. Little importance is attached to Views and Attitude Analysis nor Image Analysis and these are the two areas of PR activity least done. Surprisingly, many schools have no formal mechanism for collecting data on reasons why parents or students chose the school or decided to leave. This evidence is largely anecdotal. Also, many schools make no attempt to keep track or contact with ex-publics especially ex-staff.

A paradox is the fact that 80% rely upon anecdotal rather than formally collected data were schools in highly competitive environments but are less inclined to collect data on views, attitudes and image yet these schools are the most in need of this sort of data. They are also much less inclined to involve students in data collection yet for many small schools the student is often a key agent unlike a large school where a company is in control of choice. There appears to be no clear link between the level of activity and the level of competition between schools. Certainly, in terms of data collection, schools in areas of high competition engage in less data collection than schools in less competitive areas, hence the paradox described above.

The collecting of data is a very haphazard affair in most schools with few schools, mainly the larger American schools, making any effort to make it a systematic process. Few have mechanisms in place to deal with the collection of data nor the storing and up-keep of it. Few PRPs have the time to collect the data and some express concern at not having the skills to do it. In most cases the data is not kept on a concise data base that was to hand although most PRPs express that they 'could probably collate together if they really had to'. Much reliance is made of collecting data from internal publics via staff meetings, Student Council and the PTA. Little formal, systematic surveying is going on with schools instead engaging in surveys if and when they have the time or feel they need to do it.

#### **5.1.4.8) PR tools**

Only 10% of schools have a promotional video compared to the 95% who have a website. None were found to have any sort of audio-visual PR tool such as a cassette or CD. The 1999 ECIS Conference in Nice showed that out of a randomly selected group of 17 practitioners only two persons said their school had one, a figure near to the 10% that I had estimated had one. One of these persons said they found it very useful whilst the other person said it was useless as a PR tool. An ensuing debate revealed the extent to which PRPs suffer from a lack of confidence in using PR tools they have no experience of. Most felt that they were unsure of the usefulness of a video and hence did not produce one in case it did not prove worth-while. They felt unable to justify the high cost of making one and questioned the cost-effectiveness of the venture.

This 'lack of confidence syndrome' is clearly linked to the degree of isolation from other schools and other PRPs that face practitioners which leads them to question the worth of tools that they have not used before. As they do not know how other schools use the video they are unsure themselves of how to use it. This proves that any conference or meeting between PRPs ought to concentrate on the use and effect of particular PR tools rather than focus merely on the presentation and content of such tools. Practitioners want to know not only what schools do but HOW they do it.. More to the point, do they find it useful and cost-effective ?.

The local press is a PR tool hardly used by schools with only 5% of schools saying they had much contact with their local press although several schools overall did identify the lack of press contact as being a problem and an area of their activity that they wished to improve upon. The two main reasons given for this lack of activity is that the PRP felt unqualified for 'journalistic skills' or did not have the time. Linked to this was the reason given by most schools that they did not feel that press coverage in the local press was useful nor effective despite the fact that it is a free activity.

The PRPs who do use the local press express that they had good contact with the local press and found it useful . Advertising is an activity done in the local press by only 70-90% of schools with 30% of schools doing 2 per year, 10% doing one monthly but at least 5% doing only one per year. Some schools are much active than others whilst at least 10% of schools do no advertising at all. The main two reasons given are that it is, again, very time-consuming and involved skills that many PRPs do not feel comfy with and is also quite expensive. Generally, adverts are seen as too expensive whilst, again, most PRPs doubt their effectiveness.

Most PRPs are unhappy at engaging in PR activity that cannot be measured as being 'cost-effective' and that will greatly reduce their annual budget. They are also unhappy at engaging in activity that cannot be targeted at specific audiences. Furthermore, most PRPs express the fact that there is little evidence that press activity or adverts bring in students, the main PR goal of most schools which raises the issue that any activity that is not to do with increasing the school's roll is neglected despite the fact that press activity could serve to meet many other PR goals such as making the school better known in the local community.

Newsletters are an area of PR activity done to a surprisingly large extent by many schools. At least 90-100% of all schools publish a newsletter but the extent of activity differs greatly with 70% of schools doing one monthly but 20% of schools only doing one per term. Some schools even aim to publish one every two weeks. These are normally given to present parents although some schools do send them to alumni and ex-staff. However, given that they are usually only in English and involve much time to produce there is clearly a doubt over whether they warrant such a large use of time and resources and whether they are as useful as schools believe them to be.

It would appear that activities that directly involve parents or students such as newsletters are considered by most schools to be 'useful' and 'effective' and hence done to a great extent whilst activities aimed at seemingly less important publics are deemed to be less useful and neglected.

The degree to which PRPs tend to carry out PR activity that they are familiar with and feel confident about shows that PR activity is certainly affected by the confidence of the PRP in carrying out the activity and the degree to which they are prepared to experiment and take risks. The lack of confidence by the majority of PRPs results in schools doing what they know will work and result in tangible gains or effects. This means that the area of data collection, an area that few PRPs feel confident with and which many do not see the value of is a much underutilized area of PR activity .

The Web-site was revealed to be an area of activity warranting special attention; 90% of schools now have a web-site with a further 5% setting one up. It is a PR tool aimed a large number of publics in particular alumni, ex-staff, prospective parents and present parents. Few schools aim the web site at students.

Only 10% of schools visited and 18% of all schools felt that the recent increase in their school numbers had any link to their use of the internet. This is much higher at 33% in schools in Europe and, paradoxically, is much higher with small schools at 40%. This is surprising since it is the larger, mostly American oriented, schools who are the most enthusiastic and greatest users of the web-site. This raises the issue that the web-site may not be as useful as some schools feel that it is or ought to be especially in recruiting students. Also, as it is used as a tool to be aimed at many different publics there is a debate over whether some schools, especially large schools, are over-relying upon it at the expense of other PR activity.



Many schools have contracted out the job of creating the web-site whilst at least 10% had given the job to a present student. Only 10% of schools have any sort of 'web-master' which raises the issue of the PRP being reliant upon external bodies to create and update the web-site. The PRPs who were themselves responsible for maintaining the web-site felt uneasy with the job, given that it requires specialized skills and requires much time. In particular, PRPs expressed unease at the time required to create and update the site and check and send e-mails.

Some of the larger American oriented schools feel that the web-site is a very useful PR tool and indeed now regard it as their main PR tool. There appears to be very little evidence of how this claim could be justified as few schools monitor the effectiveness of the web-site. Some schools say that at least 20% of their enquiries are now coming via e-mail but very little formal monitoring or collecting of data is evident.

There is a case to be argued that schools are embracing the web-site as something that feel they ought to be doing and something that other schools are doing but without any clear knowledge of its usefulness or effectiveness. Furthermore, little thought appears to be going into the mechanisms needed to maintain the site nor to utilize and update it. It is also an area of activity that many PRPs feel uneasy with, given their lack of time and specific training.

#### **5.1.4.9) The PR budget**

This is more often determined by the importance and meaning attached to the activity rather than an amount considered suitable to carry out a marketing plan. Some schools see PR as 'free publicity', leading it to it being under-funded. Others set a large budget. One of £1 million was found.

In total, 53% of all schools have a specific budget although only 33% of schools in Europe. Its existence is not affected by the size of the school only by the geographical location. The average size is 1% of the total annual expenditure, which leads to 47% of all PRPs arguing it is not enough (only 30% in schools in Europe). However, 90% of PRPs in large schools feel it is enough.

Part of the problem lies with the lack of marketing plans in schools at present, due probably to high student numbers. Also, many schools allocate money as and when it is needed and so do not have a budget as such. This leads to adhoc PR activity.

#### **5.1.4.10) Conclusions**

A study of mechanisms and systems reveals a strong culture of informality;

- There is little evidence of PR being carried out as a systematic process or as a two-way process involving the collection of data.
- There are four distinct paths taken by PRPs and all involve a very informal appointment and training process. There is a lack of formal appraisal for PRPs.
- There is a large 'skills-gap' involving PRPs and few formal mechanisms for initial or on-going training.
- PR activity is more based upon immediate need and amount of time available. It is very much an 'inspirational' process where outcomes are unknown.
- The role of the PRP is a very isolated position. Few formal support mechanisms exist to help and guide the practitioner. Instead they are expected to rely upon 'inspiration'.

- Few schools have a large PR budget. Instead, money is allocated as and when needed.

Overall, there is a complete lack of formal mechanisms and systems with regard to PR activity. There is instead strong evidence of 'inspirational' activity probably due in the main to the lack of knowledge of how consumers choose an international school and the lack of knowledge of how effective most PR activity is. It is clear that many PRPs have been appointed via very informal methods whilst their career path tends to have involved little formal training. Indeed, there is a distinct lack of both initial and ongoing training which again may explain the lack of experimentation. Some PR activities such as data collection are hardly undertaken by most schools despite the concern of many schools over the views and attitudes of the local community.

## **5.1.5) People**

### **5.1.5.1) Motivational Factors**

A key factor affecting behaviour in any organization, according to Jaquesian Theory (see Hughes and Hickson 1989), is the role of practitioners within it. Jaques, via the 'Glacier Investigations', showed that the role of practitioners is a key factor within any organization. One can argue that this ought to also be a factor in international schools as this research showed that there are a number of quite complex models with regard to the role of the PR practitioner. These are;

- A) The Senior Management Practitioner: about 20% of all PRPs are the sole person in charge of PR, marketing and admissions. This person is usually also the Head.
- B) The Multi-Task Practitioner: at least 40% of all PRPs are responsible for a multitude of tasks including admissions, alumni, press relations, fund-raising and PR. This person is not usually also the Head although in very small schools this may be the case.

- C) The Greek Temple Practitioner (after Handy 1989): the remaining 40% are responsible for a multitude of tasks alongside another linear practitioner who is responsible for Admissions, Alumni and Development. This is especially the case with the larger American-oriented Zone B and D schools.

This complication of role should, according to Jaquesian Theory, be a problem as Jaques suggested that persons in an organization need to have their role and status clearly defined in a way which is acceptable to themselves and others. Insecurity and frustration will arise when there is confusion of role boundaries or where multiple roles occupied by the same person are not sufficiently distinguished.

It is difficult to identify what motivates the PRP in international schools. There is no clear indication of any aim for self-actualization as argued by Maslow (1965) nor of any signs of a link to Performance Related Pay which might motivate persons as argued by Rational Economic Models such as Taylor (1947). Instead, it appears to be what Schein (1980) would call a Complex Model where motivation varies according to life situation and personal development. Motivation differs from school to school. Schein also argues the key factor determining the motivation of any practitioner is their 'career anchor' which affects their confidence and willingness to experiment. This is also argued by Herzberg (1966) who argues that dissatisfaction at work is due to poor 'hygiene factors' such as working conditions and inter-personal relations. Thus, Herzberg would see the PRP in international schools as likely to be poorly motivated as a consequence of the isolation of the job and the high level of micro-political tension as well as the lack of clearly defined role.

Certainly, many psychological factors affect the behaviour of the average PRP, 85% of whom are female although 90% of the Head-PRPs are male. Ninety percent are American and 8% are British. Many feel disliked by other staff and feel insecure. In particular, they feel that the local community do not understand what they do and are therefore unnecessarily hostile. Many feel undervalued and isolated within the school.

Furthermore, the primary goal of attracting students has been largely met resulting in an air of complacency in many schools. This operates at three levels;

- Complacency shown by the PRP towards the need for a marketing plan or PR activity due to the rise in student numbers. Small schools in particular are likely to reduce their PR activity at a time of rising student numbers yet, as explained above, this raises a paradox in that these schools ought to be doing more PR activity in order to retain these students and guard against a sudden and dramatic downturn.
- Complacency shown by senior management. This may be because the school finances are presently sound and the long-term situation is not a present concern. Or, it may be that the management, after several years of poor finances, are merely glad to be making a profit. It may also be because the management are unaware totally of the nature of international schools and the fact that the student numbers cannot be guaranteed and could fall at any moment. If it is the latter, then there are serious PR issues regarding communication between the PRP and the management that need to be addressed.
- Complacency shown by staff at the school who fail to understand that the school could suffer a downturn. Again, this raises serious issues about the lack of communication between the staff and the PRP and management. Staff at a school tend to take for granted that they will have sufficient students to teach and do not see it as their responsibility or problem to find or retain students. In a small school especially the nature of an international school needs to be explained to the staff so that they can be ready for a fall in numbers and play a part in retaining students. This tends to be seen as an internal academic role for the Head to play and so is ignored by the PRP.

In fact, 24% of PRPs feel that the senior management do not understand the role and importance of PR to the school although this rises to 60% in small schools. More to the point, 58% of all practitioners do not feel that the school takes PR as seriously as they ought to, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and is felt much more strongly in European schools where the roll is likely to be much higher. There was found to be a direct link between the level of complacency and importance attached to the role of PR and the level of student numbers which leads one to identify that PR is seen as largely something to be done when student numbers are falling rather than when they are rising or the school is full. Yet, this is the time when PR and marketing ought to be seen as being most important to small schools especially. This is borne out by the fact that 12% of all practitioners feel that the senior management are less concerned with PR than they used to be, a view shared equally by all sizes and types of school.

The lack of importance shown by the staff towards PR and marketing, especially at a time of rising student numbers, was expressed as a problem by most PRPs visited. The postal survey showed that at least 60% of all practitioners wish that the school and staff in particular would take PR more seriously, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools and 70% among non Head PRPs.

The unorthodox career paths followed by the vast majority of PRPs affects their sense of security in the post with one practitioner having been given a two year contract and a number of ambitious fund-raising goals to attain. Under this sort of pressure, the PRP is unlikely to feel inclined to experiment. This sort of pressure leads to the PRP engaging only in activity that is tangible in its result and is 'cost-effective'. For example, as there is little evidence that press activity brings in more students, few schools have a policy of having contact with the local press.

For example, only 10% of schools have a promotional video compared to the 95% who have a web-site. None were found to have any sort of audio-visual PR tool such as a cassette or CD. PRPs suffer from a lack of confidence in using PR tools they have no experience of.

Most feel unsure of the usefulness of a video and hence did not produce one in case it did not prove worth-while. They felt unable to justify the high cost of making one and questioned the cost-effectiveness of the venture. This lack of confidence is clearly linked to the degree of isolation from other schools and other PRPs that face practitioners which leads them to question the worth of tools that they have not used before. As they do not know how other schools use the video they are unsure themselves of how to use it.

Also, most PRPs are unhappy at engaging in PR activity that cannot be measured as being 'cost-effective' nor that will greatly reduce their annual budget. They are also unhappy at engaging in activity that cannot be targeted at specific audiences. Furthermore, most PRPs express the fact that there is little evidence that press activity or adverts bring in students, the main PR goal of most schools: this raises the issue that any activity that is not to do with increasing the school's roll is neglected despite the fact that press activity could serve to meet many other PR goals such as making the school better known in the local community. The degree to which PRPs tend to carry out PR activity that they are familiar with and feel confident with shows that PR activity is certainly affected by the confidence of the PRP in carrying out the activity and the degree to which they are prepared to experiment and take risks. The lack of confidence by the majority of PRPs results in schools doing what they know will work and results in tangible gains or effects. This means that the area of data collection, an area that few PRPs feel confident with and which many do not see the value of, is a much under-utilized area of PR activity.

A further example is the web-site which 90% of schools now have with a further 5% setting one up. It is a PR tool aimed a large number of publics in particular alumni, ex-staff, prospective parents and present parents. Few schools aim the web site at students.



However, only 10% of schools visited and 18% of all schools felt that the recent increase in their school numbers had any link to their use of the internet. This is much higher at 33% in schools in Europe and, paradoxically, is much higher with small schools at 40%. This is surprising since it is the larger, mostly American oriented, schools who are the most enthusiastic and greatest users of the web-site. This raises the issue that the web-site may not be as useful as some schools feel that it is or ought to be especially in recruiting students. Also, as it is used as a tool to be aimed at many different publics there is a debate to be had over whether some schools, especially large schools, are over-relying upon it at the expense of other PR activity.

Many schools have contracted out the job of creating the web-site whilst at least 10% had given the job to a present student. Only 10% of schools have any sort of 'web-master' which raises the issue of the PRP being reliant upon external bodies to create and up-date the web-site. The PRPs who were themselves responsible for maintaining the web-site felt uneasy with the job given that it requires specialized skills and requires much time. In particular, PRPs expressed unease at the time required to create and up-date the site and check and send e-mails.

Some of the larger American oriented schools feel that the web-site is a very useful PR tool and indeed now regard it as their main PR tool. However, there appears to be very little evidence of how this claim could be justified as few schools monitor the effectiveness of the web-site. Some schools say that at least 20% of their enquiries are now coming via e-mail but very little formal monitoring or collecting of data is evident.

There is a case to be argued that schools are embracing the web-site as something that feel they ought to be doing and something that other schools are doing but without any clear knowledge of its usefulness or effectiveness. Furthermore, little thought appears to be going into the mechanisms needed to maintain the site or to utilize and update it. It is also an area of activity that many PRPs feel uneasy with given their lack of time and specific training.

### **5.1.5.2) Financial Factors**

This is more often determined by the importance and meaning attached to the activity rather than an amount considered suitable to carry out a set marketing plan. There is evidence of schools seeing PR as being 'free publicity'. For example, one school visited saw PR as being about hospitality treatment for prospective parents and saw the need for a very small budget. In this case, the very narrow understanding of what PR is led to its being under-funded. Other schools where PR is seen as a wider activity linked to advertising and publications can give a very large budget with one large school visited having an annual budget of £1 m.

In total, 53% of all practitioners say their school has a budget as such although only 33% of schools in Europe have one, a fact backed up by the visits. This fact does not seem to be affected by the size of the school only the geographical location. It was not possible to obtain actual amounts from most schools although responses given showed that the average amount given to the budget is less than 1% of total school expenditure, a fact which has led to only 47% of all practitioners feeling it is enough. This figure is only 30% in European schools, a fact backed up by the visits where most practitioners felt that they were not allocated enough. However, 90% of large schools seem to feel it is enough; this makes the issue more of a small school problem.

Part of the problem clearly lies with the lack of a clear marketing plan and the low status given to marketing by many schools at the present time of high student numbers. Thus, there is a case for small schools in particular drawing up a marketing plan or at least a contingency plan for falling numbers in an effort to get more money allocated to the budget. Again, the lack of clear job description and isolation is also a factor. One difficulty in comparing budgets is that some practitioners may have a separate publication budget which is likely to be quite large a complete breakdown would need to be obtained. Also, there is evidence that some schools allocate money as the need arises, a reflection on the fact that activity tends to be unplanned and often ad-hoc.

### 5.1.5.3) Recognition Factors

A serious issue concerns the extent to which the PRP is well regarded by the school and there is much evidence that the person feels under-valued both by the school management and the staff. Forty two percent of all PRPs feel that the school does not take their role within the school seriously enough. This might be because most schools are presently full and do not regard PR and marketing to be as important. This figure rise to 50% in non European schools which makes one think that there must be other explanations as many non European schools are not full. There is certainly a link with the size of the schools as only 20% of PRPs in small schools feel they are not treated seriously enough highlighting the fact that the situation is worse in larger schools. This might be because the PRPs in a large school regard themselves as very important which leads to the argument that the PRP can often feel under-valued. The views of the senior management or Board were not gathered so it is not known to what extent they are actually seen as important to the school.

In particular, 55% of Head PRPs as against only 25% of non-Head PRPs feel they are not treated seriously enough which leads to an exclamation that the degree to which a person feels under-valued depends upon the position they are perceived to hold within the school. Thirty percent of all PRPs feel that they are not appreciated by the other staff, a figure which again is lower in small schools (20%) than large schools (40%). This time though, the non Head PRPs felt they suffered more which can be explained by the fact that the non Head PRP is likely to be much more isolated within the school and does not hold as high a status position within the academic faculty. Again, this is more of an issue in schools outside Europe (40% as opposed to 15%).

The same number, 29%, feel that the other staff do not fully understand the role of the PRP within the school. This is much more of an issue in small schools where 40% of PRPs feel they are not understood as against only 20% of practitioners in large schools. This is also more of a problem for Head PRPs: the issue is largest in small schools where the Head is the PRP. This is likely to be because the staff do not necessarily link PR and marketing with the role of a Head and may explain why Head PRPs are more likely to feel that their role in the school is not treated seriously enough. However, they are the school's principal teacher and are thus likely to be more respected than the non Head PRPs who are seen by many staff as 'non teaching' staff and held in lower respect.

These findings show that the self-esteem and self-motivation of the PRP can be lacking in many cases due to their not being seen as important or taken as seriously as they ought to be. There is clearly a need for the PRP to communicate much more with the staff and make efforts to raise their profile within the school. A proper job description may also help some PRPs to be seen as more important and taken more seriously. There is much evidence of many PRPs who are also responsible for admissions being seen merely as non teaching 'school guides' which only adds to their low status profile.

#### **5.1.5.4) Support Factors**

An issue raised by many PRPs is that they require their own secretary. At present, 65% of all PRPs have a secretary which is either their own or shared with the Development Officer. As expected, this is much more of an issue in small schools where only 20% have access to a secretary unlike 90% of large and medium sized schools: this seems to be much of an issue in schools in Europe where only half of the practitioners have a secretary.

This situation is worsened by the fact that 53% of all PRPs express that they are the only person in the school who has any dealings or formal responsibility for PR and marketing, a figure which rises to 80% in small schools which also raises the issue that in many other schools the only assistance given is at a secretarial level. Again, this is proved by the fact that this figure is much higher in schools who have a non Head PRP as Heads are more likely to have a personal assistant or secretary.

However, a surprisingly high 35% of Head PRPs do not seem to have access to a designated secretary even though they might also be responsible for admissions and PR, almost the same as non Heads. This can only be explained by the Head in most small schools not having a secretary or personal assistant. Given that the Head PRP is likely to be more overworked than a non Head PRP, the lack of a secretary is even more of an issue in small schools and adds to overwork and a higher opportunity cost. A further issue to do with the PRP being overworked and having to neglect certain PR activity is the fact that most practitioners complain of not being able to get out and about and visit external publics.

Ninety percent of all PRPs spend at least 90% of their time in the school, a figure which rises to 95% in schools in Europe and 100% in small schools. Even 85% of practitioners in large schools spend at least 85% of their time in the school. A few PRPs even confessed to spending at least 90-100% of their time in the school. This is clearly linked to the fact that 70% of practitioners are also showing parents around the school and thus find it difficult to find opportunities to get out of the school. It may also be linked to the lack of a secretary for PRPs in small schools who are unable to timetable their appointments.

This factor means that many PR activities such as visiting embassies and companies are not utilized whilst little contact is made with the local community. This also raises the issue that the PRP needs to communicate to the school management the necessity of having more 'release time', an issue raised by over 70% PRPs when asked what changes they would make to their present situation to make it more effective

#### **5.1.5.5) Other people (see Appendix R)**

The American influence shows itself in the status given to Chamber of Commerce, something that two-thirds of all schools make use of. Women's Clubs are also greatly used. Most contact is with present publics with even alumni being targeted by only 50% of schools. Once people leave the school, contact is lost in 70% of cases. Some publics are much more involved;

1) Local Government: One-third of all PRPs express having much contact with the local government; this was twice as high in non European than European schools and was as high as 80% in large schools as opposed to only 25% in small schools. This finding was backed up by the visits which showed that large schools were much more actively involved with the local authorities and saw these links as being much more important.

Eighty-five percent of all PRPs expressed having very good relations with the local authorities, including 90% of small schools thus raising the issue that either small schools do not see the local authority as important or, more likely, this is one of the areas of PR activity that is neglected and under prioritized due to the overwork factor.

This finding needs to be treated with caution. Four of the schools visited, all small schools, expressed having very poor relations with the local authorities and expressed that this was a problem that they wished to rectify. This was especially the case in the UK where independent schools are not liked by local authorities and where international schools in particular feel very isolated and misunderstood. This 'private school syndrome' is clearly a barrier to activity in some schools although most schools in mainland Europe do not seem to have such a problem. This may also be linked to the fact that the 4 schools in question were also profit-making schools as opposed to the more normal mainland European non-profit making international school.

2) The staff: Only 5% have any form of Marketing Committee made up of other staff or even students. There was a general view that this sort of committee was not needed. At least 3 schools had some sort of PR sub-committee concerned with a specific aspect of activity such as a Year-book Committee. No school seemed to have any formal mechanisms for involving the staff in making contact with external publics such as embassies or companies.

3) The parents: The only formal mechanism for involving parents is via the PTA although several schools do not have one and one school said they used to have one but found it got too 'political' and difficult to control. Many schools questioned the role of the PTA as a PR medium. Some schools also use coffee mornings as informal PR mechanisms and informal meetings between staff and new parents as key mechanisms for gathering anecdotal data. There was little evidence of schools using parents as key sources of word-of-mouth marketing and a key source of information. For example, few schools give videos to the present parents so that they can show them to other prospective parents. Indeed, there is no evidence of schools utilizing the concept of using parents for pyramid selling.

4) The students: It is extremely rare for a school formally to involve students in the PR process. Several schools allow senior students to show prospective parents around the school and some invite them to talk at gatherings of parents or information evenings. Few web-sites contain student work and very few brochures have quotes or work from the students. The only PR tool where students are given a leading role is the school video although even here the emphasis is on the staff talking to camera. The Student Council is rarely used for PR purposes other than for gathering anecdotal data.

5) Present staff: 29% of all PRPs feel that their job is mainly to do with external publics, a figure which rose to 35% in large schools and 40% in small schools. 72% of non Head PRPs express this view.

This 'external relations syndrome' may be due to a misunderstanding over what PR is, with it seen as merely to do with communication with external publics or it may be due to overwork and pre-occupation of many practitioners with admissions or fundraising.

The evidence that this might be due to PR being seen as mainly to do with external relations involving external publics comes from the fact that 23% of all PRPs expressed that they leave internal relations to the academic staff, a figure which rises to 40% in small schools and is expressed by 50% of non Head practitioners. There appears to be a view felt by many PRPs that they ought to leave communication with internal publics to the teaching management .

6) prospective staff: An area where this situation manifests itself clearly is the area of communication with prospective staff. At present in most international schools, teachers who apply for a vacant post are sent very little information about the school. At most they will be sent a brochure but at worst may have to rely upon a scan of the web-site in order to determine what sort of school they are applying for.

Most PR activity is aimed at the present parents, especially newsletters, mainly in English. Present students get less attention, the emphasis being on the Student Council. Contact with companies is mainly via newsletters rather than direct contact or visits. Embassies in particular are left to rely upon the school video or brochure. American oriented schools make much use of estate agents. Ex-students and staff rely upon the web-site for contact.

It can be seen that the only activities that are not targeted at a particular public are local press and adverts. Little effort is made to provide separate material for different publics. Most activity is aimed at a wide, general audience and seeks to serve the needs of different publics simultaneously.

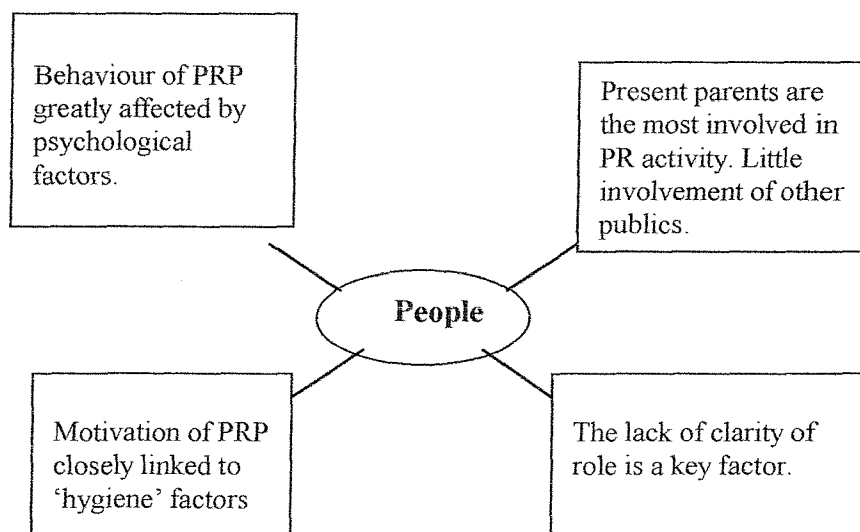


### 5.1.5.6) Conclusions

PR activity is mainly aimed at present parents whilst other present publics are the most actively involved. Despite the diversity of schools, there was found to be much similarity in terms of PR/ marketing activity with very little evidence of experimentation. This maybe explained by a lack of confidence, inexperience and lack of understanding of what other schools do. Over-work and lack of time also leads to the practitioner focusing on the 'easy' target audience of present parents. There is much evidence that poor 'hygiene-factors' such as poor working relationships are affecting motivation but the issue of what actually motivates the PRP is complex.

The lack of clarity of role is likely to be a major factor affecting behaviour as predicted by Jaquesian Theory. Overall, it can be seen that the PRP has much freedom to do what they want but, in practice, this leads to similar activities as most PRPs lack the confidence or time to experiment. Instead, the major goal is to attract more students and the PRP tends to focus on this tangible result.

**Figure 5.14: A summary**



### 5.1.6) Overall Summary to Chapter 5

This analysis of the data regarding PR activity shows that a number of specific factors appear to affect the organisational culture of international schools;

- The lack of a marketing plan leads to a lack of set goals and the main PR/marketing goal is, therefore, to attract more students. As most schools appear to be presently full, this results in a large degree of complacency on the part of both the PRP and the school.
- The PRP has a large degree of freedom to carry out PR activity as they wish within the budget. Few formal mechanisms exist to make the PRP accountable and little appraisal is undertaken.
- The nature of the organisational structure results in a large degree of isolation for the PRP, at a number of different levels. Furthermore, the PRP makes little contact with peers in other schools
- The nature of the structure also leads to a large degree of micro-political tension between the PRP and associated practitioners. This leads to the PRP feeling threatened and even more isolated
- The informal nature of the appointment of the PRP is combined with the informal nature of the role of the PRP with no clear, written job description being supplied.
- The level of activity is greatly affected by the level of confidence felt by the PRP. This is a by-product of the lack of job description, written marketing plan, lack of experience and lack of initial and ongoing training. All these factors lead to a culture of the PRP doing what they think they ought to be doing and what they are confident will produce tangible results. There is no real culture of experimentation nor appraisal or ongoing support.
- The interviewing of Headteacher PRPs revealed that there is a culture of distrust among Heads in many small, mainly Zone E schools, which leads to this carrying out most of the role of PRP.

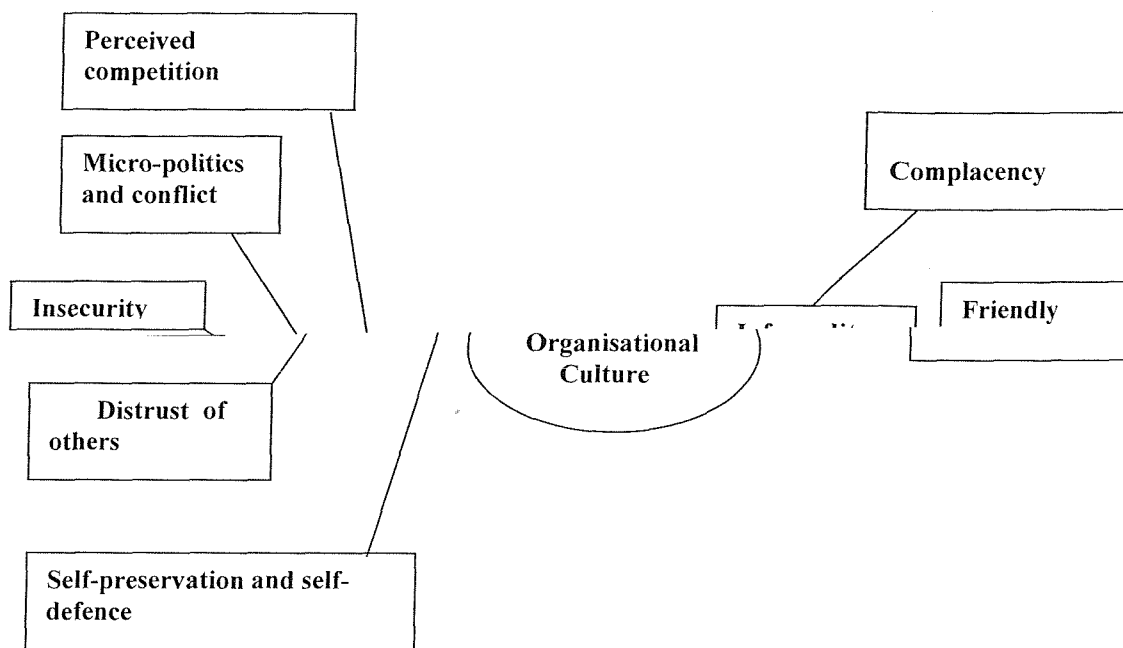
Many Heads feel unable to delegate the job to another person and may be under pressure by the school's owners to do the job themselves. This is also a direct result of the understanding of PR as being merely 'meeting and greeting' and hence something that the Head of a small school ought to do.

- There is a strong culture of insecurity among international schools who feel threatened and misunderstood by the local community leading to little contact with outsiders and a culture of isolation.
- This sense of threat leads to schools adopting a culture of being a friendly, 'family' organization and to the appointment of 'insiders'.
- The lack of training and qualifications of the PRP leads to a lack of confidence in experimentation and practice. It also leads to a culture of 'self-isolation' where the PRP wishes to appear to be more competent and wishes to appear in control. There is no culture of discussing or airing problems. This can lead to a culture of self-preservation and self-defence.
- The lack of information about why consumers choose the school and the lack of data on the activities of other schools leads to all schools being viewed as competitors, leading to an isolated PR stance.

This can be better summarised as a model. It can be seen there appear to be two main features. The first factor is one of 'informality'. The complacency shown by both management and the PRP when the student roll is high leads to the PRP being given much freedom. The marketing niche employed by most schools to create an intimate friendly environment also leads to a large degree of informality.

The second major feature is one of 'isolation'. This is a factor of the lack of confidence felt by untrained PRPs and the structure of the school where the PRP is isolated within what Handy (1989) would refer to as a 'pillar', with little contact with others.

**Figure 5.15: A summary of factors affecting the organizational culture**



Of course, the two are actually linked together: the informal nature of appointing PR practitioners leads to insecurity and lack of confidence which, in turn, leads to the PRP isolating themselves within the school and shying away from contact with more experienced peers. Thus, both these key factors require much further investigation. The following pages are an attempt to conceptualise more fully the nature and causes of these two features.

The next chapter sets out to conceptualise both this informal nature and isolation nature of international schools, starting with the informal nature as this is identified by Hayden and Thompson (1995) as being a possible 'generic' feature of such schools.

## **5.2) What does an analysis of PR activity reveal about the organizational culture?**

### **5.2.1) Introduction**

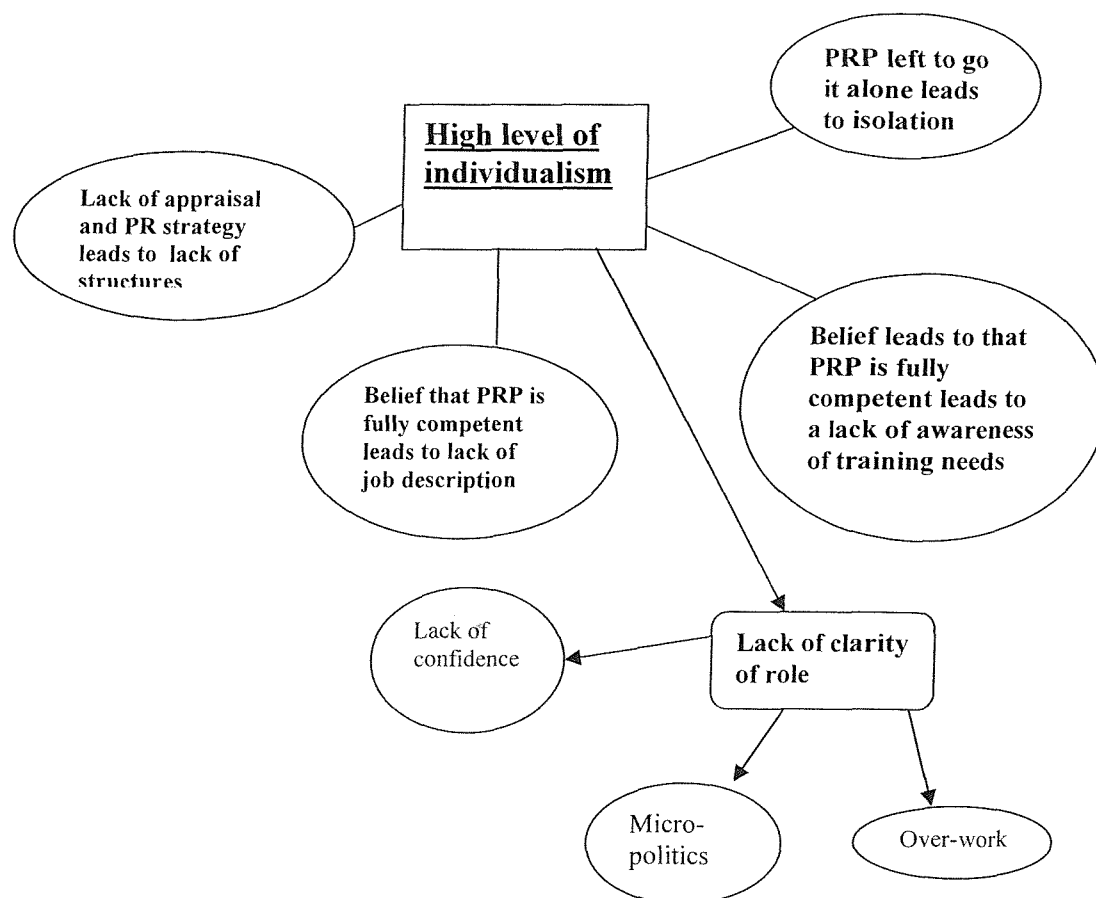
The data regarding PR activity shows a complex picture in terms of the organizational culture of international schools although two features do stand out: the informal and isolation nature. These require further investigation if we are to understand how these features bind international schools as a distinct class of institution. As at least 98% of international schools ought to have an Anglo-American management culture, the characteristics identified by Hofstede ought to be applicable. Although this theoretical approach has limitations it ought, in theory, to be a useful tool for further understanding how international schools operate as organizations.

### **5.2.2) Conceptualising the informal nature of international schools**

Firstly, one could argue that what Hofstede would refer to as the high levels of 'individualism' leads to much isolation and an assumption that the PRP requires no initial nor on-going training. It also leads to an organisational structure where the PRP is a powerful department or 'pillar' with little need for contact, appraisal or reporting back. This might explain the lack of a job description and hence a lack of formal mechanisms or procedures. This is further compounded by the lack of strict rules and procedures. Instead, the PRP is free to pursue their own goals, usually of increasing the student numbers, within the budget set. However, the high degree of freedom could be expected to lead to a lack of clarity of role of the PRP which could explain the lack of confidence shared by many PRPs and the high degree of micro-politics between the separate 'pillars'.

Thus, we can see that many of the features of PR activity uncovered by this research can be explained by what Hofstede would refer to as the high degree of 'individualism', a common feature of Anglo-American oriented organizations.

**Figure 5.16: The high level of individualism**



This diagram shows the central role played by the high level of individualism and how this might lead to the lack of clarity of role of the PRP, evident in most schools. This management culture seems to lead directly to four assumptions about the competence of the PRP which, in turn, leads to much freedom and a lack of clarity of role of the PRP.

We can further identify this management culture as being akin to what Likert (1967) calls 'System 3': the Consultative Model. This is where some management involvement is sought but upward communication other than that which the senior management wants to hear is given in only limited amounts and only cautiously. Instead, the PRP prefers to get on with the job with as little contact as possible.

Broad policy decisions are taken at the top but specific decisions are taken at the bottom. Little group participation is evident as would be found in 'System 4'. Theory Y (McGregor 1966) is a further key factor of Anglo-American Management Culture and also seems to be very evident in international schools.

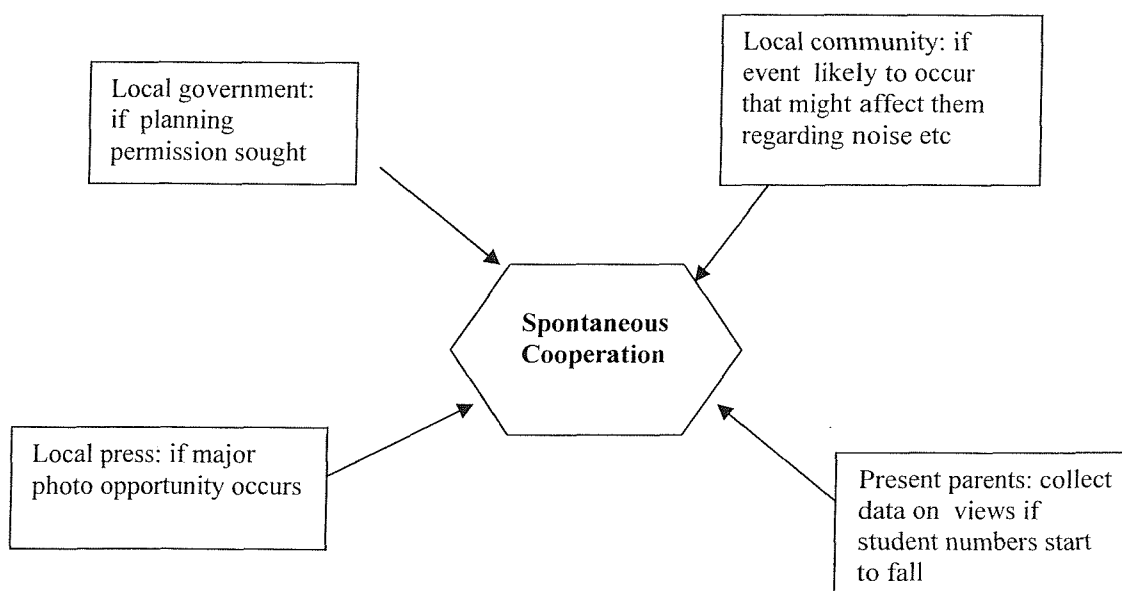
Here, external control is not necessary as the PRP can exercise self-direction and self-control in the pursuit of the major 'goal' of increasing the student roll. A second possible cause of the 'informal' nature is likely to be the highly volatile student roll, a consequence largely of changing economic conditions. This possibly explains the unplanned, adhoc development of international schools. Changes in the economic conditions for either the host country or another country cause the school to expand in an ad-hoc manner making the drawing up of an effective marketing/ development plan difficult and leading to a lack of set goals. This might also be caused by changes in the economic conditions of companies especially with regard to Zone B and D schools. This leads to the unplanned development of the school which results in organizational structural problems such as multi-campus, and a Temple Structure with separate pillars. The isolation of practitioners and micro-political tension between practitioners probably results in a lack of clarity of role with roles changing as development occurs.

A third cause may come from schools feeling threatened and isolated from the outside. This sense of being un-liked and misunderstood might be expected to lead to a culture of 'spontaneous co-operation' as and when the school feels outside contact is needed and this would help to explain the informal nature of the 'family' school which many international schools promote. International schools display a paradox of seeming distant and remote to outsiders, the 'fortress' culture, but warm and friendly by insiders, the 'family' culture. This 'nurture' culture where the school wishes to not only educate the child but look after and safeguard it is evident in publicity (brochure and video especially). Of course, all schools have this feature to one degree or another but with international schools it is used as a particular marketing niche. Many schools, mainly small Zone E, stress the point that the school is a form of 'family' whilst the outside world is hostile and alien. This is especially aimed at new arrivals to a country who are in a large city and forms a marketing niche for many schools.

Hayden and Thompson (1999) claim that this ‘informal’ nature might be a distinctive feature of international schools and this research seems to show it to be true in terms of PR activity and the behaviour of the PRP. However, we know little about its application to other types of practitioner or educator. For instance, the appointment process of the PRP is informal as is the actual process of carrying out PR activity. It is certainly true to say that the PRP holds a post that is rarely appraised or monitored and even then only on an informal basis. Of course, this may also apply to other posts within the school and needs further research.

This organizational culture appears to manifest itself in the form of what Elton Mayo (see Pugh and Hickson 1989) would call ‘spontaneous co-operation’. Mayo through The Hawthorne Investigations during 1927-32 showed for the first time the benefits of the informal organisation and showed that informality could improve productivity and motivate people better. Advocates of the Human Resource Movement would see this informal management culture in international schools as being a positive feature;

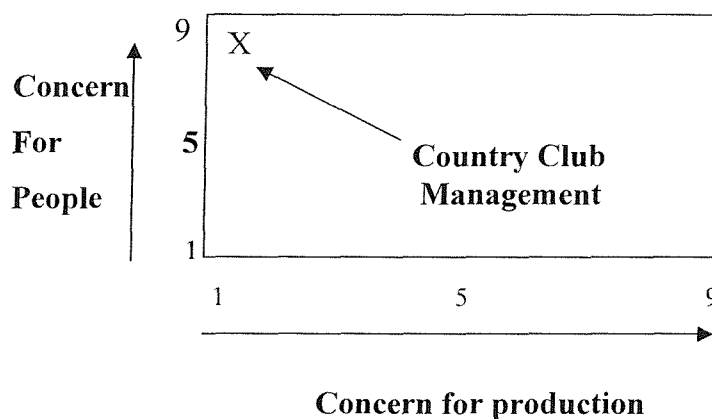
**Figure 5.17: The ‘spontaneous co-operation’ feature of PR activity**





This diagram shows that the PRP is allowed to form ‘spontaneous co-operation’ with a number of different groupings without the formal constraints of systems and rules as laid down by a Job Description or Development Plan. Instead, they are free to create informal links as and when necessary. This manifests itself in a culture of little formal planning or procedure but spontaneous action when necessary.

This informal culture can also be likened to what Blake and Mouton (1985) call ‘Country Club Management’ which suggests that practitioners should not be pushed but encouraged and supported and any mistakes are overlooked as long as they seem to be doing the best they can. The key word is ‘togetherness’ and decisions are discussed over coffee in an informal manner. This culture can be conceptualized as a ‘1,9 Culture’ on a ‘Managerial Grid’ (Blake and Mouton 1962);



**Figure 5.18: The Blake and Mouton Grid**

This type of management leads to problems being glossed over and new ideas being left aside. It is, according to Blake and Mouton, a product of a ‘quasi-monopoly’ situation where the PRP has much freedom and only meets up with senior management or indeed other peers on an informal basis where the objective is to ‘have a chat’ rather than discuss policy and plans.

### **5.2.3) Conceptualising the culture of isolation of international schools**

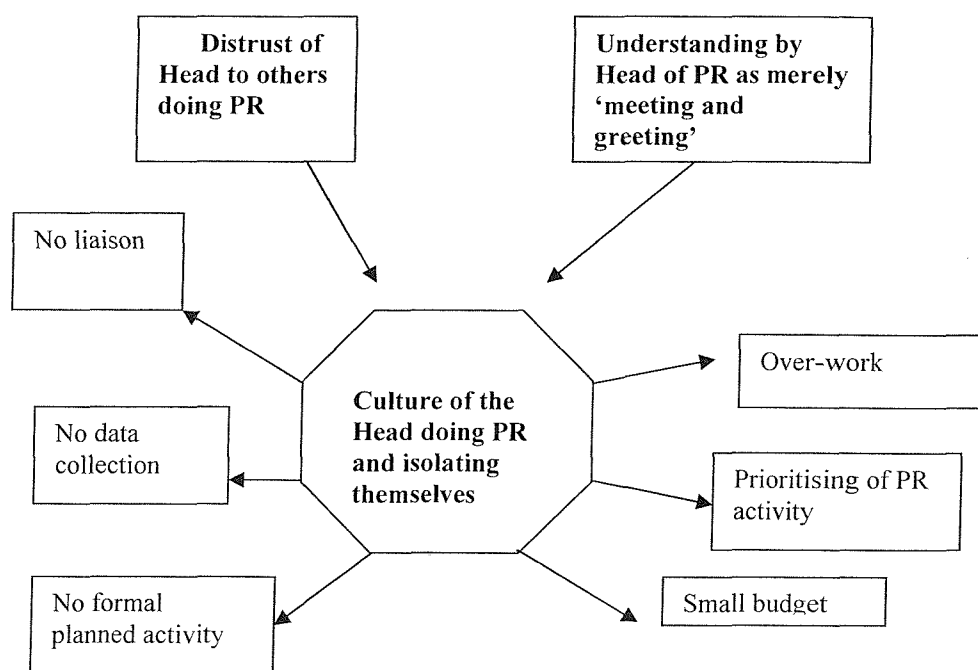
The behaviour of the PRP can be conceptualised as a distinct ‘theory-in-use’ and can be likened to what Argyris and Schon (1975) call Model 1 Behaviour. This has 4 rules of behaviour;

- design goals unilaterally and try to achieve them.
- Control the task with as little dependence on others as possible .
- Minimise generating or expressing negative thoughts in public, keeping thoughts and feelings a mystery.
- Be rational and objective.

It can be seen that Rule 1 is linked to the amount of freedom given within the Anglo-American management culture and Rule 3 leads to a particular style of behaviour of non-open discussion and defensive routines. Rule 2 can also be linked to the way that some heads prefer to take control of PR activity (see below). There is a culture of distrust, particularly in small schools, towards other persons doing the job. In many ways this is probably a reflection of the heads often seeing themselves as responsible for the maintaining of the school roll and feeling personally accountable to the Board or owners. But, it may also be a reflection of the understanding of PR as a ‘front of house’ activity that does not require a formal post-holder nor a large budget and is something that a head ought to do.

This culture can lead to a lack of formal PR activity with no planned activity, and no data collection and goes to explain the overload felt by most Head PRPs. Ultimately it leads to the prioritizing of PR activity. The diagram below shows how Headteacher PRPs in particular become isolated with regard to PR behaviour owing to their distrust of others doing the job and their understanding of it as a ‘front-of-house’ activity that the Head ought to undertake.

**Figure 5.19: The isolation of the Headteacher as the PRP**

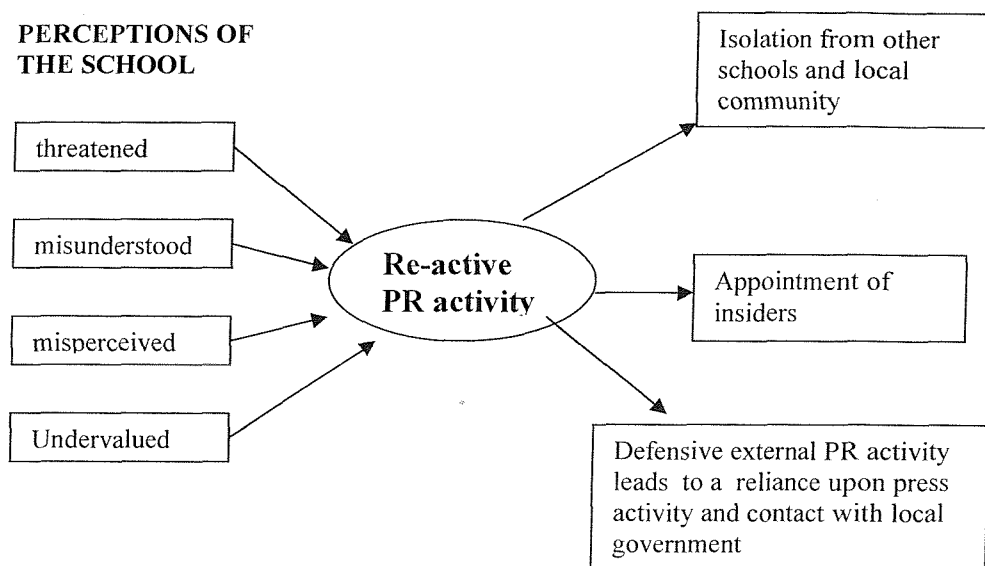


A second factor reflects the way international schools feel threatened and isolated within the local community. Many schools feel unliked and undervalued and this leads them to carry out reactionary activities rather than pro-active. In particular many larger schools feel that their contributions to the local economy is not valued and this leads to re-active contact with the local community, local government and local press. Feeling threatened by 'outsiders' who do not understand them leads to the appointment of practitioners and staff from 'within' and helps to explain the informal appointment process evident in most schools.

It appears that some schools tend to adopt a 'fortress' stance by isolating themselves from the local community and other schools and appear only to venture out if they feel they need to make contact. By and large they are 'invisible' to the local community and make no real effort to become better known, preferring to bus in their students and staying aloof. When they do venture out, they have to make great efforts to make contact, hence the emphasis put on local authority contact. It would be interesting to see if this has increased since '9/11'.

The diagram below shows how some international schools appear to isolate themselves as a consequence of feeling threatened and under-valued.

**Figure 5.20: The Fortress School Model**

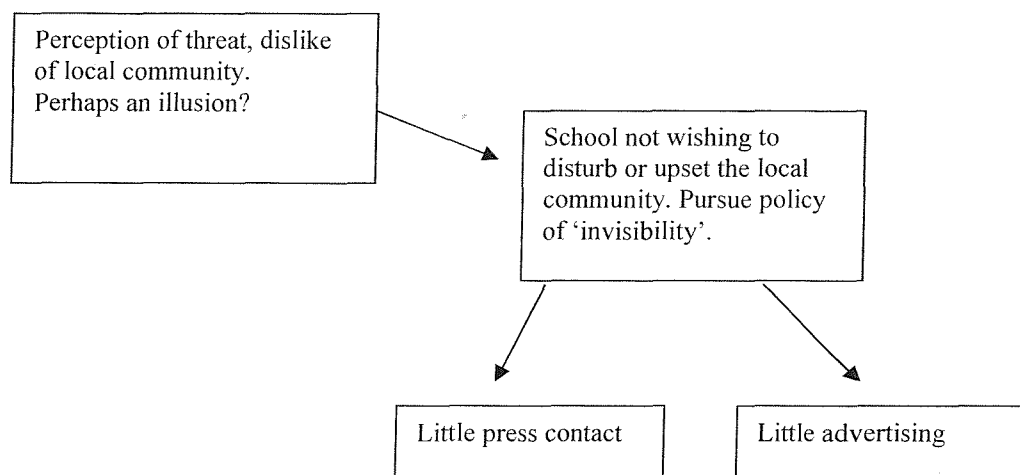


The perception that the ‘outside’ world is hostile and a threat leads to a form of PR activity that is introspective as well as re-actvie. It is easy, for example, to explain the lack of press relations with the local community as being due to the culture of high individualism leading to the school preferring to go it alone and not make contact with others, what Trompeneers and Hapden-Turner (1997) call *inner-directedness*: the process of making little contact because you do not wish to be disturbed.

This is too easy an explanation since the present research has shown that many schools are keen to make more contact with the local community. It appears therefore to be more the case that some international schools are afraid of disturbing the local community and hence a culture of what Trompeneers and Hapden-Turner (1997) call *outer directedness* may be more applicable. This results in international schools being largely ‘invisible’ to the local community and partly explains why many schools do not feel valued by the local community or local authorities. What is not clear is whether this inner-directedness is a strategic choice or merely a historical characteristic. This requires further investigation.

This is a paradox since, given the national and management culture, we would expect a policy of inner directedness but this appears to be another area where some international schools display characteristics similar to Japanese rather than Anglo-American organisations, although the Anglo-American nature of these schools is by far the most prominent. The diagram below shows how the perception of being disliked makes some international schools pursue a policy of 'inner-directedness'. This, of course, is merely a perception since no schools appear to collect data on the views of the local community.

**Figure 5.21: The process of 'Inner-directedness'**



A fourth factor is that there is little evidence of a culture of experimentation. PR activity is aimed at the 'safe' task of increasing student numbers. The success of this is tangible and can be measured by management unlike, for example, the task of improving the image of the school.

This culture of 'low risk-taking' is another paradox since we might expect Anglo-American oriented organizations to be more risk averse. This does not appear to be the case with most international schools. This may be due to a number of factors. Firstly, the lack of a marketing or development plan leads to a lack of clear direction from senior management thus leading to an assumption by the PRP that the increasing of the student roll is the main task.

This 'safe' option may also be due to a lack of confidence and an unwillingness to experiment by the practitioner, who quite often is inexperienced and untrained. This leads ultimately to the key task of aiming to attract more students. A further cause is likely to be the over-load and lack of time experienced by many PRPs who opt for the 'safety-first' option of involving mainly present parents and trying to maintain student numbers.

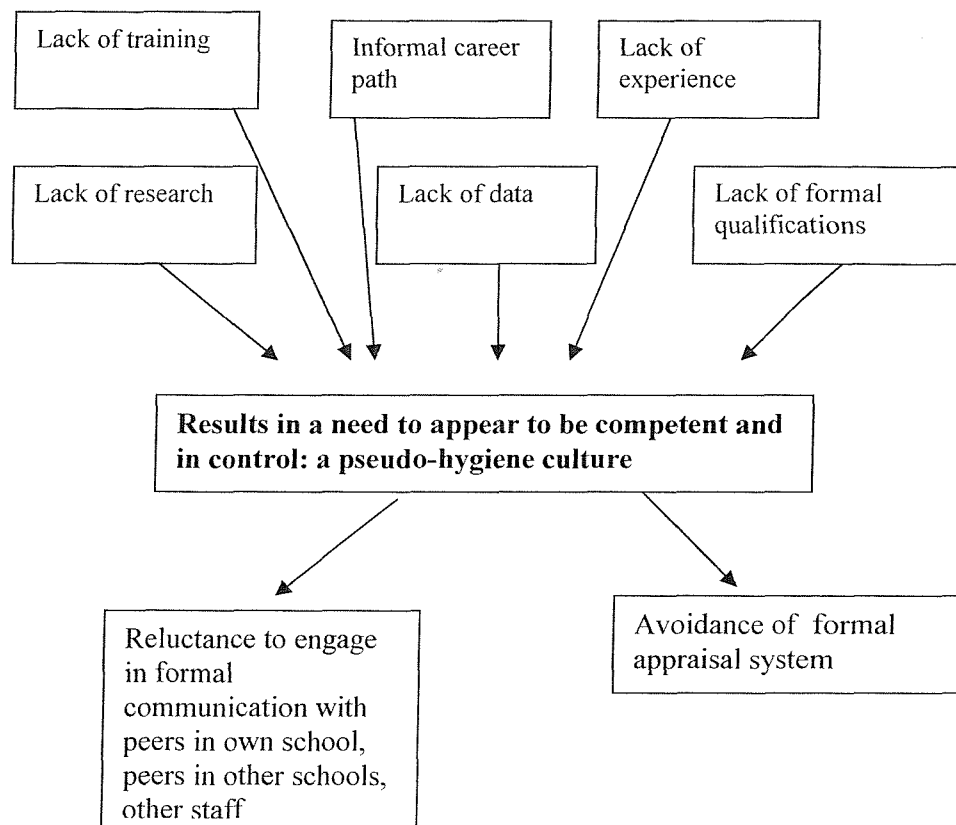
The last factor can be understood by the fact that *defensive routines exist in most organisations* (Argyris 1985). This is caused by the assumption held by the Anglo-American management culture that the PRP is fully competent to do the job and leads to the PRP feeling they have to seem to be competent and in control. This leads to a defensive practice and manifests itself in a reluctance to pursue formal communication not only with other publics especially staff and senior management but also with peers who are perceived to be more trained and competent.

This can lead to what Argyris (1957) refers to as a Pseudo-Hygiene Culture where practitioners pretend that things are going better than they actually are, a *defensive-prone* theory in use. As the PRPs want to appear to be in control they avoid formal contact and are reluctant to share thoughts or air problems. This process of 'self-isolation' stems directly from the informal appointment process where unqualified and untrained practitioners are employed who are believed to be fully competent and hence are placed under pressure to realise this perception. It is also a result of micro-political tension between practitioners which leads each to pretend to be competent so as not to appear inferior and is a product of the environment of PR activity where very little formal research or publications have occurred so the PRP has to pretend to possess more knowledge than is actually possible. This situation is compounded by the lack of formal data collection by the PRP.

The diagram below shows that the nature of PR activity in international schools results in a 'pseudo-hygiene culture, where the PRP wants to appear to be in control despite the fact that they, in the main, have a lack of experience, formal qualifications and training. Furthermore, they undertake little data collection.

This may explain why many PRPs have a very isolated position within the school. It may be a result of their own desire to avoid formal communication with others in an effort to appear to be in control. This provides an interesting link between both the informal and isolation nature.

**Figure 5.22: Conceptualizing the ‘pseudo-hygiene’ culture**



It can be seen that two factors are at work;

1) Firstly, the high level of individualism reflecting the Anglo-American management culture may lead to isolation at 5 different levels. The PRP is isolated from the senior management, the staff, peers in the school, peers in other schools and contacts in the local community. The explanation for this is rather more complicated than blaming national culture. There is a distinct Pseudo-Hygiene culture leading to the PRP undergoing self-isolation whilst many Heads take charge of PR activity.

A key factor is what Handy (1989) would call the strong 'Apollo Culture' evident in international schools who possess a Greek Temple organisational structure. This sort of structure, where departments are separate and strong pillars, is good when conditions are stable but can become unstable if the ground shakes. Thus, international schools, where economic conditions can cause much 'ground shaking', perhaps would be better to adopt a more teamwork oriented 'Net Culture'. At present, international schools adopt the isolationist 'Role Culture'. There is, for example, no culture of directly using the staff for PR purposes such as involving them in making contact with a particular national community. Nor do schools have a PR/ marketing committee. Instead, the PRP tends to act alone, with little internal help or support.

Secondly, international schools aim to do more than educate Third Culture Kids: they also aim to protect and 'nurture' them. This leads to a distinct 'family' culture and is especially used as a marketing ploy by smaller schools. It is exemplified in a quote in the International Schools Journal on 'the spirit of community' by Burleigh (1994 p47): *'For some students, the school superceded the family as the group in which the student felt like a valued, participating member'*.

However, the explanation for this 'pseudo-family' culture appears to be rather more complex and may be linked to the perception of being surrounded by a non-sympathetic, even hostile, outside world which does not understand them. This leads to a reliance upon re-active PR and a reluctance to engage in contact with the 'outside' world. This isolation cannot simply be blamed upon the strong Anglo-American (capitalist) culture of 'inner-directedness'. Instead, it may be more due to a sense of not wishing to disturb the outside world, a form of 'outer-directedness' normally associated with less individualistic national cultures such as Japanese organizations.

Most international schools appear to have a strong 'memo culture' where daily bulletins replace the more formal face to face contact. As a result, few have regular assemblies and information tends to be passed by writing rather than word-of-mouth. In many schools, much information is kept secret (e.g. finances) leading to a large power distance culture.

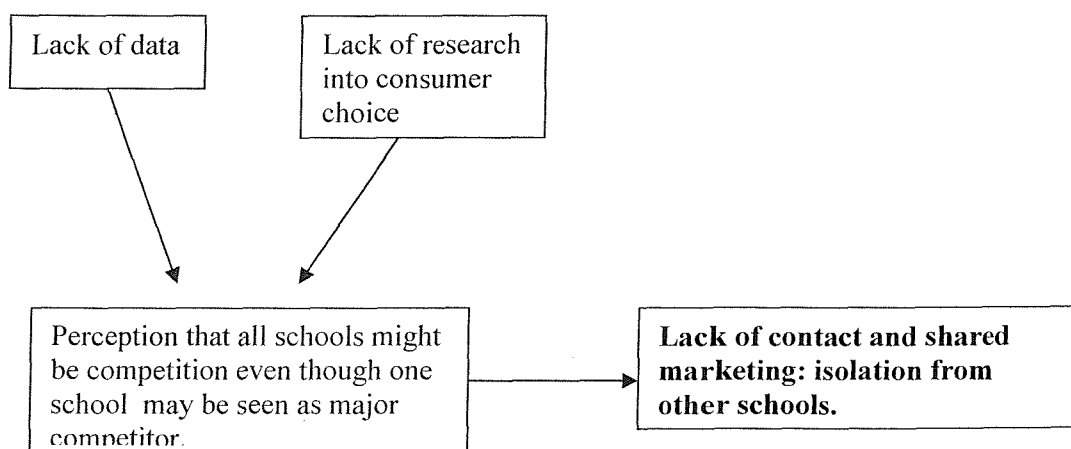


The lack of contact schools have with each other can be understood by the degree to which they consider each other to be competitors. Despite the fact that have the same key task of increasing student numbers, there is little evidence of strategies aimed at competing with other schools. All schools appear to have at least one other school whom they 'perceive' to be a competitor. This is more of a perception than reality since it tends to be backed only by anecdotal evidence and there is probably little actual formal competition. Also, it is not known exactly how and why consumers make a choice: this is compounded by the lack of formal data collection.

Thus, many schools appear to cope with the perceived threat from competitors by isolating themselves from other schools. Hence, the small amount of formal 'shared' PR. In effect, all schools are seen as 'perceived' competitors even though one school may be seen to be more of a threat than another. The largest 'perceived' threat is experienced by American oriented Zone B and D schools who isolate themselves completely. The second biggest amount is shown by the smaller Zone E schools towards other small schools and the large Zone B schools they compete with in large City Cluster Model situations.

The diagram below shows how many schools isolate themselves from other schools owing to a sense of 'competition'. This is largely a perception rather than reality.

**Figure 5.23: The perception of threat**



It can be seen that PR activity in international schools is affected by a strong culture of isolation. Closer examinations reveals this to be more a culture of 'self-isolation' occurring at two separate levels;

Firstly, the PRP is self-isolated from other staff and from senior management. One cause of this could be that some practitioners are promoted into what Handy (1989) calls the *innovation* operation of the organisation, where a Role Culture is more prominent, and out of the 'steady state'. For example, some of the PRPs who have been promoted from a secretarial background with its steady routines are now in a much more innovative job. This can prove to be a promotion beyond one's level of competence and hence *The Peters Principle* can be applied (the theory that people get promoted to their highest level of incompetence). This can lead to practitioners being out of their depth and consequently withdrawing into isolation. This factor requires further investigation although there is evidence of some PRPs feeling under pressure, especially in terms of raising large sums of money. Furthermore, 80% of all PRPs expressed a desire to undergo a training course which shows that there is a degree of lack of confidence.

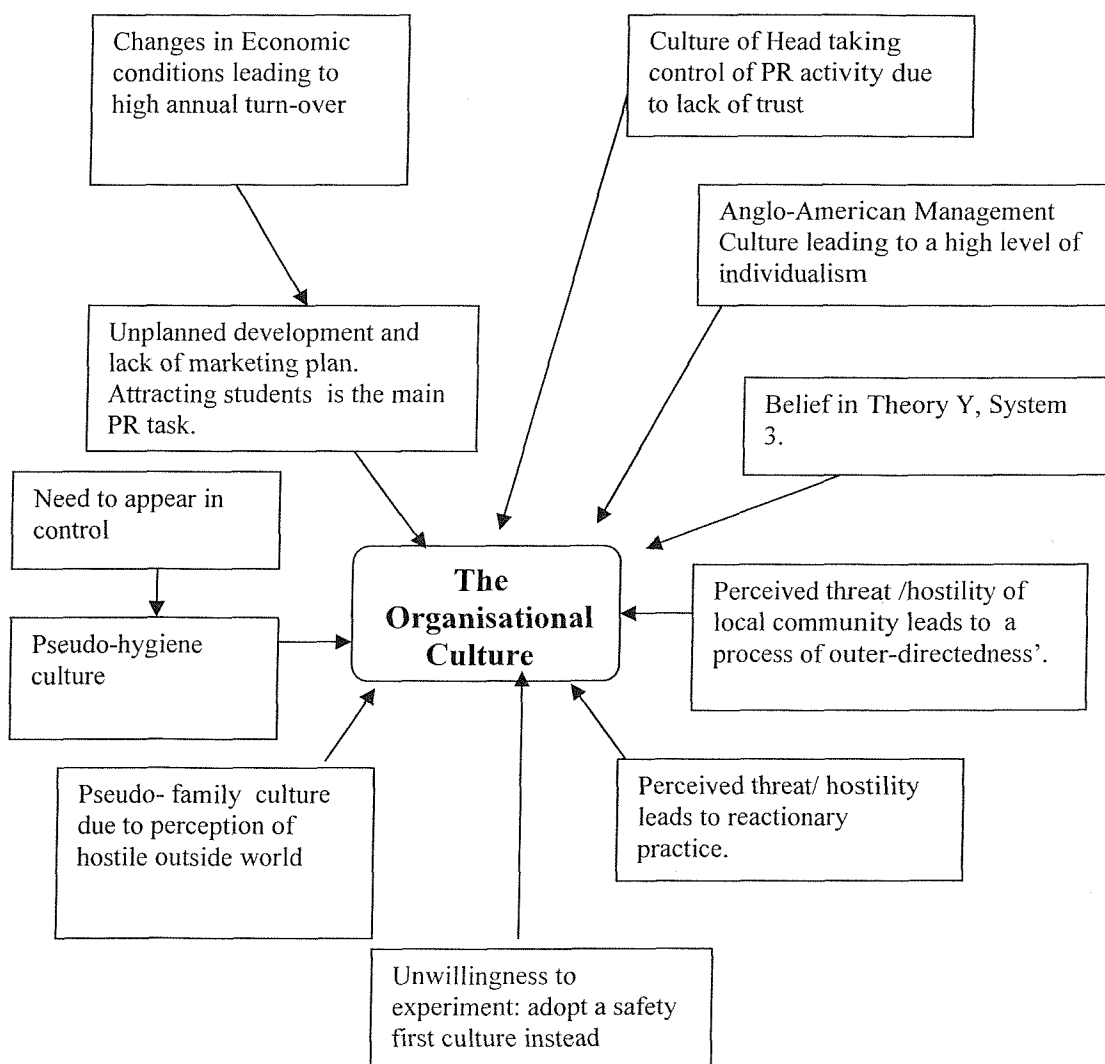
Of course, this can also occur in the case of a teacher who is promoted to the position of Head where they also responsible for PR and marketing. This shows that some persons are more suited for the role of PRP than others and some persons are more suited to working in the 'steady state'.

Secondly, the school itself is self-isolated from the local community and from other schools: this may be a result of the pseudo-hygiene culture where the PRP feels under pressure to pretend that they are competent and tend to isolate themselves but is also a product of the outer-directedness culture. Of course, some schools may prefer not to be disturbed by the outside world (inner-directedness) especially in less developed countries; there is evidence that some schools wish to make contact do not wish to disturb the local community. Either way, there is a process of self-isolation.

### 5.2.4) A Summary

It is now possible to draw a model to show how the factors identified above come together to form a distinct organisational culture regarding PR activity and behaviour. This model helps us to understand how international schools function as a distinct class of institution. It can be seen that the organizational culture of international schools, certainly with regard to PR activity, appear to have at least nine distinct features revolving around the two key factors of 'informality' and 'isolation'. Most are linked with the lack of research into 'Parental Choice'.

**Figure 5.24: Conceptualizing the organizational culture of international schools**



## **6) Responses to the Research Questions**

### **6.1) What does this research tell us about PR activity in international schools?**

#### **6.1.1) Introduction**

A review of literature showed that there is much about PR activity in international schools that is unknown, mainly due to the lack of formal research in this area. In particular, there are four key factors identifiable in both literature on PR activity in a business and educational context that have never been tested by research but are likely to be factors influencing this activity. The present research has shown that all these factors had a bearing on PR activity although the issue of the PRP being usually untrained and unqualified proved to be by far the most significant. This was anticipated. The scale of this issue was a major surprise and was a key factor in identifying the informal nature of international schools. These four factors will now be explored in more detail below.

#### **6.1.2) PR as an activity with many meanings**

PR activity in international schools suffers from similar misunderstandings to those found in other businesses. It tends to be seen as;

- ‘winning and dining’: PR is often seen as ‘free publicity’, a process of entertaining parents and visitors. This simple view of PR leads to several schools having a small PR budget. It also leads to the Head in small schools taking charge of PR.
- External Relations: Schools see PR mainly as an outward oriented activity. Internal relations tend to be either neglected or left to the academic staff.

- The parents are seen as the main public whilst the concept of the staff being a public is not recognized by many PRPs.
- Ad-hoc activity: PR is seen as a series of ad-hoc activities rather than as a systematic, planned process as defined by the British IPR. This is evident in the lack of planning and the use of PR activities as the need arises or as one off promotional activities.
- Part of marketing: PR is seen as a smaller and less important activity than marketing, merely as one of the 4 Ps alongside promotion, price and publicity and therefore a minor activity compared to marketing and selling the school.
- Front-of-house: PR is seen as a front-of-house activity involving the process of visitors being greeted and given information. This is particularly true of small Zone E schools with a Head PRP. In particular, some schools regard the material on display in the reception area as being a key PR activity which makes PR an activity aimed at merely giving out information.

It ought to be noted that in some cases this practice might be due more to the PRP having a lack of time or resources rather than a 'misunderstanding'. Certainly, in the case of schools where the PRP is also the Head, there is much evidence of their prioritizing time and energy resulting in the role of 'meeter and greeter' being the main activity. This may be due to the pressure of having to juggle several different roles.

### **6.1.3) PR as a disliked activity**

There is no evidence of PR being seen as a tarnished, disreputable activity by the practitioners themselves. Given the nature of the participants, this was always likely to be so. All practitioners see PR as a valid, necessary activity whilst no link was made to competition and no view was expressed of its being an immoral or unethical activity. This was as one might expect.

However, concern was expressed by several practitioners that other internal publics, especially the school staff, were wary of PR and did not rate the activity highly. Many felt that some teaching staff were uneasy with the concept of marketing and its perceived link with competition. There is some evidence of this affecting activity and it is an area needing to be addressed in some schools.

A further area of conflict that came to light is the relationship between the PRP and other associated practitioners, notably the Development Officer, Admissions Officer and the Alumni Office. In some schools there is much evidence of a poor relationship and much micro-politics between the different 'advancement' practitioners. This affects practice and needs addressing via organizational structural changes. At present there is an emphasis on internal competition rather than co-operation and sharing of resources.

An interesting point is that most PR/ marketing officers in international schools are Anglo-Saxon and, more specifically, American. This might explain the lack of dislike or distrust of marketing by the actual PRPs given that American practitioners in particular are much more likely to be familiar with and at ease with the notion of educational marketing unlike other cultures where the concept is relatively 'new', as indeed it is in the UK.

#### **6.1.4) PR as an activity undertaken by untrained, unqualified practitioners**

Of the four hypotheses, this was the most strikingly correct. The present research shows that, just as in a business context, the person in charge of PR in international schools is generally unqualified and untrained although there is a debate over what training and experience are relevant. Many of the PRPs, especially former parents, feel they are 'qualified' even though they do not possess formal qualifications. Those who are responsible for fund-raising are particularly worried about their lack of training.

By and large the PRP is also very inexperienced, especially in terms of having not worked in another school or even in any school. Of all the issues found in a business context this is the most serious factor affecting PR behaviour and needs addressing the most not only by the schools but by other support agencies such as the ECIS in terms of conferences and by universities in terms of relevant research and the providing of training support.

#### **6.1.5) PR as an activity regarded as unimportant and unnecessary**

There is much evidence of the full potential of PR not being fully realized nor appreciated by both many PRPs and senior management. PR tends to be seen as a means of communicating information to present parents whilst the lack of appreciation of it as a twoway process is evident in the lack of data collecting

PR is not viewed as a 'systematic process' and little evidence is found of any planning. Schools do have goals and have a calendar of events but this is rarely linked to any plan. The evaluation and monitoring of activity is rarely undertaken whilst schools also largely ignore any idea of shared marketing with other schools, instead preferring to operate very much as a separate unit.

Many staff in the smaller profit-making schools do not seem to fully equate PR/marketing with the financial success of the schools and hence tend to underestimate the role of PR activity in the survival of the school. At the same time, the role of the PRP is also underestimated. Many PRPs feel that their role within the school is not fully appreciated.

## **6.2) What does this research tell us about international schools as a distinct class of institution?**

This research is a step along the road to identifying international schools as a distinct class of institution. It goes some way towards identifying whether the assertion of Cambridge and Thompson (2000 p2) that *'The term 'international school' is frequently used but it cannot be applied to define a single class of institution'* is indeed correct.

It shows that these schools, seemingly at first glance a very diverse and unconnected grouping, in fact appear to have distinct characteristics with regard to PR behaviour. In fact, it is surprising to see how similar these schools are with regard to the nature and extent of their PR activity. However, an analysis of this area of activity seems to reveal a lot more about the nature of international schools. There appears to be two distinct features of international schools in particular that could lead us to argue that this grouping of school are a distinct class of institution.

But, to what extent do the distinct features of 'informality' and 'isolation', as strong as they may be, make these schools a *distinct* class of institution? Without research into other types of schools and into other areas of activity, we cannot be absolutely certain. Therefore, we cannot totally disprove the assertion by Cambridge and Thompson (2000). What we can say, though, is that international schools share generic features which may or may not also be features of other schools. It would be particularly interesting to analyse PR activity in a school such as the Harrow International School.

What we cannot do is say for certain that Langford et al (2002 p11), in the recently published 'survival' guide for international school teachers, are correct in their assertion that *'while no two international schools are the same, there are some common characteristics that distinguish them from national schools'*. This really requires further research.



However, it is likely that the strong Anglo-American management culture, evident in all international schools, is a distinct feature and differentiates these schools from other 'schools in an educational context' as this feature is hardly likely to be evident in schools such as the French Lycee schools.

This research has shown that, through a study of PR activity, it is possible to identify a distinct culture or 'nature', the key form of which equates well with the 'informal' nature claimed by Hayden and Thompson (1999) to be a key characteristic of international schools. However, this has been shown to be a very complicated picture in terms of the main influencing factors and their causes but models, such as the ID Matrix and the TPFi Model, can be developed to help conceptualise this generic organisational culture.

In terms of PR activity, this 'informal' nature is reflected in the informal way that many PRPs are appointed and the amount of freedom they are given. However, this feature may be even more of a distinct feature than we imagine. For example, Sears (1998 p22), in her handbook for ESL teachers in international schools, points out that *one of the most typical features is a friendly and welcoming attitude to new families, and a generally informal and easy relationship between students and teachers*. Thus, perhaps this 'informal' nature goes even much further than Hayden and Thompson (1999) envisaged. Furthermore, Sears (1998 p22) also says that *'It is understandable that such students may find the friendly and informal behaviour of teachers in international schools difficult to interpret'*.

One possible explanation appears to the management culture which, in all international schools, appears to be very strongly 'Anglo-American' as defined by Hofstede (1985). It is not surprising to find that many schools share this feature but what is surprising is how strong this feature is and how it is found in all schools throughout the world and in all zones of the ID Matrix. This generic organisational culture feature, exemplified in practice by a strong sense of individualism leading to a high degree of informality and isolation leads one to argue that all international schools share a common trait, the extent of which has never really been identified: they are all very 'American'.

This finding, that all international schools, appear to be intrinsically ‘American’ in terms of their organisational culture with regard to PR activity, is interesting coming on top of research at Trent University into the management practices of McDonalds restaurants (see Taylor 2001). This research showed that the organisational culture of McDonalds differed very little around the world with local cultural factors having little effect except in certain countries with strong collectivist management cultures such as Sweden. Here, activity differed but otherwise all McDonalds display similar levels of ‘Anglo-American’ management culture features. Taylor remarks that McDonalds ‘*standardises not merely its basic menu but its management practices, largely regardless of cultural differences across societies*’.

It would be interesting to discover to what extent the key feature of informality, found by this research to be a seemingly generic feature of all international schools, is found in American based Multi-National Corporations such as McDonalds.

What has also been shown by this research is that one cannot identify an international school merely by looking at the diversity of its staff and student body, as asserted by Wallace (2001) in his TES article where he merely identified such schools as carrying the title ‘international’. It is clear that one needs to undertake a study of the way that such schools function as organizations if one is to try to identify a common feature. A study of PR activity appears to be one way of doing this although there are probably other means.

One can go further and state that although many international schools appear to be, certainly with regard to their PR activity, American-oriented schools it appears that even the non-American oriented international schools have a strong American organisational culture. So, perhaps it can be argued that when Hayden and Thompson (1997) refer to international schools having an informal nature what they are implying is that perhaps all international schools behave very much like ‘American’ schools. Also, when Longford et al (2002 p11) state that ‘*While most so-called international schools are English-medium, ‘western style’ schools, there are exceptions*’, what they perhaps really mean to say is that international schools are basically ‘American’.

This point was raised by Bartlett (1994 p53) who stated that: *“Even those who take a particular pride in working in ‘international schools’ would probably agree that, given the medium of instruction and much of the underpinning philosophy, a more accurate description of many of our schools would be ‘Anglo-American’.* According to Bartlett, this is an inevitable feature given the history of these schools. Cambridge (2000 p2) implies that this is perhaps an inevitable consequence of the ‘success’ of capitalist values. He states that: *“International schools are epiphenomena of the global spread of capitalist values. The emerging markets for international education are in China and India, where in the coming century, I think that their own young dynamic ‘cultures of capitalism’ are going to eclipse those of Europe and the Anglo-Saxon world...”*

This is an interesting point and may explain why even students who attend the supposedly very ‘British’ International School of London soon adopt a very apparent ‘American’ outlook as well as, strangely, an American accent. This again needs further examination, from a national culture angle rather than an organizational culture one. Is this perhaps another key feature of the ‘Third Culture Kid’?

The main variation from this feature of ‘Americanization’ is that most international schools appear to have a strong ‘pseudo-family’ culture where they aim to create a family atmosphere. This is especially true of small, Zone E schools who use this as a PR/marketing niche but all schools, to a degree, display it. This is a characteristic more in common with ‘Japanese’ oriented organisations, a fact which causes this research to identify an organisational culture akin to a combination of the Anglo-American ‘Theory Y’ and the Japanese oriented ‘Theory Z’. However, it should be noted that this is only a marginal feature. International schools, in the main, are overwhelmingly ‘Anglo-American’ in terms of their organizational culture.

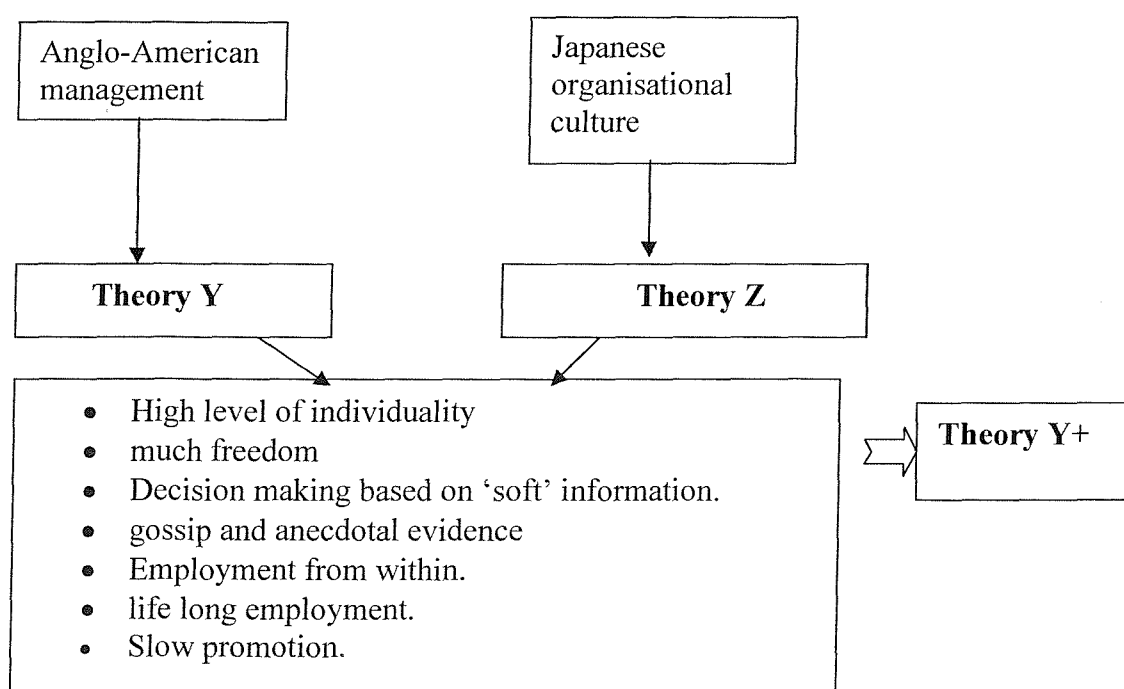
The concept of Theory Z (Ouchi 1981) was developed to conceptualise the organisational culture of Japanese organisations. By linking this to Theory Y, one can develop a new conceptual theory applicable to international schools. Theory Y rests on the principles of individual decision making, individual responsibility, specialised career paths, rapid promotion and segmented concern.

Although not all these factors are characteristic of PR activity in international schools the overwhelming characteristic is one of individual freedom, a high level of ‘individuality’. Theory Y rests on the assumption that the practitioner is competent and responsible enough to be left to their own devices without the need for coercion or control (Theory X).

To fully understand international schools one needs to bring in Theory Z based upon long term employment, slow promotion, slow to change, using ‘soft’ information to make decisions, tendency to employ from within. This last feature can be best inked to international schools although the PRP tends to be employed in the position for a long time and makes decisions not based upon formal data. Furthermore, the post is not liable to promotion within the school.

However, it is the ‘family’ culture of international schools that can be most easily linked to Japanese organisations. Thus, international schools appear, to an extent, to be a hybrid of Theory Y and Theory Z, a sort of Theory Y+. This appears to be especially true of the smaller Zone E type international school where the ‘family’ nature of the school offers a useful marketing niche when competing with the larger Zone B and Zone D type of school.

**Figure 6.4: The Theory Y+ Model**



What this research has shown is that international schools are perhaps a more complex and a more interesting class of institution than previously thought. This research allows us to acquire a much greater understanding of how such schools behave and function as a distinct type of organization.

For instance, we can begin to understand why these schools tend to appear to be 'invisible' to the outside world. Or, we can start to better understand the effect that the management culture has on school's activities.

Also, we can begin to understand better the effect of the organizational structure. In particular, we can start to better understand international schools as being a class of institution that appears to share a common feature: they are all seemingly very 'American'.

What we don't fully understand, though, is how this feature originates. Does it come from the students or from the staff? What we also don't fully understand is why it is that seemingly 'British' schools also appear to share this feature. Certainly, they do with regard to PR activity. However, the work of Hofstede showed that international schools, as organizations who share a common Anglo-American management culture, ought to have a common distinction.

We also can see from this research that international schools share a common feature of being *isolated* from the local community. But, to what extent is this a case of *self-isolation*?

As said, this research has gone some way towards providing a better understanding of how international schools function and behave as a distinct class of institution. However, it is clear that much more research is needed if we are to say with certainty that this type of school is different. All that we can say for certain is that they have certain characteristics that they share. Or, at least they appear to with regard to PR activity.

The most major of these being their high level of individualism, a feature which leads us to conclude that they are all seemingly intrinsically 'American'.

In particular, the informal nature of international school requires further examination. This feature, alluded to by Hayden and Thompson (1997) as being perhaps a major distinguishing feature of international schools, has been proven to be indeed a major feature. Certainly this is shown to be the case with regard to PR activity. I have to confess that my 12 years experience of working in and amongst international schools made me expect this to be a significant finding but I was surprised at the extent to which this is a common feature among international schools. I also have to confess at being shocked at the degree of informality with regard to the appointment and training of PR practitioners within international schools. Given the importance of this role within a school one might expect this process to be a lot more formal than it appears to be in most international schools.

The apparent 'Americanization' of international schools is an interesting feature that could be, and needs to be, investigated further. As pointed out in the next chapter, it would be interesting to pursue research into the appointment process of other educators within international schools. My own experience leads me to believe, for example, that many part-time teachers are employed in a very informal manner. Also, my own experience has shown a complete lack of induction and appraisal processes in many international schools for newly-appointed educators.

In fact, research into the whole area of Human Resource Management (HRM) might highlight more clearly the informal nature of international schools. This would need to be research into not only the 'hard' HRM features such as pay and conditions but also into 'soft' HRM features such as the means by which stakeholders within the school participate in the decision-making process and are consulted by senior management. Indeed, the degree to which they are in fact regarded as 'stakeholders' at all. This would allow us to more fully describe and understand international schools as intrinsically 'American' organizations. Or, it might allow us to identify more clearly the degree to which some international schools are perhaps more akin to 'Japanese' type organizations.

What is also clear from this present research is that international schools appear to 'suffer' from the lack of formal research into their activities. It is quite clear that most PR activity is undertaken on a 'inspirational' rather than a planned basis. Partly this is explained by the lack of formal research into how and why parents, or children, choose an international school. The next chapter highlights this also as a key area for further research: the area of so-called 'Parental Choice'. It is perhaps this lack of formal research that leads to the apparent inclination to experiment with regard to PR activity, which in turn leads to a common type of activity.

Whilst the informal nature of international school was quite apparent, this research also seems to show that international schools are very much isolated. This may also be construed, to a degree, as a distinct feature. In terms of PR activity, there is little evidence of marketing differentiation between schools and little evidence of shared marketing. This feature is also true of the PRP within the school. Partly this can be argued to be a feature of the organizational structure of international schools with the 'Temple' structure (Handy 1985) being the norm, certainly among the larger Zone B and D schools. Here the PRP is a separate pillar who helps to support the structure but has little contact with both the other pillars and the 'pediment', the school's management. Some schools appear to be tackling this feature by combining together some of the separate pillars within an 'Advancement Office'. However, the 'pillar' structure appears to remain the norm. One possible explanation for this sort of structure might be the way that international schools develop. Several of the schools involved in this research had grown over the space of 30 years from only a handful of students to a present number in the region of 1000. This enormous growth has led, in the case of many schools, to a complicated organizational structure with many buildings and sites. Moreover, it has led to the growth of a structure with many 'pillars'. Perhaps this is another distinct feature of international schools: they have often undergone huge sudden growth leading to an overly complex organizational structure.

The degree to which this growth and expansion has been planned is perhaps also another factor. Perhaps we can also say that international schools are a class of institution who undergo ad-hoc, unplanned growth as well as being a class of institution with a complex organizational structure.



## 7) Evaluation

### 7.1) Further research required

#### 7.1.1) Understanding international schools as organizations

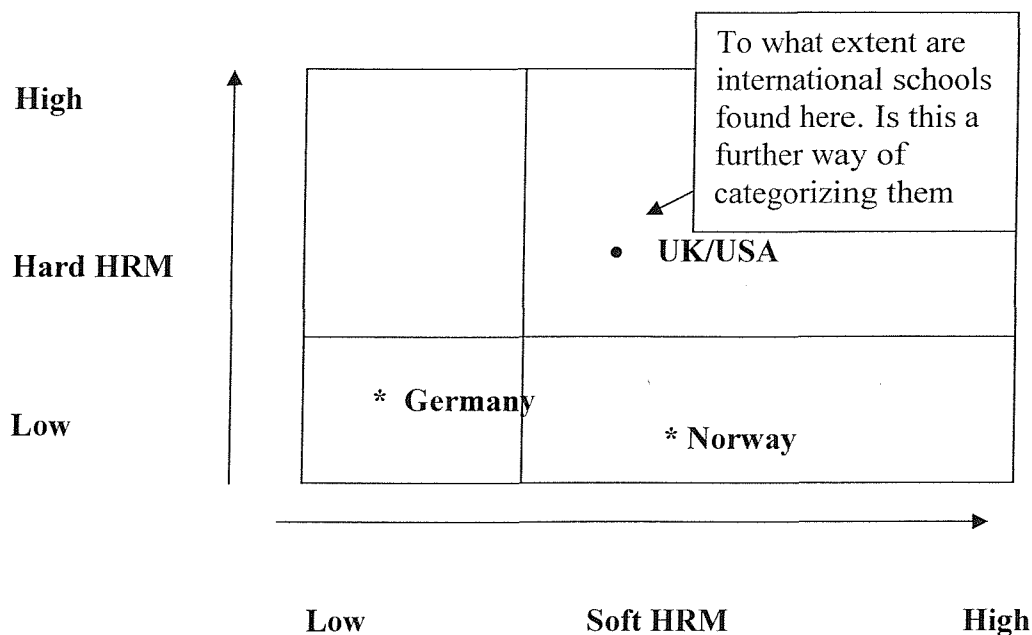
We cannot say for certain that international schools form a distinct grouping or class of institution without further research into areas of activity and into how this activity compares to other types of school. For example, how does the PR activity of international schools compare with that of other 'schools in an educational context', or even with other independent schools? There is still much scope to build further upon the ID Matrix as a model for categorizing international schools, especially with regard to the level of diversification which could be made more 'scientific', something that Cambridge and Thompson (2000) have started to do. For example, the Marginal Volatility Index requires more testing and the use of Pareto Analysis requires further investigation both as a means of classification and as a useful marketing tool. The informal nature of international schools, strongly identified by this research, could be further investigated. An alternative route to PR activity would be a study of labour and industrial relations building upon the study of such practice of McDonalds by Royle (2001). This would allow a further investigation of the 'Americanization' of such schools. This is summarized below in Figure 7.1.

**Figure 7.1: Further Research**

<b>Investigation into labour and industrial relations in international schools: further investigating the informal nature of such schools.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do schools have active trade unions?</li><li>• How are pay and conditions negotiated</li><li>• Do schools offer a pension?</li><li>• What sort of contract do schools offer?</li></ul>
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A further more detailed analysis would be to investigate mechanisms by which staff in international schools are consulted and involved in decision making as well as the degree to which they are involved in pay and conditions bargaining. One way to do this would be to investigate Human Resource Management (HRM) practice in international schools and the degree to which this fits the Anglo-American model as developed by Gooderham et al (1999). This study showed that the US and UK model of HRM is characterized by a high level of 'Hard' HRM and a fairly high level of 'Soft' HRM. 'Hard' HRM is characterized by pay and conditions being decided on an individualistic level according to market forces. 'Soft' HRM is characterized by collective decision-making through collective bargaining and active staff participation. Given the outcome of this research into PR practice one would expect international schools to fit very closely the Anglo-American Model where employees are treated as merely another resource to be either hired or fired, a passive resource. One would especially expect a very high level of 'High' HRM given the Anglo-American management culture. To what extent do international schools fit within the upper right-hand quadrant of the Goodenham et al HRM model ?

**Figure 7.2: The Goodenham et al HRM Model (1999)**



Alternatively, German companies fit into the 'Rhineland' model: low levels of both 'Hard' and 'Soft' HRM (strong unions and much collective decision-making). Research by Sparrow and Hiltrop (1994) showed that there were differences in HRM practice between small and large companies. An investigation into HRM practice among international schools might help to fully identify more the characteristics of Zone E schools and the extent to which they differ from the usually larger Zone B and D schools.

A further analysis would be to investigate more fully the 'family' nature, identified by this research as making international schools similar to Japanese organizations. This would lead us to identify more fully the claim that international schools cannot be identified as a distinct class of institution. It would be particularly useful to investigate the marketing strategies of small Zone E 'Market Opportunist' schools who operate in city clusters such as in Vienna, Amsterdam and Berlin. To what extent do they use the 'family' nature as a marketing niche? Is it a strong feature of larger schools?

### **7.1.2) The effectiveness of PR activity**

There is a clear need for an investigation into how effective present PR practice is in international schools given the lack of monitoring, evaluation and data collection that presently goes on. This would need to examine the effect of practice on different national cultures and needs to assess how effective certain time-consuming tools such as the web-site actually are.

Furthermore, the complete lack of research into 'Parental Choice' means that PR practitioners are unsure of how effective their activity will be as they do not know how or why parents choose an international school. In terms of international schools, this research would be more 'Consumer Choice' rather than Parent Choice as several publics have a say in choosing the school such as embassies and companies whilst the student also may have a large say.

Much research has been undertaken into how and why parents, and students, choose maintained schools in the UK. Examples are given below. No similar type of research has been carried out for international schools. But, without these two connected areas of research above explored, PRPs in international schools are at presently unsure of what PR activity to do and how. This is evident in a lack of confidence felt by most practitioners and in a fear that they may be doing things that are not useful. It also leads to the carried out of PR activity based upon inspiration rather than judgment.

A survey similar to that by West et al (1991) into the role of the child in choosing an international school would be especially useful as would a survey into what PR tools consumers use to choose a school such as that by Falconer (1996). In particular, to what extent is the web-site used for choosing a school ? As many schools have a perception that formal PR activities have only a limited effect, there is a need for research into the grapevine and word-of-mouth such as that by Edge (1996).

Specific examples of what areas need to be explored are given below. It is recommended that either ECIS initiate this research or it comes from university departments such as Bath or Southampton.

**Figure 7.3: A summary of research to be done into international schools**

<p><b>Parental Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research needed into how and why parents (or students or companies) choose a particular international school.</li> <li>• Knowledge is needed of what mechanisms and criteria are used.</li> <li>• Survey needed of what PR material consumers use to garner information and make a decision.</li> <li>• Emphasis is needed on informal PR tools as well as formal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do parents choose an international school ?</li> <li>• How much power do the students have ?</li> <li>• How important is the visit ?</li> <li>• What do parents want to see on a visit?</li> <li>• Why do parents choose an international school ?</li> <li>• How important is the ideology/ ethos of the school ?</li> <li>• How are decisions affected by cultural backgrounds ?</li> <li>• What PR tools do parents consult for information?</li> <li>• What expectations do parents have ?</li> <li>• To what extent is this expectation affected by culture ?</li> <li>• How important is the grapevine in international schools ?</li> <li>• What affects this grapevine ?</li> <li>• What material do parents want to be given on a visit to the school ?</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What material do parents want to consult?</li> <li>• What role do other publics such as embassies and companies play in choosing schools ?</li> <li>• What criteria do they use ?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research needed into the extent to which PR practice is effective.</li> <li>• Survey needed of what schools feel is effective and of parents.</li> <li>• Analysis of the quality and quantity of information given.</li> <li>• Aim to encourage greater confidence and more focus upon meeting PR goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do other schools do ?</li> <li>• Which PR tool is most effective ?</li> <li>• How successful do schools consider their current practice to be ?</li> <li>• What do parents think of the PR activities of schools ?</li> <li>• How effective is the PTA ?</li> <li>• How could schools make more use of their parents ?</li> <li>• How useful is the school web-site and video?</li> <li>• Do the PR tools give all the information that parents want and need ?</li> <li>• How would parents change the material ?</li> <li>• Can all parents understand the material sent to them ?</li> </ul>

### 7.1.3) Current PR/ Marketing practice

There is a need for further case study analysis of current PR practice. A study such as that by Tilling and Walker (1988) may be the most useful. Furthermore, a study of the views of Head PR practitioners such as that by the Leverhulme Trust would be the most useful. A study such as that by the Metafour Survey would identify the extent to which international schools undertake PR activity and reveal more fully the problems faced in carrying out this practice. This research showed that lack of expertise and training are a barrier but the issue needs more clarification.

**Figure 7.4: Marketing case studies: a summary**

<b>Tilling and Walker (1988)</b>	Significant in being the first case study into marketing practice in a secondary school in Peterborough but now over 10 years old. Significant in identifying PR as being about conveying a sense of pride among internal publics and a good image among external publics.
<b>The Leverhulme Trust Survey (see TES 1990)</b>	The first large scale survey of 100 primary school Heads. Significant in showing that many Heads at this time saw themselves as being involved in marketing and with 25% identifying it as a valid role for a Head. However, no direct references to PR were given.
<b>The Metafour Survey (see Doe 1995 and Darbyshire 1995)</b>	Another large scale survey by a large marketing agency of 60 secondary schools in Mansfield. Significant in that it showed that a lot of PR activity is going on in schools but many schools doubt its usefulness and effectiveness. The main reasons quoted being lack of time, budget and expertise.
<b>Marketing Direct Survey (see Revell 1997)</b>	The largest survey of 101 maintained schools throughout England. Significant in revealing that 85% of Heads in general now see marketing and PR as an essential management activity.

The use of marketing strategies in order to compete with other schools needs further investigation. This research showed that schools engage in little direct competition however the extent and nature of this competition needs further investigation and might lead to further classification of international schools. There is also a need to undergo more research into specific areas of PR activity. For example, many schools perceive that they are disliked by the local community. However, no school monitors this sort of view. To what extent is it true?

## **7.2) Limitations to this Research**

Undertaking research among the small and seemingly very diverse body of schools that make up the 'world' of international schools is bound to have limitations. It is difficult, for example, to undertake research among merely a 'City Cluster' of schools such as in London. It would be interesting to undertake research merely among the 16 schools that make up the body of the London International Schools Association (LISA) or the equivalent Regional Association in Rome (RISA). However, this research has shown that it is not possible to obtain the agreement of all the schools within such a confined grouping. Many of the larger Zone B schools, in particular, are reluctant to partake in research that involves their main perceived 'competitors'. This is a shame as it would be useful to examine the marketing behaviour of such a grouping. This also hinders further research into the 'American' nature of international schools as many of the larger American-oriented schools are wary of formal research.

This research also shows the difficulty in obtaining data on ownership and finances. Much of this is considered to be too 'sensitive'. This is an obvious key limitation of educational marketing research. A further limitation proved to be the lack of support of the larger ECIS organization. Support will be offered but only in the case of research undertaken through the ECIS's own Development Programme, a one-year sponsored period of research.

It also proved difficult to get access to the large-scale ECIS organized conferences. This limited the extent to which the data and findings could be validated by practitioners. Access was gained to the 1999 ECIS Conference in Nice but this had to involve the granting of permission of both my own employers and the ECIS Development Committee. This was a considerable obstacle to my taking part in running one of the seminar sessions. This did lead to a certain degree of 'face validation' with the general findings being tested as being credible and genuine.

The validating of this research is further impeded by the lack of formal case – study research among international schools. It is impossible to compare and contrast activity. Furthermore, the area of school management can be argued to be an area much ignored by management theorists. Hence one has to rely upon models such as those by Handy given that his book *Understanding Schools as Organizations* (1980): this is one of the few such books available. There are likely to be limitations to the way that these models can be applied to different types of schools. The area of management culture is a limited area with research by Hofstede (1985) being the most extensive and relevant. However, there are again bound to be limitations to the degree to which one can apply models of behaviour drawn from business (in this case IBM in 50 countries) to schools. Hofstede's confounding of nationality with culture was criticised by Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1997) but it has been used as a paradigm by other researchers (see Sondergaard 1994). Also, Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars designed a model with seven 'pillars' of capitalism rather the four put forward by Hofstede. However, it should be noted that, according to Hickson (1996 p13) he had '*frail data, but robust concepts*'. This research also draws heavily from other business theories which may or may not be fully applicable to the functioning of schools.

Lastly, one of the main limitations of research among international schools is the cost and time involved in visiting the schools. Face-to-face research was only practical among schools within Northern Europe. The remaining schools had to be contacted via postal survey which obviously limited the amount of qualitative data that could be obtained.

The face-to-face surveys showed that much of the more interesting information was obtained through the more informal 'chat', although the interview schedule was strictly adhered to. Of course, this data collection was undertaken in 1999. Future research will have the benefit of 'tele-conferencing', making face-to-face contact practical across the globe, and the considerable ease of e-mail provision.



## **Appendices A-F: Copies of Survey Forms**

## Appendix A

a) Which of the following are goals of your school's PR Programme?

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b) How would you rank them according to importance ?

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Yes/No ?      Ranking ?

_____	_____	_____	increasing student roll
_____	_____	_____	reducing staff turn-over
_____	_____	_____	reducing student turn-over
_____	_____	_____	portraying the school's exam results better
_____	_____	_____	improving the image of the school
_____	_____	_____	improving the reputation of the school
_____	_____	_____	making the school better known
_____	_____	_____	having more contact with the local community
_____	_____	_____	having more contact with other schools
_____	_____	_____	improving internal communication
_____	_____	_____	obtaining more data about views and attitudes
_____	_____	_____	improving contact with Embassies and Companies
_____	_____	_____	improving contact with parents
_____	_____	_____	reducing the pupil-staff ratio in certain classes
_____	_____	_____	getting more visitors into the school
_____	_____	_____	improving coverage in the local press
_____	_____	_____	obtaining more data on student's views
_____	_____	_____	making more use of the Internet for PR purposes
_____	_____	_____	improving the school's Web-Site
_____	_____	_____	getting more enquirers to visit the school
_____	_____	_____	better contact with non-English speaking publics
_____	_____	_____	making more use of ex-students and parents
_____	_____	_____	improving the presentation of material sent out
_____	_____	_____	improving home-school links

## Appendix B

- a) Which of the following factors affect PR practice in your school ?
- b) How would you rank them ?

/No ranking

- \_\_\_ mobile international communities
- \_\_\_ high concentrations of certain national groupings
- \_\_\_ pupils having much power in choosing a school
- \_\_\_ lack of feeder schools
- \_\_\_ school roll dependent upon economic conditions in world economy
- \_\_\_ high annual turn-over of pupils
- \_\_\_ high annual turn-over of staff
- \_\_\_ clashes between culture of school management and parents
- \_\_\_ having many non-native English speaking parents and students
- \_\_\_ much competition between schools
- \_\_\_ certain classes being very small (excess space)
- \_\_\_ difficulty in portraying exam results to consumers
- \_\_\_ the large range of publics involved with the school
- \_\_\_ roll affected greatly by word-of-mouth and 'grapevine'
- \_\_\_ certain parents having much contact with many other parents
- \_\_\_ lack of contact with [ other schools
- \_\_\_ lack of contact with local community
- \_\_\_ wide range of area that contains target markets
- \_\_\_ lack of contact with local press
- \_\_\_ difficulty in keeping up with technological advances eg. internet
- \_\_\_ difficulty in publicising school achievements
- \_\_\_ many prospective consumers are at present living abroad
- \_\_\_ falling roll
- \_\_\_ poor communication between internal publics
- \_\_\_ lack of data and knowledge of views and attitudes
- \_\_\_ poor attendance at school functions

## Appendix C

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

☐ present pupils \_\_\_\_\_

☐ present parents \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ---present-full time staff \_\_\_\_\_

☐ present part-time staff \_\_\_\_\_

☐ companies \_\_\_\_\_

☐ employers \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Embassies \_\_\_\_\_

☐ relocation agents \_\_\_\_\_

☐ other International Schools abroad \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Trust/ Board of Directors \_\_\_\_\_

☐ other schools in host country \_\_\_\_\_

☐ international community locally \_\_\_\_\_

☐ alumni \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ex-staff \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ex-parents in host country \_\_\_\_\_

☐ international community abroad \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ex-parents abroad \_\_\_\_\_

☐ local community near school \_\_\_\_\_

☐ future students \_\_\_\_\_

☐ future parents \_\_\_\_\_

☐ estate agents \_\_\_\_\_

☐ educational consultants \_\_\_\_\_

☐ organisations in home country \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Women's Clubs \_\_\_\_\_

☐ local Chamber of Commerce \_\_\_\_\_

☐ parents' company networks \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

a) Which of the following activities do you undergo in a normal academic year ?

b) How often do they occur ?

Yes/No ?

How often ?

- \_\_\_ PTA meetings \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ PTA events \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Parent-Teacher meetings \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ staff meetings \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Student council \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ parent surveys \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ INSET days \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ student reports \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Graduation Ceremony \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ daily bulletins \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ newsletters \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ assemblies \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ plays/concerts \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Primary Class visit to upper School \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Information Evenings \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Year Book \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Curriculum Guides \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Open Days \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Festivals \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Intranet \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ visitor surveys \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Inspection Reports \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Alumni Society \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Past Staff Social events \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ LISA meetings \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ ECIS Conferences \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ sports fixtures \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ ECIS Net \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Xmas Cards \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Faculty List \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ flyers \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ school stationery \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ school uniform \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ adverts in press \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ brochure \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ feeder school visits \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Embassy visits \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Teacher-Community links \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ WWW Web-Site \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ company visits \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Conferences \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Chamber of Commerce meetings \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ visits by yourself to companies \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Intranet \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

Would you be able to produce the following data if asked ?

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Yes/No

- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of alumni going back 5 years ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of alumni going back 2 years?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of visitors over the last 1 year ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of visitors going back more than 1 year?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of newly appointed staff ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of local community ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of present students ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of former students ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of former staff ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of former parents ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ views and attitudes of present parents ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ reasons why parents left the school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ reasons why visitors did not enroll at the school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ reasons why parents chose the school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ strengths and weaknesses of the school according to parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ strengths and weaknesses of the school according to students
- \_\_\_\_\_ figures on how many prospective parents visited the school over the last 3 years?
- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of all students who left the school over the last 2 years (not including graduates)
- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of all enquiries to the school over the last year ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ names and addresses of all enquiries to the school over the last 2 years ?

## Appendix F

### POSTAL SURVEY

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#### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization

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x or /

- ☐ Is your school full at the moment ?
- ☐ Do you have more students than last year ?
- ☐ Do you have more students than 3 years ago ?
- ☐ Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice ?
- ☐ Would you say that it was due to the internet ?
- ☐ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment ?
- ☐ If not, did you used to have one ?
- ☐ Does your school have a Development Plan ?
- ☐ Does your school have a Development Office ?
- ☐ If not, are you thinking of setting one up ?
- ☐ Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future ?
- ☐ Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past ?
- ☐ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR ?
- ☐ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office ?
- ☐ Does your school have a separate Alumni Office ?

#### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

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- ☐ Are you also the Head /Principal ?
- ☐ Are you also responsible for Admissions ?
- ☐ Are you also responsible for fund-raising ?
- ☐ Are you also responsible for press relations ?
- ☐ Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations ?
- ☐ Do you have a clear, written job description ?
- ☐ Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed ?
- ☐ Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified ?
- ☐ Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years ?
- ☐ Have you been doing it for more than 10 years ?
- ☐ Was your present job advertised ?
- ☐ Are you the first person to do this job in your school ?
- ☐ Do you have a secretary ?
- ☐ Had you worked in a school before ?
- ☐ Do you show parents around the school ?
- ☐ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school ?
- ☐ Do you have much contact with the local government ?



- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have good relations with them ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Would you like more contact with the teaching staff ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Did you receive much training ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you involved in any appraisal system ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you appraised every year ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is there anyone else in the school responsible for PR ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you free to decide what PR activity to undergo ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you accountable to the Head ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you accountable to the Board ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have to report your activity to a senior management person ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you free to carry out any PR activity that you wish ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have a PR Budget as such ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that this budget is enough ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you solely decide the extent and nature of PR activity in the school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does your Head play much of a part in the PR process ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that the school takes PR and your activities seriously enough ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that you have enough time to do the job properly ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that you neglect any area of PR ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that you don't have enough time to fulfill your job ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that the other staff fully understand your role in the school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel isolated within your school ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel isolated from other schools ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have contact with other PR practitioners in other schools ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Would you like more contact ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Would you like to undergo some sort of long-distance training ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you normally attend ECIS conferences ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Do you feel that ECIS Conferences serve your needs ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Would you like to attend a conference with just PR/Marketing practitioners ?

3) Would you agree with the following statements;

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) My job is mainly to do with external publics .
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff .
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff .
- \_\_\_\_\_ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously.
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget.

4) Are you one of the following ;

- \_\_\_\_\_ a) a former parent at the school .
- \_\_\_\_\_ b) a former school secretary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c) a person who used to be involved in PR work outside education .
- \_\_\_\_\_ d) a person who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created .
- \_\_\_\_\_ f) a person with no previous formal PR/Marketing experience ?
- \_\_\_\_\_ g) a person with no formal PR/Marketing qualifications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ h) a former parent at another ECIS member school.

\_\_\_\_\_ i) a qualified and experienced teacher ?

5) From your own experience, which areas of your job do you feel that a newly appointed person requires training in ? Which areas of the job are they likely to know least about ?

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6) What areas of your job would you personally like further training in or knowledge of ?

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7) What sort of workshops would be useful for you to attend at a future ECIS Conference ?

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8) how would you organise your school differently to make the job of the PR practitioner more effective ?

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## **Appendices G-K: Results of Postal Survey (raw data)**

## Appendix G

### POSTAL SURVEY

#### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization

x or /

- 41 ☒ Is your school full at the moment? E E E N N N N
- 35 ☒ Do you have more students than last year? E E N N N E
- 47 ☒ Do you have more students than 3 years ago? E E E N N N N
- 23 ☒ Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice? E E E N
- 18 ☒ Would you say that it was due to the internet? E E N
- 47 ☒ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment? E E E N N N N N
- 6 ☒ If not, did you used to have one? N
- 59 ☒ Does your school have a Development Plan? E E N N N N N N E N
- 59 ☒ Does your school have a Development Office? E E N N N N N N E N
- 13 ☒ If not, are you thinking of setting one up? E N N
- 29 ☒ Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future? N N N N N
- 12 ☒ Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past? E N
- 76 ☒ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR? E N E E N N N N N N N N E
- 59 ☒ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office? N E E N N N N N N N
- 32 ☒ Does your school have a separate Alumni Office? E N N N N N

#### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

- 53 ☒ Are you also the Head /Principal? E N E N N N N N E
- 65 ☒ Are you also responsible for Admissions? E E E E E N N N N N E
- 47 ☒ Are you also responsible for fund-raising? N N N N N N N E N
- 94 ☒ Are you also responsible for press relations? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N E N
- 41 ☒ Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations? N N N N N N N
- 70 ☒ Do you have a clear, written job description? E N E E E N N N N N E N
- 42 ☒ Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed? E E N N N E N
- 12 ☒ Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified? E N
- 47 ☒ Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years? E N E E N E N N
- 12 ☒ Have you been doing it for more than 10 years? N
- 59 ☒ Was your present job advertised? E E E E N N N N N
- 47 ☒ Are you the first person to do this job in your school? E E N N N N N N
- 65 ☒ Do you have a secretary? E N E N N N N N N N E
- 76 ☒ Had you worked in a school before? E E N E N N N N N N N N E
- 70 ☒ Do you show parents around the school? E E N E E N N N N N N
- 60 ☒ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school? E E N E E N N N N N E N
- 2 ☒ Do you have much contact with the local government? E N N N N N N
- 2 ☒ Do you have good relations with them? E N E E N N N N N N N N N

- 47 ✓ Would you like more contact with the teaching staff? N E N N N N N N
- 32 ✓ Did you receive much training? E N E N N N
- 65 ✓ Are you involved in any appraisal system? N E N N N N N N N E
- 47 ✓ Are you appraised every year? E N E N N N N N
- 53 ✓ Is there anyone else in the school responsible for PR? E E N E N N N N N N
- 82 ✓ Are you free to decide what PR activity to undergo? E E N E N N N N N N N N E
- 47 X Are you accountable to the Head? E E E N N N N N
- 40 ✓ Are you accountable to the Board? E N E E N N N N N N N N
- 23 X Do you have to report your activity to a senior management person? N N N N
- 54 ✓ Are you free to carry out any PR activity that you wish? E N E N N N N N N E
- 53 ✓ Do you have a PR Budget as such? E N E N N N N N N N
- 47 X Do you feel that this budget is enough? E E N N N N N N N
- 35 X Do you solely decide the extent and nature of PR activity in the school? E E N N N N N N
- 59 ✓ Does your Head play much of a part in the PR process? E E E E N N N N N N
- 42 ✓ Do you feel that the school takes PR and your activities seriously enough? E N E N N N N N
- 23 X Do you feel that you have enough time to do the job properly? E E N N
- 65 ✓ Do you feel that you neglect any area of PR? E N E N N N N N N N N N
- 53 ✓ Do you feel that you don't have enough time to fulfill your job? E N N N N N N N N N
- 29 ✓ Do you feel that the other staff fully understand your role in the school? N N N N N N
- 12 X Do you feel isolated within your school? E N
- 35 X Do you feel isolated from other schools? E N E N N N N
- 23 ✓ Do you have contact with other PR practitioners in other schools? E N N N
- 41 ✓ Would you like more contact? N E E N N N N N
- 47 ✓ Would you like to undergo some sort of long-distance training? N E N N N N N N
- 18 X Do you normally attend ECIS conferences? E N N
- 23 X Do you feel that ECIS Conferences serve your needs? E N N N
- 65 ✓ Would you like to attend a conference with just PR/Marketing practitioners? E N E N N N N N N N N N

3) Would you agree with the following statements;

- 29 ✓ a) My job is mainly to do with external publics. E E N N N
- 23 X b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff. E E N N N
- 35 ✓ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity. N N N N N N
- 29 X d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff. N E N N N
- 41 ✓ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously. E E E N N N N
- 65 ✓ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget. E N E N N N N N N N N N

4) Are you one of the following ;

- 23 X a) a former parent at the school. E N N N
- 6 X b) a former school secretary. N
- 23 X c) a person who used to be involved in PR work outside education. E E N N
- 6 X d) a person who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created. N
- 41 ✓ f) a person with no previous formal PR/Marketing experience? E N N N N N N N
- 47 ✓ g) a person with no formal PR/Marketing qualifications. E N N N N N N N N
- 6 X h) a former parent at another ECIS member school. N
- 65 ✓ i) a qualified and experienced teacher? E E N N N N N N N N N

## Appendix H

### POSTAL SURVEY

#### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization

- 1/ x or /
- 2 ☒ Is your school full at the moment? E E E N N N N N 6
- 5 ☒ Do you have more students than last year? E E N N N E 5
- 5 ☒ Do you have more students than 3 years ago? E E E N N N N E
- 6 ☒ Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice? E E E N 2
- 1 ☒ Would you say that it was due to the internet? E E N 1
- 4 ☒ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment? E E E N N N N N 7
- 5 ☒ If not, did you used to have one? N 1
- 5 ☒ Does your school have a Development Plan? E E N N N N N N E N 7
- 5 ☒ Does your school have a Development Office? N E N N N N N N E N 6
- 3 ☒ If not, are you thinking of setting one up? E N 1
- 2 ☒ Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future? N N N N N 2
- 1 ☒ Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past? E N 2
- 7 ☒ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR? E N E E N N N N N N N N E 8
- 5 ☒ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office? N E E N N N N N N N 6
- 3 ☒ Does your school have a separate Alumni Office? E N N N N N 3

#### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

- 5 ☒ Are you also the Head /Principal? E N E N N N N N N E 8
- 6 ☒ Are you also responsible for Admissions? E E E E E N N N N N E 8
- 4 ☒ Are you also responsible for fund-raising? N N N N N N N E N 4
- 9 ☒ Are you also responsible for press relations? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N E N 11
- 4 ☒ Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations? N N N N N N N N 2
- 7 ☒ Do you have a clear, written job description? E N E E E E N N N N N E N 9
- 4 ☒ Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed? E E N N N E N 6
- 1 ☒ Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified? E N 1
- 4 ☒ Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years? N E E N E N N 6
- 1 ☒ Have you been doing it for more than 10 years? N 1
- 5 ☒ Was your present job advertised? E E E E N N N N N N 6
- 4 ☒ Are you the first person to do this job in your school? E E N N N N N N N 4
- 6 ☒ Do you have a secretary? E N E N N N N N N N E N 6
- 7 ☒ Had you worked in a school before? E E E E N N N N N N N N E N 9
- 7 ☒ Do you show parents around the school? E E E E E N N N N N N E N 9
- 7 ☒ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school? E E E E E N N N N N E N 9
- 3 ☒ Do you have much contact with the local government? E N N N N N 4
- 8 ☒ Do you have good relations with them? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N 9

- 40 47 ✓ Would you like more contact with the teaching staff? N E N N N N N N 5
- 40 32 ✓ Did you receive much training? E N E N N N 5
- 35 65 ✓ Are you involved in any appraisal system? N E N N N N N N N N E 7
- 50 47 ✓ Are you appraised every year? E N E N N N N N 6
- 63 53 ✓ Is there anyone else in the school responsible for PR? E E N E N N N N N N 7
- 40 82 ✓ Are you free to decide what PR activity to undergo? E E N E N N N N N N N N E 9
- 13 47 X Are you accountable to the Head? E E E N N N N N 4
- 15 40 ✓ Are you accountable to the Board? E N E E N N N N N N N N 9
- 5 23 X Do you have to report your activity to a senior management person? N N N N 2
- 0 59 ✓ Are you free to carry out any PR activity that you wish? E N E N N N N N N E 7
- 0 53 ✓ Do you have a PR Budget as such? E N E N N N N N N N 6
- 3 47 X Do you feel that this budget is enough? E E N N N N N N 4
- 2 35 X Do you solely decide the extent and nature of PR activity in the school? E E N N N N N N 5
- 0 59 ✓ Does your Head play much of a part in the PR process? E E E E N N N N N N 5
- 2 42 ✓ Do you feel that the school takes PR and your activities seriously enough? E N E N N N N N 5
- 7 23 X Do you feel that you have enough time to do the job properly? E E N N 3
- 0 65 ✓ Do you feel that you neglect any area of PR? E N E N N N N N N N N N 7
- 2 53 ✓ Do you feel that you don't have enough time to fulfill your job? E N N N N N N N N N 6
- 7 29 ✓ Do you feel that the other staff fully understand your role in the school? N N N N N N 3
- 7 12 X Do you feel isolated within your school? E N 2
- 35 X Do you feel isolated from other schools? E N E N N N N 5
- 23 ✓ Do you have contact with other PR practitioners in other schools? E N N N 2
- 41 ✓ Would you like more contact? N E E N N N N N 5
- 47 ✓ Would you like to undergo some sort of long-distance training? N E N N N N N N N 5
- 18 X Do you normally attend ECIS conferences? E N N 3
- 23 X Do you feel that ECIS Conferences serve your needs? E N N N 4
- 65 ✓ Would you like to attend a conference with just PR/Marketing practitioners? E N E E N N N N N N N N N 7

3) Would you agree with the following statements;

- 29 X a) My job is mainly to do with external publics. E E N N N 3
- 23 X b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff. E E E N N N 3
- 35 ✓ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity. N N N N N N N 3
- 29 X d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff. N E N N N 5
- 41 ✓ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously. E E E N N N N N 5
- 65 ✓ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget. E N E N N N N N N N N N N 7

4) Are you one of the following ;

- 23 X a) a former parent at the school. E N N N 2
- 6 X b) a former school secretary. N 1
- 23 X c) a person who used to be involved in PR work outside education. E E N N N 4
- 6 X d) a person who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created. N 1
- 41 ✓ f) a person with no previous formal PR/Marketing experience? E N N N N N N N N 4
- 47 ✓ g) a person with no formal PR/Marketing qualifications. E N N N N N N N N N 5
- 6 X h) a former parent at another ECIS member school. N 1
- 65 ✓ i) a qualified and experienced teacher? E E N N N N N N N N N N 6

# Appendix I

## POSTAL SURVEY

### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization

- 1/ x or / 3
- 10 41 ✓ Is your school full at the moment? E E E N N N N N
- 3 35 ✓ Do you have more students than last year? E E N N N E
- 5 44 ✓ Do you have more students than 3 years ago? E E E N N N N E
- 0 23 X Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice? E E E N
- 3 18 X Would you say that it was due to the internet? E E N
- 0 47 ✓ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment? E E E N N N N N
- 6 X If not, did you used to have one? N
- 0 57 ✓ Does your school have a Development Plan? E E N N N N N N N E N
- 3 59 ✓ Does your school have a Development Office? N E N N N N N N E N
- 5 18 If not, are you thinking of setting one up? E N
- 1 24 X Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future? N N N N N
- 5 12 X Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past? E N
- 0 76 ✓ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR? E N E E N N N N N N N E
- 3 57 ✓ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office? N E E N N N N N N N
- 32 X Does your school have a separate Alumni Office? E N N N N N

### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

- 0 59 ✓ Are you also the Head /Principal? E N E N N N N N E
- 10 69 ✓ Are you also responsible for Admissions? E E E E E N N N N N E
- 47 ✓ Are you also responsible for fund-raising? N N N N N N N E N
- 0 94 ✓ Are you also responsible for press relations? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N E N
- 41 X Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations? N N N N N N N
- 1 70 ✓ Do you have a clear, written job description? E N E E E N N N N N E N
- 1 42 X Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed? E E N N N E N
- 1 19 X Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified? E N
- 47 X Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years? E N E E N E N N
- 12 X Have you been doing it for more than 10 years? N N
- 59 ✓ Was your present job advertised? E E E E N N N N N N
- 47 X Are you the first person to do this job in your school? E E N N N N N N N
- 65 ✓ Do you have a secretary? E N E N N N N N N N N E
- 76 ✓ Had you worked in a school before? E E N E N N N N N N N E N
- 70 ✓ Do you show parents around the school? E E N E E N N N N N E N
- 70 ✓ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school? E E N E E N N N N N E N
- 32 ✓ Do you have much contact with the local government? E N N N N N
- 82 ✓ Do you have good relations with them? E E N E E N N N N N N N N N



- 15 ☒ Would you like more contact with the teaching staff? N E N N N N N N
- 33 ☒ Did you receive much training? E N E N N N
- 33 ☒ Are you involved in any appraisal system? N E N N N N N N N N E
- 33 ☒ Are you appraised every year? E N E N N N N N
- 50 ☒ Is there anyone else in the school responsible for PR? E E N E N N N N N N
- 90 ☒ Are you free to decide what PR activity to undergo? E E N E N N N N N N N N E
- 50 ☒ Are you accountable to the Head? E E E N N N N N
- 50 ☒ Are you accountable to the Board? E N E E N N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you have to report your activity to a senior management person? N N N N N
- 50 ☒ Are you free to carry out any PR activity that you wish? E N E N N N N N N N E
- 33 ☒ Do you have a PR Budget as such? E N E N N N N N N N
- 33 ☒ Do you feel that this budget is enough? E E N N N N N N N
- 13 ☒ Do you solely decide the extent and nature of PR activity in the school? E E N N N N N N
- 30 ☒ Does your Head play much of a part in the PR process? E E E E N N N N N N N
- 13 ☒ Do you feel that the school takes PR and your activities seriously enough? E N E N N N N N
- 33 ☒ Do you feel that you have enough time to do the job properly? E E N N N
- 3 ☒ Do you feel that you neglect any area of PR? E N E N N N N N N N N
- 5 ☒ Do you feel that you don't have enough time to fulfill your job? E N N N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel that the other staff fully understand your role in the school? N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel isolated within your school? E N
- 3 ☒ Do you feel isolated from other schools? E N E N N N N
- 5 ☒ Do you have contact with other PR practitioners in other schools? E N N N N
- 0 ☒ Would you like more contact? N E E N N N N N
- 44 ☒ Would you like to undergo some sort of long-distance training? N E N N N N N N N
- 18 ☒ Do you normally attend ECIS conferences? E N N
- 28 ☒ Do you feel that ECIS Conferences serve your needs? E N N N N
- 65 ☒ Would you like to attend a conference with just PR/Marketing practitioners? E N E N N N N N N N N N N

3) Would you agree with the following statements;

- 29 ☒ a) My job is mainly to do with external publics. E E N N N N
- 23 ☒ b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff. E E E N N N
- 38 ☒ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity. N N N N N N N
- 29 ☒ d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff. N E N N N
- 44 ☒ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously. E E E N N N N N
- 65 ☒ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget. E N E N N N N N N N N N N

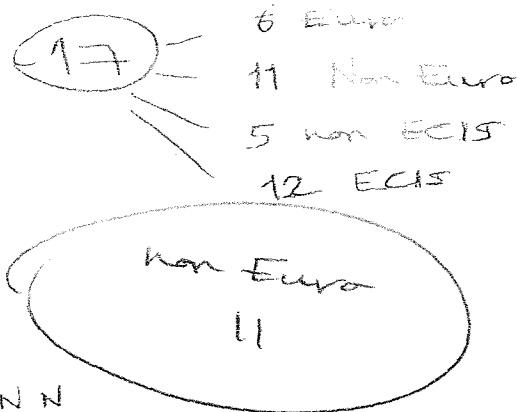
4) Are you one of the following ;

- 23 ☒ a) a former parent at the school. E N N N
- 6 ☒ b) a former school secretary. N
- 13 ☒ c) a person who used to be involved in PR work outside education. E E N N N
- 4 ☒ d) a person who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created. N
- 47 ☒ f) a person with no previous formal PR/Marketing experience? E N N N N N N N N
- 44 ☒ g) a person with no formal PR/Marketing qualifications. E N N N N N N N N N
- 26 ☒ h) a former parent at another ECIS member school. N
- 65 ☒ i) a qualified and experienced teacher? E E N N N N N N N N N N

## Appendix J

### POSTAL SURVEY

#### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization



x or /

- 33 ☒ Is your school full at the moment? E E E N N N N
- 25 ☒ Do you have more students than last year? E E N N N E
- 33 ☒ Do you have more students than 3 years ago? E E E N N N N E
- 8 ☒ Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice? E E E N
- 8 ☒ Would you say that it was due to the internet? E E N
- 33 ☒ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment? E E E N N N N N
- 8 ☒ If not, did you used to have one? N
- 60 ☒ Does your school have a Development Plan? E E N N N N N N E N
- 70 ☒ Does your school have a Development Office? N E N N N N N N E N
- 15 ☒ If not, are you thinking of setting one up? E N N
- 50 ☒ Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future? N N N N N
- 15 ☒ Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past? E N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR? E N E E N N N N N N N N E
- 60 ☒ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office? N E E N N N N N N N
- 5 ☒ Does your school have a separate Alumni Office? E N N N N N

#### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

- 5 ☒ Are you also the Head /Principal? E N E N N N N N E
- 5 ☒ Are you also responsible for Admissions? E E E E E N N N N N E
- 5 ☒ Are you also responsible for fund-raising? N N N N N N N E N
- 10 ☒ Are you also responsible for press relations? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N E N
- 5 ☒ Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations? N N N N N N N
- 5 ☒ Do you have a clear, written job description? E N E E E N N N N N E N
- 5 ☒ Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed? E E N N N E N
- 15 ☒ Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified? E N
- 3 ☒ Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years? N E E N E N N
- 12 ☒ Have you been doing it for more than 10 years? N N
- 59 ☒ Was your present job advertised? E E E E N N N N N
- 47 ☒ Are you the first person to do this job in your school? E E N N N N N N
- 60 ☒ Do you have a secretary? E N E N N N N N N N E
- 76 ☒ Had you worked in a school before? E E N E N N N N N N N E N
- 70 ☒ Do you show parents around the school? E E N E E N N N N N E N
- 76 ☒ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school? E E N E E N N N N N E N
- 37 ☒ Do you have much contact with the local government? E N N N N N
- 82 ☒ Do you have good relations with them? E N E E E N N N N N N N N N

- 75 ☒ Would you like more contact with the teaching staff? N E N N N N N N
- 42 ☒ Did you receive much training? E N E N N N
- 95 ☒ Are you involved in any appraisal system? N E N N N N N N N E
- 65 ☒ Are you appraised every year? E N E N N N N N
- 67 ☒ Is there anyone else in the school responsible for PR? E E N E N N N N N N
- 90 ☒ Are you free to decide what PR activity to undergo? E E N E N N N N N N N N E
- 50 ☒ Are you accountable to the Head? E E E N N N N N
- 90 ☒ Are you accountable to the Board? E N E E N N N N N N N N
- 40 ☒ Do you have to report your activity to a senior management person? N N N N
- 70 ☒ Are you free to carry out any PR activity that you wish? E N E N N N N N N E
- 70 ☒ Do you have a PR Budget as such? E N E N N N N N N N
- 60 ☒ Do you feel that this budget is enough? E E N N N N N N N
- 40 ☒ Do you solely decide the extent and nature of PR activity in the school? E E N N N N N N
- 60 ☒ Does your Head play much of a part in the PR process? E E E E N N N N N N
- 50 ☒ Do you feel that the school takes PR and your activities seriously enough? E N E N N N N N
- 20 ☒ Do you feel that you have enough time to do the job properly? E E N N
- 70 ☒ Do you feel that you neglect any area of PR? E N E N N N N N N N N N
- 80 ☒ Do you feel that you don't have enough time to fulfill your job? E N N N N N N N N N
- 30 ☒ Do you feel that the other staff fully understand your role in the school? N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel isolated within your school? E N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel isolated from other schools? E N E N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you have contact with other PR practitioners in other schools? E N N N
- 0 ☒ Would you like more contact? N E E N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Would you like to undergo some sort of long-distance training? N E N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ Do you normally attend ECIS conferences? E N N
- 0 ☒ Do you feel that ECIS Conferences serve your needs? E N N N
- 0 ☒ Would you like to attend a conference with just PR/Marketing practitioners? E N E N N N N N N N N N

3) Would you agree with the following statements;

- 29 ☒ a) My job is mainly to do with external publics. E E N N N N
- 23 ☒ b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff. E E E N N N
- 0 ☒ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity. N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff. N E N N N
- 0 ☒ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously. E E E N N N N
- 0 ☒ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget. E N E N N N N N N N N N

4) Are you one of the following ;

- 23 ☒ a) a former parent at the school. E N N N
- 0 ☒ b) a former school secretary. N
- 23 ☒ c) a person who used to be involved in PR work outside education. E E N N
- 0 ☒ d) a person who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created. N
- 41 ☒ e) a person with no previous formal PR/Marketing experience? E N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ f) a person with no formal PR/Marketing qualifications. E N N N N N N N N N
- 0 ☒ g) a former parent at another ECIS member school. N
- 0 ☒ h) a qualified and experienced teacher? E E N N N N N N N N N N

## Appendix K

### POSTAL SURVEY

#### 1) A survey of your school's PR organization

- ✓ x or /
- 20 41 ✓ Is your school full at the moment? ~~E~~ E N N N N N
- 20 35 ✓ Do you have more students than last year? ~~E~~ E N N N E
- 40 47 ✓ Do you have more students than 3 years ago? ~~E~~ E N N N N E
- 20 23 x Would you say that this was due to a change in PR practice? ~~E~~ E E N
- 40 18 x Would you say that it was due to the internet? ~~E~~ E N
- 60 47 ✓ Does your school have a PR/Marketing Plan at the moment? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ E N N N N N
- 0 6 x If not, did you used to have one? N ~~E~~
- 60 59 ✓ Does your school have a Development Plan? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N E N
- 40 59 ✓ Does your school have a Development Office? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N E N
- 20 18 x If not, are you thinking of setting one up? ~~E~~ N N
- 20 29 ✓ Does your school have a contingency plan for a falling role in the future? ~~E~~ N N N N N
- 0 12 x Is your school now less concerned with PR than it was in the past? E N
- 0 76 ✓ Do you feel that the senior management at your school understand the importance of PR? E N E E N N N N N N N N E
- 10 57 ✓ Does your school have a separate Admissions Office? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N N
- 10 32 x Does your school have a separate Alumni Office? ~~E~~ N N N N N N

#### 2) A survey about facts concerning you as the PR Practitioner

- 40 53 ✓ Are you also the Head /Principal? ~~E~~ N E N N N N N E
- 60 65 ✓ Are you also responsible for Admissions? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ E N N N N N E
- 0 47 x Are you also responsible for fund-raising? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N
- 0 94 ✓ Are you also responsible for press relations? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N N N
- 0 41 x Are you also responsible for Alumni Relations? N N N N N N N N
- 60 70 ✓ Do you have a clear, written job description? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ E N N N N N E N
- 30 42 x Do you feel that it ought to be more detailed? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N E N
- 10 12 x Do you feel that your job description ought to be simplified? ~~E~~ N
- 0 47 x Have you been doing the job for more than 3 years? ~~E~~ N E E N E N N
- 0 12 x Have you been doing it for more than 10 years? N ~~E~~
- 0 59 ✓ Was your present job advertised? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ E N N N N N
- 0 47 x Are you the first person to do this job in your school? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N
- 0 65 ✓ Do you have a secretary? ~~E~~ N E N N N N N N N E
- 60 76 ✓ Had you worked in a school before? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N N
- 30 70 ✓ Do you show parents around the school? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N
- 0 70 ✓ Do you spend more than 90% of your time in school? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N E N
- 0 32 ✓ Do you have much contact with the local government? ~~E~~ N N N N N
- 0 82 ✓ Do you have good relations with them? ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ ~~E~~ N N N N N N N N

- 2 2 2

0 29 ✓ a) My job is mainly to do with external publics . E E N N N N

10 23 X b) I leave internal relations to the academic staff . E E N N N

60 35 ✓ c) I am over-worked and hence have to neglect certain areas of PR activity. N N N N N

20 29 X d) My role and efforts regarding PR activity are not appreciated by the other staff . N E N N

0 41 ✓ e) I wish the school would take PR more seriously. E E E N N N

0 65 ✓ f) I am free to do any PR activity that I want as long as it is within the budget. E N E N N N

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**Appendix L: Copy of presentation given to ECIS  
Conference, Nice 1999.**

## Appendix L

### Public Relations Activity in International Schools : Issues for School Practitioners to Consider Regarding Current Practice

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**Abstract:** Recent research into public relations activity in international schools has revealed a number of issues that school practitioners and management might like to consider in an attempt to improve upon current practice. These are presented as a checklist for self-examination and are based largely around the emphasis and attention given to certain PR tools as well as the way the school is organized in order to carry out these activities.

The following issues stem from research carried out during 1998-99 as part of a part-time PhD into the nature and extent of PR activity in international schools. In all, 34 schools including 29 ECIS members were surveyed from 21 countries throughout the world. Half the schools were visited with an interview taking place with the Marketing / PR Officer. The remainder were contacted via a postal survey.

A clear picture was drawn of what activities schools in general engage in and what mechanisms they use to implement these activities. In particular, it was found that the main difference was not so much between what activities different schools do but the frequency and the processes by which they do it. It was also found that there is a large difference between schools in Europe and outside Europe in terms of the way they are organized in order to carry out PR and the priority that they give to the goals of this activity.

Closer examination of the data revealed a number of issues that individual schools may wish to consider and even discuss in an attempt to question their own activity and perhaps act to improve upon it. To facilitate this self-examination the following list has been devised with a brief explanation given as to why it may be an issue for consideration for some schools;

- 1) Should we be doing more parent surveys ? : 50-70% of schools do parent surveys usually once or twice per year however 10% do one only every 2 years.
- 2) Should we involve visitors more ? : Visitor surveys are hardly ever done by any school whilst 10% used to do one but now do not.
- 3) Should we be involving Embassies more ? : Despite the fact that 67% of schools see Embassies as a very important PR public only 40% have a regular programme of Embassy visits.
- 4) How could we get companies to visit the school more ? : 50-70% of schools visit at least two companies per year but only 40% organize regular visits by companies to the school.
- 5) Should we be involving the local community more ? : Only 33% of schools see the local community as an important PR public with the main involvement revolving around IB CAS activities and occasional invites to functions.
- 6) Do we keep enough contact with ex-parents ? : Only 36% of schools keep in contact with ex-parents abroad and 30% involve ex-parents in the host country in activities. Reliance is made on the web-site and occasional newsletters.

- 7) Are there organizations in the home country that we could use more ? : These are the least involved publics with only 20% of schools involving them in the PR process.
- 8) Should our Marketing Officer be showing parents around the school ? : 90% of Marketing Officers in schools in Europe show parents around the school against only 65% of schools outside Europe.
- 9) Does our Marketing Officer need a more detailed job-description ? : Although 70% of Marketing/ PR Officers have a detailed job-description , 42% feel that it ought to be more detailed.
- 10) Should our Marketing Officer be appraised along with other staff ? : 66% of Officers are involved in the appraisal process but only half of these are involved on a regular basis .
- 11) Should our Marketing Officer have their own secretary / PA ? : 85% of Officers outside Europe have their own secretary but only 60% in Europe.
- 12) Should our Marketing Officer be spending more time outside the school ? : 90% of Officers in schools in Europe spend 90% of their time inside school against 70% outside Europe.
- 13) Do we have enough contact with the local government ? : 70% of schools say they have a very good relationship with local government but only 32% have a lot of regular contact ( 50% in schools outside Europe).
- 14) Do we need to draw up a Marketing Plan ? : Only 47% of schools have such a plan whilst there is evidence that many schools , especially in Europe, used to have one but now do not.
- 15) Should we consider setting up a longer term Development Plan ? : 67% of schools have such a plan usually reviewed yearly although only 20% have a 10 year plan.
- 16) Should we consider establishing a Development Office ? : 60% of schools outside Europe have one but only 33% of schools in Europe although 18% of schools are considering setting on up in the near future .
- 17) Does our Marketing Officer need assistance with admissions ? : Only 33% of schools in Europe have a separate Admissions Office against 80% in schools outside Europe.
- 18) Is there someone else who could deal with Alumni relations ? : Only a very small amount of schools in Europe ( 15%) have a separate Alumni Officer whereas outside Europe 60% have one.
- 19) Should we draw up a contingency plan for a future falling roll ? : Only 5% of schools in Europe have any such plan but 50% outside Europe have one.
- 20) Is our marketing /PR budget adequate ? : Only 53% of schools have an actual budget for marketing / PR purposes.
- 21) Should we collect more data from visitors ? : Only 6% of schools collect data on the views and attitudes of visitors during a normal academic year.
- 22) Should we be making more use of data about enquiries ? : Only 47% of schools have data stored on the names and addresses of all enquiries over the last year and only 37% have data going back more than one year.
- 23) Do we know enough about why parents do not enroll ? : Only 28% of schools collect this sort of data on a regular basis .



- 24) Should we make more contact with other schools ? : Only 36% of schools make any regular contact, apart from sporting events, with other schools either abroad or in the host country .
- 25) Show we obtain more data about views and attitudes ? : 75% of schools collect data on the views of present students but only 53% of former students whilst only 28% of schools seek the views of parents leaving the school.
- 26) Are we making enough contact with embassies and companies ? : Although they are seen as major PR publics , only 67% of schools involve Embassies in the PR process and only 61% involve Companies.
- 27) Are we placing too much emphasis on increasing the school roll ? : Despite the fact that 85% of schools in Europe are full , it is still seen by 80% of schools as the main PR goal.
- 28) Should we be giving more attention to reducing student turn-over ? : This is seen as a PR goal by only 50% of schools , the same as reducing staff turn-over.
- 29) Are we doing enough to deal with the grapevine ? : 'Word-of-mouth' marketing and the grapevine are seen as major PR obstacles by nearly all schools .
- 30) Could we do more to publicise the school's achievements ? : This is seen as a major PR obstacle by most schools whilst for many schools the issue of portraying the school's exam results better is also a problem.
- 31) Should we be doing newsletters more regularly ? : Although 90-100% do a regular newsletter the range of regularity varies. 70% of schools do one monthly but 20% do only 3 per year.
- 32) Are we doing enough advertising ? : 70-90% of schools do regular adverts whilst 30% do only 2 per year and 5% do more than 10 per year.
- 33) Should we be making more use of the local press ? : This is a PR tool hardly used by schools and not regarded as an important part of the PR programme.
- 34) Would a school video be useful for us ? : Only 10% of schools have a school video and limit its use in the main to handing out to companies and embassies .
- 35) Are we relying too much on our web-site ? : 95% of schools have a web-site and see it as a tool aimed at many publics in particular alumni, ex-staff, prospective parents and present parents.
- 36) Should we be publishing material in languages other than English ? : Schools give much literature to present parents including a newsletter which is often weekly and a colour magazine or newspaper often termly. However, only 5% of schools show any evidence of having this material published either wholly or in part in a language other than English.

Special attention needs to be drawn to issue number 34 concerning the web-site. It can be seen that most schools have a web-site and aim it at a wide variety of publics both at home and abroad. This, however, raises the concern that schools may be over-relying on it as a PR tool especially given the fact that most attention in literature about web-sites tend to concern itself with the presentation and content of such sites rather the more needy issues of whom to aim it at and what use it can serve. The finding by this research that only 10% of schools feel that their rise in student numbers is due to their greater use of the web-site shows that it may not be as useful as people wish it to be or believe it is .

Clearly, much more research is needed into the usefulness of the web-site and the mechanisms that schools use to exploit its potential rather than just focusing on making the site look nice.

The very last issue also raises a serious concern for international schools . It is clear that most schools give out a large amount of printed literature on a regular basis especially to present parents. However, there is no guarantee nor checks made to ensure that this material is read and understood by parents whose first language is not English which raises the issue that much activity may be wasted or , at the very least , under-consumed.

Attention also needs to be drawn to issues 14 and 19. It is clear that many schools only bother with a Marketing Plan when their student numbers are falling which raises the worrying issue that some schools are not only unconcerned about a future sudden down – turn but are also unprepared. It is also clear that most schools do not see the need at present for any sort of contingency PR/ marketing plan for a possible future fall in student numbers. This is especially a concern with small schools many of whom are largely reliant at present on the admission of students who fail to enter the school of their first- preference choice either because they can not get in or are not wanted . This raises the interesting paradox that many schools dispense with a Marketing Plan at a time when they most need one such as when they are full and ought to be preparing for any down-turn.

On a positive note, there is evidence of a growing trend towards schools creating a Development Office where they bring together the functions of fund-raising, admissions , marketing , PR and alumni under one roof and , more importantly, within one data base. This is certainly a trend to be encouraged as would be a move towards simplifying the organizational structure of some schools highlighted by issues 17 and 18.

One area of PR that definitely requires much more discussion concerns the collecting and use of data . This is an area of activity almost completely ignored by schools and done by others on a very ad-hoc or informal basis . The value of this data and the use with which it can be utilized is an area that needs further examination but it can be seen from issues 1, 21, 22, 23 and 25 that there is much more that schools could do in this area of activity.

Lastly, the concept of a video as a PR tool is another area that needs more discussion. At the moment this is by far the least used and most under-utilized of all PR tools despite the fact that it does offer much potential especially maybe as a means of the Principal greeting visitors and outlining the school's ethos and aims. There is some evidence of schools using a single copy for this purpose but otherwise little is known about the disliking or disregard of it as a PR tool.

The author: Tristan Bunnell is Head of Economics at the International School of London where he has taught for 11 years . He has an MA in School Management and Development and is currently undergoing a part-time PhD at the University of Southampton.

**Appendix M: Copy of results sent to PRPs who participated  
in survey.**

## Appendix M

A) What sort of PR activities do international schools in general engage in ?

B) How often do these activities occur in a normal academic year ?

---

### 1) Activities done by nearly all schools (90%- 100%)

PTA meetings: sometimes weekly, usually monthly with 2 big events per year.

PTA events: usually every 2 months.

Parent-Teacher meetings: 2 or 3 per year with a 'Back to school' social.

staff meetings: 80% weekly, 100% monthly.

Student council: 90% weekly.

INSET days : usually 1 or 2 per year with a large meeting every 2 years.

student reports : 4-9 per year.

Graduation Evening: June.

newsletters : 70% monthly, 20% do 3 per year.

assemblies : 10% daily, 50% weekly, 40% ad hoc.

plays/concerts: 2 per year.

information evenings: 20% termly, 80% annual.

curriculum guides: annual.

ECIS conferences: 40% yearly, 60% go to 2 per year.

e-mail: 5 messages per day.

school stationary

brochure

web-site

sports fixtures

### 2) Activities done by most schools (70% -90%)

---

bulletins : 95% daily , 55 weekly

primary class visits to secondary school : 10% each term

year book : yearly

open days: 10% termly, 90% yearly.

festivals : 3- 6 per year . 70% have an International Evening

intranet

inspection reports: 5 and 10 year accreditations.

meetings with other international schools

ECIS Net

Christmas Cards

Faculty list : usually annual but sometimes up-dated termly.

flyers: annual

adverts in local press : 30% do 2 per year, 10% do one monthly, 5% do 10 per year.

conferences: 50% attend 6 per year.

Chamber of Commerce meetings: 50% per term, 10% do 4 per year.

3) Activities done by at least half of all schools (50% -70%)

---

parent surveys : usually 1 or 2 per year . 10% do one every 2 years.

alumni society events: 1-3 per year.

past staff social events : annual

feeder school visits : usually annually.

visits to companies : 2 per year.

4) Activities done by less than half of schools

---

visitor reports: hardly ever done . 10% used to do one but not any more.

uniform : 40% of schools have one.

embassy visits by school : 40% visit embassies.

company visits to school : 40% organise such an event.

C) What activities are aimed at specific publics ?

---

1) Parents

---

newsletter (often weekly)  
magazine  
International Day  
Social Evening in September  
brochure  
web-site  
PTA  
Welcome Pack  
bulletin from Principal (termly)  
speech days  
information evenings  
breakfasts / coffee mornings ( weekly)  
orientation for new parents  
Annual Report  
colour newsletter (termly)  
directory containing addresses and phone numbers of all parents

2) Pupils

---

International Day  
magazine  
newspaper  
page on web-site  
intranet  
Year-book  
Student Council  
surveys

3) Alumni

---

Alumni Newsletter (2 X per year)  
directory  
Annual Dinner  
page on web-site

4) Embassies

---

video  
brochure

5) ex-parents/ staff/ students

---

web-site

occassional newsletters

flyers

6) Local Community

---

invites

involvement in CAS

7) Companies

---

separate newsletter

Open Day

video

brochure

D) Which publics are involved in these activities ?

---

Major players

---

present parents 76%  
present pupils 72%  
present full time staff 69%  
embassies 67%  
present part-time staff 64%  
companies 61%  
local Chamber of Commerce 61%

Secondary players

---

future parents 58%  
future students 58%  
relocation agents 54%  
international community in host country 54%  
Alumni 54%

Lesser players

---

employers 45%  
Trust /Board 42%  
parents' company networks 42%  
cultural institutions eg. British Council 42%  
Women's Clubs 40%  
ex-parents abroad 36%  
other international schools abroad 36%  
other schools in host country 36%

Minor players

---

local community near school 33%  
estate agents 33%  
ex-staff 30%  
ex-parents in host country 30%  
international community abroad 30%  
educational consultants 26%  
organisations in home country 20%



E) Who is responsible for deciding and carrying out these activities ?

---

33% of practitioners are also the Head. Outside Europe this rises to 55%.

60% of schools have the Head playing a large role in marketing/ PR.

47% of practitioners report to their Head .

75% are female

66% are also responsible for admissions. (90% in schools in Europe ).

47% are responsible for fund-raising (20% in schools outside Europe).

94% are responsible for press relations

41% are responsible for Alumni relations (80% of schools outside Europe)..

6% of PR practitioners are former parents at another international school

23% were parents at their present school

6% are former school secretaries

24% have had experience of PR outside of education

6% are persons who contacted the school and suggested that the post be created.

41% are persons with no previous PR or marketing experience .

47% have no formal marketing qualifications

65% are qualified and experienced teachers

47% are the first persons in their school to be doing this job.

12% have been doing it for more than 10 years and a further 50% for less than 3 years .

70% show parents around the school ( 90% in schools in europe).

60% have a secretary ( 85% in countries outside Europe ).

70% spend more than 90% of their time in school ( 90% in European countries).

75% have worked in a school before ( 90% in schools outside Europe).

70% have a clear, written job description although 42% feel that it ought to be more detailed. (12% think it ought to be simplified) . .

32% have much contact with local government ( 50% in non-european countries).

66% of practitioners are appraised at some time with 30% being appraised each year.

F) how are schools organised in order to carry out these activities ?

---

(Note the big differences between structure in schools in Europe and outside Europe).

47% of schools have a Marketing Plan at the moment .

60% have a Development Plan (usually 5 years although 23% have a 10 year plan).

33% of schools in Europe have a Development Office but 60% of schools outside Europe have one . A further 18% of schools worldwide are considering setting one up.

33% of schools in Europe have a separate Admissions Office ( 80% of schools outside Europe have one ).

15% of schools in Europe have a separate Alumni Office ( 60% of schools outside Europe have one).

5% of schools in Europe have a detailed contingency plan for a future falling roll ( 50% in schools outside Europe).

85% of schools in Europe are full at the moment ( only 33% outside Europe).

35% of schools had more students in 1998-99 than in 1997-98.

47% of schools had more students in 1998-99 than in 1995-96 ( 80% in schools in europe ).

65% are free to carry out whatever PR activity they wish as long as within budget.

53% of schools have a PR/Marketing budget

What goals do these activities serve ?

---

1) Primary ( seen by nearly all schools as very important goals )

Increasing student roll

Improving image

Improving reputation

Making the school better known

2) Secondary ( seen by most schools as fairly important )

improving teacher-pupil ratio

making more use of the internet

improving the web-site

getting more visitors into the school

improving the presentation of material

improving home-school links

3) Specific ( seen by many schools as fairly important )

Reducing staff turn-over

Reducing student turn-over

Portraying exam results better

Making more contact with the local community

Improving internal communication

Improving contact with embassies and companies

Improving contact with parents

Getting more visitors

Improving coverage in local press

Making more use of ex-parents and students

4) Minor ( seen by many as a goal but un-important )

having more contact with other schools

obtaining more data

better contact with non English speakers

What issues affect this activity ?

---

1) Mass Issues ( seen as very important by almost all schools )

Mobile international communities

School roll dependent upon world economic conditions

2) Secondary Issues ( seen as important by most schools )

High concentrations of certain national groupings

High annual turn-over of pupils

Clashes between the culture of the school and parents

The large range of publics involved with the school

Roll being affected greatly by the grapevine and 'word-of-mouth'

Certain parents having much contact with others

Difficulty in publicizing the school's achievements

Many prospective parents are presently living abroad

Falling roll

Poor communication between internal publics

Lack of data and knowledge of views and attitudes

Poor attendance at school functions

3) Pet Issues ( not an issue for many but important to those it affects )

High annual turn-over of staff

Much competition between schools

Difficulty in portraying exam results to consumers

Lack of contact with local community

Wide range of area that contains target market

Lack of contact with the local press

4) Un-important Issues ( an issue only for a few schools and not important )

pupils having much power in choosing the school

lack of feeder schools

certain classes being very small

lack of contact with other schools

difficulty in keeping up with technology eg. Internet.

## What data do schools collect ?

(% of schools who collect the following data on a regular and formal basis )

- 84% :Names and addresses of alumni going back 2 years
- 75% : views and attitudes of present students
- 72% : names and addresses of alumni going back 5 years
- 72% : strengths and weaknesses of the school according to parents
- 62% : reasons why parents left the school
- 62% : names and addresses of all students who have left the school over the last 2 years
- 59% : names and addresses of former staff
- 59% : reasons why parents chose the school
- 53% ; views and attitudes of newly appointed staff
- 53% : views and attitudes of former students
- 50% : strengths and weaknesses of the school according to students
- 50% : figures on how many prospective parents visited the school over the last 3 years
- 47% : names and addresses of all enquires to the school over the last year
- 37% : views and attitudes of the local community
- 37% : names and addresses of all enquires to the school over the last 2 years
- 28% : views and attitudes of former parents
- 28% : reasons why visitors did not enroll at the school
- 9% : views and attitudes of visitors over the last year
- 6% : views and attitudes of visitors going back more than 1 year

**Appendices N-O: Copies of job descriptions for post of PRP.**

## Appendix N

### PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGER

The Public Relations and Marketing Manager is responsible to the Principal and is involved in developing and implementing the marketing strategy for the whole school. Duties include but are not necessarily confined to:-

1. propose and implement marketing aims and objectives
2. advising the Board of Management on all aspects of marketing and public relations
3. writing annual reports on the marketing situation, plus reports on special marketing projects
4. making and maintaining contact with chambers of commerce, companies and other employers
5. making and maintaining contact with the press
6. liaising with the PTA
7. coordinateing and ensuring high standard of all public documents and papers, e.g. prospectus, pamphlets, information sheets issued by all three schools
8. collecting and collating data pertaining to customer requirements
9. collecting and collating data pertaining to enrolments and leavers
10. designing and initiating advertising as necessary
11. monitoring and maintaining public relations policies and customer relation policies
12. assisting in the organisation of all public occasions, e.g. parents' meetings, industry/commerce presentations
13. organisation in conjunction with the Principal and Headteachers of visitors to the School
14. liaising with the Principal on all approaches to firms for sponsorship
15. obtaining advertising for the School Magazine
16. distribution of publicity material
17. responsibility for the bus coordinator and uniform shop organiser.

## Appendix O

### (Director of External Relations)

#### Duties and Responsibilities

The incumbent of this new post will:

1. Make regular visits to the Foundation's major clients in order to up-date, refine and act upon the school's knowledge of its customers; liaise with Principals in order to give them feedback on the information thus gathered 20%
2. Keep abreast of, and ensure that the Foundation is fully aware of, accurate social, economic and political developments within the Geneva region 5%
3. Compile, maintain and disseminate accurate statistical data used for forecasting and providing information requested by ECTS and similar agencies <sup>Full</sup> 5%
4. Read, select and disseminate and, where appropriate, act upon information in the local press 5%
5. Liaise closely with Ms Ellen Wallace who is responsible for the Foundation's press relations, brochures and general advertising 5%
6. Establish a coherent and efficient public relations policy, building upon the work already started with influential people in Geneva 25%
7. Act as the school's focal point for fund-raising initiatives approved by the Board 5%
8. Create and maintain a link between the Director-General and the Alumni Office in order to keep him better informed of the Association's activities 5%
9. Create and maintain a similar link with the PTA Committees on each campus 5%
10. Organise visits to the Foundation's campuses for official delegations or individuals 5%
11. Report in writing or orally to the Director-general or the persons designated by him. 5%
12. Edition, translation & production of Highlights Monthly newsletter 5%
13. Creation of publicity material - sale, distribution, 5%  
maintenance of stock, etc  
Calendar  
Web site



**Appendices P-R: Sample of results from  
Survey (raw data)**

## Appendix P

a) Which of the following activities do you undergo in a normal academic year ?

b) How often do they occur ?

(12)

Parents' Council

Yes/No ?

How often ?

- ☒ PTA meetings monthly
- ☒ PTA events bi-monthly
- ☒ Parent-Teacher meetings "Back-to-school" evening Oct.
- ☒ staff meetings monthly
- ☒ Student council weekly
- ☒ parent surveys not regular
- ☒ INSET days 2/3
- ☒ student reports 4 progress reports.
- ☒ Graduation Ceremony 1
- ☒ daily bulletins daily
- ☒ newsletters x4
- ☒ assemblies weekly
- ☒ plays/concerts monthly
- ☒ Primary Class visit to upper School m/s → U/S
- ☒ Information Evenings 4 College College
- ☒ Year Book 1
- ☒ Curriculum Guides 1
- ☒ Open Days 1
- ☒ Festivals Many 1
- ☒ Intranet email
- ☒ (visitor) <sup>exit</sup> surveys
- ☒ Inspection Reports 5 yr 10 yr alternating
- ☒ Alumni Society x3
- ☒ Past Staff Social events Reunions
- ☒ LISA meetings bi-ann FL Chair

✓ ECIS Conferences Fall (10) Spring (1)  
 ✓ sports fixtures 6 fixtures weekly  
 ✓ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 ✓ ECIS Net \_\_\_\_\_  
 ✓ Xmas Cards 1  
 ✓ Faculty List 1  
 ✓ flyers 2/3  
 ✓ school stationery 1  
 ✓ school uniform 1  
 ✓ adverts in press / releases 10  
 ✓ brochure bi-annual  
 ✓ feeder school visits overseas 1  
 ✓ Embassy visits overseas 1  
 ✓ Teacher-Community links Community Service Program  
 ✓ WWW Web-Site web master  
 ✓ company visits to school overseas US Company Open Days  
 ✓ Conferences educational open US  
 ✓ Chamber of Commerce meetings ACC 3  
 ✓ visits by yourself to companies overseas/UK  
~~Internet~~ \_\_\_\_\_

a) Which of the following activities do you undergo in a normal academic year ?

b) How often do they occur ?

Yes/No ?

How often ?

- ☒ PTA meetings Monthly (sm. committee) 2X yr large grp
- ☒ PTA events almost every month; sometime 2 or 3 a month
- ☒ Parent-Teacher meetings 2X a yr
- ☒ staff meetings 1X week (sm. groups) 3X-yr. large
- ☒ Student council HS/MS 1X week
- ☒ parent surveys upon need
- ☒ INSET days 3X-yr.
- ☒ student reports 3X-yr (with mid-term each time)
- ☒ Graduation Ceremony June < <sup>MS</sup> HS
- ☒ daily bulletins HS/MS ES 1X wk
- ☒ newsletters every 4-6 wks
- ☒ assemblies. irregular events: school opening, Christmas
- ☒ plays/concerts both on ES/MS/HS levels
- ☒ Primary Class visit to upper School 5<sup>th</sup> grade visits 1/2 day in gr. 6
- ☒ Information Evenings Sept all; then according to topics
- ☒ Year Book 1X yr.
- ☒ Curriculum Guides updated each year
- ☒ Open Days more on ES level
- ☒ Festivals International + Faculty + Carnival ....
- ☒ Intranet \_\_\_\_\_
- ☒ visitor surveys Rarely (for accreditation)
- ☐ Inspection Reports accreditation a principal
- ☐ Alumni Society \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Past Staff Social events \_\_\_\_\_
- ☒ LISA meetings CESSIB - regular meetings

- ☒ ECIS Conferences yearly & according to subject  
☒ sports fixtures 2 gyms  
☒ e-mail all teachers and school admissions  
☒ ECIS Net \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Xmas Cards sometimes  
☒ Faculty List \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ flyers \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ school stationery \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ school uniform grade 1-5  
☒ adverts in press almost monthly  
☒ brochure \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ feeder school visits \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Embassy visits sometimes  
☐ Teacher-Community links \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ WWW Web-Site \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ company visits \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Conferences regularly each year  
☒ Chamber of Commerce meetings 4x yrs to Dover Chamber  
☒ visits by yourself to companies \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ Intranet \_\_\_\_\_

a) Which of the following activities do you undergo in a normal academic year ?

b) How often do they occur ?

Yes/No ?

How often ?

- ☒ PTA meetings weekly
- ☒ PTA events weekly
- ☒ Parent-Teacher meetings 2 x years formally, more informally
- ☒ staff meetings weekly - monthly
- ☒ Student council weekly
- ☒ parent surveys monthly - different groups
- ☒ INSET days 2 x year
- ☒ student reports 2 - 4 x year
- ☒ Graduation Ceremony 1 x
- ☒ ~~daily~~ bulletins daily, weekly, monthly, ad hoc
- ☒ newsletters weekly, monthly
- ☒ assemblies 2 x 3 x - 4 x 2 x monthly
- ☒ plays/concerts ad hoc
- ☒ Primary Class visit to upper School ad hoc
- ☒ Information Evenings ad hoc
- ☒ Year Book 3 bulletins
- ☐ Curriculum Guides \_\_\_\_\_
- ☒ Open Days 2 x year
- ☒ Festivals 2 x year
- ☒ Intranet \_\_\_\_\_
- ☒ visitor surveys ad hoc
- ☒ Inspection Reports 3 x year
- ☐ Alumni Society \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Past Staff Social events \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ LISA meetings \_\_\_\_\_

Data

## Appendix Q

Would you be able to produce the following data if asked ?

(all 32 schools)

Yes/No

- 23 ☒ names and addresses of alumni going back 5 years ?
- 27 ☒ names and addresses of alumni going back 2 years?
- 3 ☒ views and attitudes of visitors over the last 1 year ?
- 2 ☒ views and attitudes of visitors going back more than 1 year?
- 17 ☒ views and attitudes of newly appointed staff ?
- 12 ☒ views and attitudes of local community ?
- 24 ☒ views and attitudes of present students ?
- 17 ☒ views and attitudes of former students ?
- 9 ☒ names and addresses of former staff ?
- 9 ☒ views and attitudes of former parents ?
- 8 ☒ views and attitudes of present parents ?
- 10 ☒ reasons why parents left the school ?
- 7 ☒ reasons why visitors did not enroll at the school ?
- 9 ☒ reasons why parents chose the school ?
- 3 ☒ strengths and weaknesses of the school according to parents
- 6 ☒ strengths and weaknesses of the school according to students
- 16 ☒ figures on how many prospective parents visited the school over the last 3 years?
- 0 ☒ names and addresses of all students who left the school over the last 2 years (not including graduates)
- 5 ☒ names and addresses of all enquiries to the school over the last year ?
- 2 ☒ names and addresses of all enquiries to the school over the last 2 years ?

## Appendix R

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present pupils</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present parents</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present-full time staff</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present part-time staff</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> companies</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> employers</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Embassies</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> relocation agents</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other International Schools abroad</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust/ Board of Directors</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other schools in host country</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> international community locally</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> alumni</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-staff</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-parents in host country</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> international community abroad</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-parents abroad</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local community near school</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future students</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future parents</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> estate agents</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational consultants</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> organisations in home country</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women's Clubs</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local Chamber of Commerce</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> parents' company networks</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cultural institutes eg British Council</p> | <p><u>International Days, Fundraising, Excursions, Trips Abroad.</u></p> <p><u>Open Days, Parents Evening, Social Events.</u></p> <p><u>Whole School Staff meetings and dept. Social events and off term.</u></p> <p><u>Office opening of new building 1998, Speech Days.</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>Jamuna High Commission, UAE Embassy, Australia High Com.</u></p> <p><u>Mailshots, Exhibitions + Fairs + Conferences.</u></p> <p><u>Mailshots + Bursals.</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>Mailshots, Organisation memberships, personal visits.</u></p> <p><u>Local advertising - Estate Agents</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>Mailshots.</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>Fundraising + visits, presentations.</u></p> <p><u>visits, Open day/evening, presentations, trial day.</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>flyer</u></p> <p><u>mailshot, Conferences.</u></p> <p><u>" "</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>advertise in handbook</u></p> <p><u></u></p> <p><u>Mailshots, personal contacts.</u></p> |
|--|---|



a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

\_\_\_ present pupils

yes present parents Newsletter

--- present-full time staff

\_\_\_ present part-time staff

\_\_\_ companies

\_\_\_ employers

yes Embassies periodic mailings

yes relocation agents " " , frequent phone contact, active in ARA

\_\_\_ other International Schools abroad

\_\_\_ Trust/ Board of Directors

\_\_\_ other schools in host country

yes international community locally periodic mailings, advertising

yes alumni occasional newsletters

yes ex-staff occasional mailings

\_\_\_ ex-parents in host country

no international community abroad

yes ex-parents abroad occasional newsletters

\_\_\_ local community near school

yes future students Web Site

yes future parents occasional mailings, advertising

yes estate agents occasional mailings

yes educational consultants " "

yes organisations in home country British Council, abroad (mailings)

\_\_\_ Women's Clubs

yes local Chamber of Commerce American Chamber of Commerce

\_\_\_ parents' company networks

yes cultural institutes eg. British Council see above

to all  
of above  
Web Site

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

- ☒ present pupils Our Newsletter
- ☒ present parents Our Newsletter
- ☒ present full time staff Our Newsletter
- ☒ present part-time staff Our Newsletter
- ☒ companies Advertising / website
- ☒ employers Advertising / website
- ☒ Embassies Advertising / Social
- ☒ relocation agents Advertising / Personal Contact / Social
- ☒ other International Schools abroad EGIS / websites / website
- ☒ Trust / Board of Directors Our Newsletter
- ☒ other schools in host country
- ☒ international community locally
- ☒ alumni Advertise in their Newsletter
- ☐ ex-staff
- ☐ ex-parents in host country
- ☒ international community abroad website
- ☐ ex-parents abroad
- ☐ local community near school
- ☒ future students prospective / website
- ☒ future parents prospective / website
- ☐ estate agents
- ☐ educational consultants
- ☐ organisations in home country
- ☒ Women's Clubs Advertise / attend Luncheon / Dinners
- ☒ local Chamber of Commerce Advertise / attend Networking Luncheon / Dinners
- ☒ parents' company networks Newsletter
- ☒ cultural institutes eg. British Council Newsletter

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present pupils	parent newsletter / Corporate News parents, yearbook
<input type="checkbox"/> present parents	" "
<input type="checkbox"/> ---present-full time staff	e-mail, Corp. News, staff mtg
<input type="checkbox"/> present part-time staff	" "
<input type="checkbox"/> companies	corp newsletter, visits, events
<input type="checkbox"/> employers	"
<input type="checkbox"/> Embassies	
<input type="checkbox"/> relocation agents	
<input type="checkbox"/> other International Schools abroad	" , TIE, ISS, etc
<input type="checkbox"/> Trust/ Board of Directors	corp News, board mtgs
<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>not much</sup> other schools in host country	
<input type="checkbox"/> <sup>not much</sup> international community locally	advertise women's clubs, journals
<input type="checkbox"/> alumni	alumni news + local events
<input type="checkbox"/> ex-staff	" "
<input type="checkbox"/> ex-parents in host country	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> international community abroad	
<input type="checkbox"/> ex-parents abroad	alumni news + events
<input type="checkbox"/> local community near school	occasional events
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future students	> regular correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future parents	
<input type="checkbox"/> estate agents	corp News + events
<input type="checkbox"/> educational consultants	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> organisations in home country	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women's Clubs	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local Chamber of Commerce	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> parents' company networks	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cultural institutes eg. British Council	

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Activities ?

✓ present pupils	Student Council
✓ present parents	Parents' Council
✓ present full time staff/faculty	} Daily Bulletins
✓ present part-time staff/faculty	
✓ companies	} Newsletter; PR Piece
✓ employers	
✓ Embassies	
✓ relocation agents	Brochure; newsletter
✓ other International Schools abroad	} Leaflets re summer newsletter programs Reporting
✓ Trust/ Board of Directors	
✓ other <sup>int'l</sup> schools in host country	
✓ international community locally	Newsletter, brochures
✓ alumni	} Alumni magazine x 3
✓ ex-staff	
✓ ex-parents in host country	
✓ international community abroad	
✓ ex-parents abroad	} local chapter?
✓ local community near school	
✓ future students	
✓ future parents	Newsletter Press releases   catalog; letter; newsletter
✓ estate agents	Leaflets
✓ educational consultants	PR brochures/fees/academy info
✓ organisations in home country	LISA; ADDIS
✓ Women's Clubs	AWS AWBS
✓ local Chamber of Commerce	ACE CCC ACC
✓ parents' company networks	HR personnel
✓ cultural institutes eg. British Council	RTA

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

e.g. Amer. Chambers  
MAG

- ☐ present pupils We place their activities in magazines
- ☐ present parents Welcome Packet - a help for parents
- ☐ ---present-full time staff I ask teachers to make me aware of any-  
they worth publishing; then I get an article into a
- ☐ present part-time staff local magazine
- ☒ companies regularly send videos & brochures
- ☐ employers " " " " "
- ☒ Embassies " " " " "
- ☒ relocation agents " " " " "
- ☐ other International Schools abroad have sent brochures upon  
request; have shared materials
- ☐ Trust/Board of Directors we regular report at meetings
- ☐ other schools in host country exchanges, brochures
- ☐ international community locally we participate a lot; festivals,  
concerts, art exhibits
- ☐ alumni we send news 2x a year in alumni magazine
- ☐ ex-staff receives above
- ☐ ex-parents in host country also above
- ☐ international community abroad Japanese educators visited  
2 exchange students each year from USA
- ☐ ex-parents abroad receive alumni magazine
- ☐ local community near school exchanges occur; also to Germany + Spain
- ☐ future students reached via web site
- ☐ future parents " " " "
- ☐ estate agents send our packet
- ☐ educational consultants
- ☐ organisations in home country
- ☐ Women's Clubs have sent speakers to them; go to their  
art exhibits; we accept an award for 2 students  
each year
- ☐ local Chamber of Commerce American - we won their marketing competition; also in both directions
- ☐ parents' company networks we send brochures
- ☐ cultural institutes eg. British Council we use frequently

10) a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

Yes present pupils GIS Newsletter; Student Publications; Web Page <sup>web page</sup>

Yes present parents GIS Newsletter; Principal's Bulletin; Headmaster's Message <sup>web page</sup>

Yes present full time staff Daily Bulletin; Memos; Weekly faculty meeting <sup>web page</sup>

Yes present part-time staff Daily Bulletin; Memos; Weekly faculty meeting <sup>web page</sup>

Yes companies GIS Newsletter; Alumni Bulletin; Personal Contact; Web Page

Yes employers Same as companies

Yes Embassies Same as companies

Yes relocation agents Admissions info and materials; promo video; web page

No other International Schools abroad

Yes Trust/ Board of Directors These are GIS parents

No other schools in host country

Yes international community locally GIS Newsletter; Adverts in newspapers; Web Page

Yes alumni Alumni Bulletin; Web Page

Yes ex-staff Alumni Bulletin; Web Page

Yes ex-parents in host country Alumni Bulletin; Web Page

Yes international community abroad Alumni Bulletin; Web Page

Yes ex-parents abroad Alumni Bulletin; Web Page

No local community near school

Yes future students Web Page; school brochures

Yes future parents Web Page; school brochures

No estate agents

No educational consultants

No organisations in home country

Yes Women's Clubs school brochures; web page

Yes local Chamber of Commerce school brochures; web page

No parents' company networks

No cultural institutes or British Council

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

Yes present pupils

ECA activities

Yes present parents

PIA functions

Yes present-full time staff

} staff socials

Yes present part-time staff

Yes companies

} personal visits by Admissions

Yes employers

dept

Yes Embassies

Yes relocation agents

No Other International Schools abroad

No Trust/ Board of Directors

Yes other schools in host country

member of network groups

Yes international community locally

involvement in expatriate societies

No alumni

No ex-staff

No ex-parents in host country

No international community abroad

No ex-parents abroad

No local community near school

Yes future students

Seminars / advertisement

Yes future parents

Yes estate agents

No educational consultants

No organisations in home country

Yes Women's Clubs Head is a member of various

Yes local Chamber of Commerce U.S. + British

No parents' company networks

Yes cultural institutes eg. British Council use services

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

___ present pupils	<u>Careers evening / lectures</u>
___ present parents	<u>Speed Day / Information Evenings</u>
--- present-full time staff	<u>Staff party</u>
___ present part-time staff	<u>" "</u>
___ companies	<u>Business lunches in school</u>
___ employers	<u>Open Meetings in Company or Education</u>
___ Embassies	<u>" " " Commonwealth Day</u>
___ relocation agents	<u>General contact / invitations to productions etc.</u>
___ other International Schools abroad	<u>Meet at ECIS etc.</u>
___ Trust/ Board of Directors	<u>Reports</u>
___ other schools in host country	<u>Visits to School by students</u>
___ international community locally	<u>Invitations to hr Fair etc.</u>
___ alumni	<u>Annual Dinners</u>
___ ex-staff	<u>Invitations to main events</u>
___ ex-parents in host country	<u>PRA news</u>
___ international community abroad	<u>Info sent to Emb + C of Cs.</u>
___ ex-parents abroad	<u>"</u>
___ local community near school	<u>Free tickets to all events</u>
___ future students	<u>Induction programme</u>
___ future parents	<u>Information - Social evening</u>
___ estate agents	<u>Invitations to events / info</u>
___ educational consultants	<u>"</u>
___ organisations in home country	<u>Advertising / info</u>
___ Women's Clubs	<u>Invitations to events</u>
___ local Chamber of Commerce	<u>Information - visits</u>
___ parents' company networks	<u>Close personal contact</u>
___ cultural institutes eg. British Council	<u>On Association / invitations</u>



a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

___ present pupils	_____
___ present parents	_____
___ present full time staff	_____
___ present part-time staff	_____
___ companies	<u>Printed materials / personal contact</u>
___ employers	<u>" " " "</u>
___ Embassies	<u>Locally - Printed / Personal Contact</u> <u>Abroad - Printed materials</u>
___ relocation agents	<u>visits / events</u>
___ other International Schools abroad	<u>mailings</u>
___ Trust / Board of Directors	_____
___ other schools in host country	<u>meetings (regularly scheduled)</u>
___ international community locally	_____
___ alumni	<u>Annual Publication / ongoing contact</u> <u>website</u>
___ ex-staff	<u>newsletter</u>
___ ex-parents in host country	<u>special events / alumni contact</u>
___ international community abroad	<u>via Embassies</u>
___ ex-parents abroad	<u>surveys, internet</u>
___ local community near school	_____
___ future students	<u>website</u>
___ future parents	<u>website, parent <sup>ex-parent</sup> networks</u>
___ estate agents	<u>visits, events</u>
___ educational consultants	<u>mailings, regular contact</u>
___ organisations in home country	<u>personal <del>so</del> 2x yr update</u> <u>via yearbooks</u> <u>Printed material</u> <u>Video + Web.</u>
___ Women's Clubs	_____
___ local Chamber of Commerce	_____
___ parents' company networks	<u>personal contact</u>
___ cultural institutes eg. British Council	_____

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

- ☒ present pupils include students in some PR activities. Take part in classwork
- ☒ present parents Produce "ISB Today" Attend Chateau Breakfasts
- ☒ present full time staff " Spend a lot of time out about
- ☒ present part-time staff "
- ☒ companies Visit at least 6 of our user companies / embassies <sup>each</sup> <sub>yr.</sub>
- ☒ employers "
- ☒ Embassies "
- ☒ relocation agents Will invite them to school, take them to lunch. Relocation Seminar
- ☒ other International Schools abroad Remedy of Development group
- ☒ Trust/ Board of Directors Attend all Board mtgs. Video for each ed. member
- ☒ other schools in host country meet on an ad hoc basis
- ☒ international community locally AmCham lunches
- ☒ alumni Alumni Office - 1 full time person
- ☒ ex-staff "
- ☒ ex-parents in host country "
- ☒ international community abroad Entry in directories, send publications
- ☒ ex-parents abroad Alum. office
- ☒ local community near school
- ☒ future students Info packs + video + email
- ☒ future parents Info packs "
- ☐ estate agents
- ☐ educational consultants
- ☒ organisations in home country Abroad lunches etc
- ☒ Women's Clubs Provide Speakers
- ☒ local Chamber of Commerce AmCham
- ☒ parents' company networks Visit user companies
- ☐ cultural institutes eg. British Council
- Green Book Commission "Creative and Cultural Relations"

a) Which of the following publics would you say your PR Programme was intended to reach ?

b) What sort of activities do you aim at them ?

Yes/No ?

Activities ?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present pupils	CAREER DAY, ADVENTURE DAYS, press interviews
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present parents	orientation, parent-teacher-group, newsletter, annual report
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present-full time staff	orientation, project support, press interviews
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present part-time staff	" " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> companies	provide information & support via regular <del>visits</del> visits & contact
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> employers	" " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Embassies	" " " " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> relocation agents	" " " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other International Schools abroad	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trust/ Board of Directors	regular meetings, publications, events
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other schools in host country	visits & conferences
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> international community locally	special events
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> alumni	re-unions, newsletter & directory
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-staff	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-parents in host country	press reports, alumni assoc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> international community abroad	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex-parents abroad	" " alumni assoc.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local community near school	special events, visits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future students	press, publications
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> future parents	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> estate agents	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational consultants	press publications
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> organisations in home country	" "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Women's Clubs	visits, press, publications, special events
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local Chamber of Commerce	" " " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> parents' company networks	" " " "
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> cultural institutes eg. British Council	" " " "

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