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International Schools and National Culture: A Comparative Study in The Arab Republic of Egypt, and Some Other Countries

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The Mobility of Students between Countries, in the light of the opened society which is separated by virtual limits, has become definiteness, as students can begin their studies in a place, and continue them in any other place in the world, because of their living circumstances, as to achieve the idea of the universal citizen, who can be adapted with different changes of other cultures that he faces when traveling from a place to the Other.

Therefore, it was necessary to have an international educational organization that can acquire its students the characteristics of the universal citizen, and as a result, the international schools have emerged to achieve this aim, and to provide the international students, whose their parents are obligated to move from a place to another for their work, or other conditions, with the educational service,

International Schools has spread all over the world, because it is interested by preparing students according to universal standards, and as they prepare students to have an international degree, that enable them to be members at the international community, and the international universities, so the current thesis tries to benefit from the experiences of foreign countries that have wide range of international schools & at the same time, trying to maintain its national culture to solidify the national culture in the Egyptian international schools, provided that to be suitable for the Egyptian society.

Although the efforts that are performed by the Egyptian Ministry of Education to support the students abilities in Knowing a foreign universal language to expedite communication and mobility between members of the universe, in response for the universal requests through expanding the emergence of new international schools, the reality indicates some points of weakness at these schools.

This research adopts the following main assumption:

Education Which is Found at the International Schools Leads to weaken enabling students of the hosting country from their national culture.

This research followed **Beredy method** in comparative studies and **Scenario Technique** which aimed at reaching some Suggested Scenarios for solidifying the national culture in the Egyptian international Schools.

Key words: international schools, national culture

ملخص

المدارس الدولية والثقافة القومية : دراسة مقارنة في جمهورية مصر العربية،
وبعض الدول الأخرى

أصبح حراك الطلاب بين الدول في ظل المجتمع المنفتح الذي تفصل بين أجزائه حدوداً افتراضية، أمراً حتمياً؛ حيث يمكن للطلاب أن يبدأ دراسته بمكان، ويكملها في أي مكان آخر بالعالم؛ نظراً لظروف إقامته، وتحقيقاً لفكرة المواطن العالمي، ولا يتسنى للطلاب ذلك إلا إذا كان يحمل صفات ذلك المواطن العالمي، الذي تمكنه مؤهلاته من التكيف مع التغيرات التي يواجهها عند الاحتكاك بثقافات متباينة تختلف بانتقاله من مكان إلى الآخر.

وتحقيقاً لذلك، أصبح من الضروري أن تكون هناك مؤسسة تربوية دولية تستطيع أن تكسب طلابها تلك السمات ليكونوا مواطنين عالميين، حيث أصبح ذلك من المتطلبات العالمية الجديدة، فظهرت المدارس الدولية لتحقيق ذلك الهدف، كما أنها ظهرت لتقديم الخدمة التعليمية للطلاب الدوليين، أي الطلاب من غير أبناء البلاد الأصليين، الذين اضطرتهم ظروف أولياء أمورهم إلى الانتقال إلى بلد أخرى نظراً لظروف عملهم أو ظروف أخرى.

وتنتشر المدارس الدولية بجميع أنحاء العالم، نظراً لاهتمامها بإعداد الطالب وفق معايير عالمية، كما أنها تعد الطالب للحصول على شهادة دولية تمكنه من الانضمام للمجتمع الدولي، والجامعات العالمية، وعليه يحاول البحث الحالي الاستفادة من خبرات الدول الأجنبية التي تنتشر بها المدارس الدولية، وفي ذات الوقت تحافظ على ثقافتها القومية بما يتلاءم مع ظروف المجتمع المصري لتأصيل الثقافة القومية بالمدارس الدولية المصرية.

وعلى الرغم من الجهود التي تقوم بها وزارة التربية والتعليم من أجل تدعيم معرفة الطلاب بلغة أجنبية عالمية تسهل التواصل بين أعضاء المجتمع البشري وتسهيل حراك الطلاب استجابة لمتطلبات العالمية الخاصة بتكوين المواطن العالمي من خلال التوسع في إنشاء المدارس الدولية؛ إلا أن هناك الكثير من أوجه القصور التي اعترت العمل بتلك المدارس.

ومن ثم يتبنى البحث الفرض الرئيسي التالي:

أن التعليم الذي يتم بالمدارس الدولية يؤدي إلى ضعف تمكن الطلاب من أبناء البلد المضيف من ثقافتهم القومية.

ونظراً لطبيعة البحث سوف يتم استخدام مدخل الحلول الكبرى لجورج بيريداي والذي يسير وفقاً للخطوات التالية: الوصف، والتفسير، والمقابلة، والمقارنة، كما يستعين البحث بأسلوب السيناريو **Scenario Technique**، وذلك من أجل التوصل لسيناريوهات مقترحة لتأصيل الثقافة القومية لدى طلاب المدرسة الدولية بجمهورية مصر العربية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المدارس الدولية، الثقافة القومية

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Introduction :

The mobility of students between countries, in the light of the opened society which is separated by virtual limits, has become definiteness, as students can begin their studies in a place, and continue them in any other place in the world, because of their living circumstances, as to achieve the idea of the universal citizen, who can be adapted with different changes of other cultures, that he faces, when traveling from a place to the other.

Therefore, it was necessary to have an international educational organization that can acquire its students the characteristics of the global citizen, and as a result, the international schools have emerged to achieve this aim, and to provide the international students, who's their parents are obligated to move from a place to another because of their work, or other conditions, with the educational service.⁽¹⁾

International Schools have spread all over the world, because it is interested in preparing students according to universal standards, and as they prepare students to have an international degree, that enable them to be members at the international community, and the international universities, so the current research tries to benefit from the experiences of foreign countries that have wide range of international schools & at the same time, try to maintain its national

culture to solidify the national culture in the Egyptian international schools, provided that to be suitable for the Egyptian society.⁽²⁾

Research Problem and Assumption:

Although there are many efforts that are performed by the Egyptian Ministry of Education to support the students' abilities in Knowing a foreign universal language to expedite communication and mobility between members of the universe, in response for the universal requests through expanding the emergence of new international schools, the reality indicates some points of weakness at these schools, some of them are the following:

1. The philosophy of international schools in Egypt are expressing about a philosophy of a foreign society, that absolutely, differs from the Egyptian one, the matter that may lead to a negative influence on supporting Egyptian students belongingness to the Egyptian society.⁽³⁾
2. The teaching language in international schools in Egypt, is a foreign language, which may weaken the ability of the Egyptian students in using their mother tongue language and weaken also their faith in their national culture in front of foreign cultures, which they will be belonged to, instead of their national one.⁽⁴⁾

This research adopted the following main assumption:

Education which is found at International Schools leads to weaken enabling students of the hosting country from their national culture.

Research aim:

The current research sought to reach some suggested scenarios for solidifying the national culture in the Egyptian international Schools.

Research Methodology:

This research followed **Beredy Approach** in comparative studies and **Scenario Technique** which aimed at reaching some suggested scenarios for solidifying the national culture in the Egyptian international Schools.⁽⁵⁾

Exploring the Status quo briefly in Egypt:

International Schools in Egypt are belonged to foreign culture, they present their curriculum in foreign language, they also introduce a different culture, that is belonged to the foreign country that possess the school, Arabic curriculum is characterized by a weak content, that make students neglect studying it seriously, also Social Studies curriculum concentrate on the components of the foreign culture, and doesn't mention any thing about the Egyptian Geography, or the historical background of the Egyptian Society.⁽⁶⁾

Activities that are practiced there, focus all the time, on appreciating the foreign culture, without fostering the importance of belongingness to Egypt, Ministry of Education also has a weak supervision upon this kind of schools, the matter that resulted in a wide freedom for these schools to formulate students' minds according to the foreign country, ignoring the mother one, so they have weak belongingness, weak skills when using mother tongue, and unappreciation of their national culture.⁽⁷⁾

When international schools are accredited, they followed the international standards, that are legislated by foreign organizations⁽⁸⁾, so there are no national standards are there to control the accreditation of these schools in Egypt, so the international standards are the only way of judgement about the level of the school, ignoring any national standard that represent the Egyptian national culture.

Exploring the Status quo briefly in Japan:

Japan is a good example for its trial to maintain the national culture inside international schools, as the philosophy of international school there concerning the matter of maintaining the national culture inside international schools, can be summarized into their trial to reinforce students' awareness about the necessity of being integrated into the global society, and maintain their national culture at the same time, in order to face different challenges of the multi- cultured society, briefly, it is the interest of forming the universal character with the Japanese roots.

So the main goal of the international schools in Japan is to reinforce foreign and Japanese students' acceptance and appreciation of culture diversity, through interaction among students and teachers, also to develop their ability to appreciate the Japanese language, and use it fluently, in addition to, give a special interest to the Japanese culture, and recognize the Japanese cultural heritage, and respect it, in order to pave the way to build the requested global identity, which is interested in building the global and the national citizen.⁽⁹⁾

The way to achieve the previous goal was to give an interest to international schools' curriculum, so there are some curricula that were designed for that goal, such as: Japanese Language, which is a compulsory curriculum for foreigners and Japanese, Social studies that interested in presenting both the American and the Japanese cultural components, also activities in international schools in Japan, focus on preserving a continuous interaction among foreigner and Japanese students, the matter that enable them to have a mutual sharing for the cultural elements of each other.⁽¹⁰⁾

International schools in Japan, can't be accredited, except for having the accreditation degree from a national Japanese organization, beside the international one, in order to be sure that the national Japanese standards are attained: Such as: the national subjects inside the curriculum, the balance between the Japanese national language and the foreign languageetc, free practices for each school, that prove the its interest to foster the Japanese national culture for both the feigners and the Japanese students as well.⁽¹¹⁾

Exploring the Status quo briefly in France:

France also can be considered a good example for a nation, that is interested in preserving its national culture, inside international schools there, as the philosophy of international schools in France concerning the issue of maintaining the national culture can be summarized into the necessity of concentrating on the French national culture dimension, and guarantee formulating French students who are admitted to these schools according to the national French home country formula, so preparing the guarantees that

qualify them to interact with other cultures, without being negatively influenced, the matter that may cause a weak interaction between them and their home country and their mother tongue fluency.⁽¹²⁾

The goals of the international schools in France, have the same interest, as they are concentrating on encouraging French and foreigner students to be fluent in both French and English, in addition to another language, to facilitate interaction between different cultures, also encouraging foreign students to enjoy recognizing the French culture through, participating in sport programs, visiting theatres, museums that represent the French culture, and field studies about the French society, and developing students' awareness about the importance of respecting and appreciating difference and diversity inside and outside the school.⁽¹³⁾

For attaining these goals, French language is a compulsory curriculum for both the French and foreigner students as well, Social Studies too, is an important one, that is concerning issues about the whole world and others about France, in order to keep a balance between the universal ideas and the national ones.⁽¹⁴⁾

Students of international schools in France also participate in different activities, that guarantee interaction between French: and foreigners such as: knowledge competitions that ask foreigners questions about the components of the French culture and vice versa, in order to exchange information among different cultures.⁽¹⁵⁾

National and international organizations, that are responsible for accrediting international schools in France, identified certain standards for the accredited international schools in France, the most important one of them for each school is to have certain procedures to maintain the French national culture inside the French, and the foreigner students' minds as well.⁽¹⁶⁾

There are some points of similarities between both Japan and France, as they are interested in fostering national culture at international students' minds, and at the same time, they are

interested in preparing students to accept difference, diversity, respect and appreciate the culture of each other, historical factors can play an important role in such an issue, as both Japan and France are two nations, that appreciate themselves from the very old ages, they also appreciate the most important element of their culture, which is language, so they insisted on making it a compulsory curriculum for the national and the international students.

On the other hand, there is a point of difference between Egypt, Japan, and France in fostering the national culture at international students' minds, as Egypt doesn't have the same interest like Japan and France, this may be because of the social factors of the Egyptian society, as being educated by English, in a distinguished, different educational environment, that is belonged to a foreign country, is considered as a matter of proudness, and dignity according to the beliefs of the Egyptian society, as student that are admitted at international schools, are seen as the distinguished high rank layer citizens.

After description, analysis, juxtaposition, and comparison, according to Beredy Approach steps, the primitive assumption of the research was assured, so it was proved that Education which is found at International Schools, leads to weaken enabling students of the hosting country from their national culture.

The Suggested Scenarios:

The current research reached three suggested scenarios for solidifying the national culture in the Egyptian international Schools, they are: the status quo scenario, the optimistic scenario, and the pessimistic scenario, so the identifications of carrying out them, would be summarized into the following:

The Status Quo Scenario:

- Disseminations of cooperative projects and agreements between countries that have good relations with each other, which encourages them to establish more international schools.

- The emergence of Globalization phenomena which leads to more changes into the surrounding world, and openness which cancelled limitations between world countries.
- The continuous call for respecting other cultures, valuating human variety, as it is a mean to integration between world countries, seeing international school a suitable environment to achieve that.
- The foreign countries seek for valuating their languages and cultures, through relaying on the efforts of embassies, international organizations, and cultural centers in advertising these languages as they are a mean of communication between cultures.

The Optimistic Scenario:

- The emergence of studies that dealt with risks of foreign education, which increasing the awareness of societies about the importance of solidifying the national culture.
- The complete separation between the international schools' curricula and the Egyptian Society, that generates a separation between the international school, and the surrounding environment.
- The international schools' policy concentration on attracting more believers in foreign cultures and languages, as their policy concentrates on culture invasion for young minds.
- The readiness of the Egyptian students to imitate the western habits, and giving up the Egyptian customs and traditions, imagining that will lead to progress and achieving the universal requirements.
- The rising problems that emerged from ignoring the national culture of the Egyptian society, such as: the immigration of distinguished minds, the decreasing level of Arabic language, and graduates believe in foreign occupational ideas, belonged to the foreign associations that owing the schools.

The Pessimistic Scenario:

- The mastery of foreign traits on training programs which presented to international schools teachers.
- The complete persuasion to the importance of foreign languages in general, and specially the English language.
- Seeing foreign societies as the good example ones, which must be followed without rationale, seeing their experiences as the solution for any problem faced by the Egyptian society.
- The Egyptian Ministry of Education concentration on disseminating slogans and hollow solutions, without interesting in actually applying them.
- The Egyptian Ministry of Education insisting on not using the Educational specialists to participate in supervising and controlling the international schools.
- The foreign Associations owing the international schools insisting on attracting foreign teachers, to disseminate their ideas, national languages, and cultures to the Egyptian students at the school.
- The labor market increased requirements, and the graduated expected rising level, which the traditional school cannot afford.

Looking at the identifications of carrying out the previous scenarios, the requirements of applying the favorite one can be shown in the following:

- The Egyptian Ministry of Education should legislate some laws, and legislations which have the ability to guarantee the ministry right to participate in following, supervising, and controlling international schools.
- The Egyptian Ministry of Education with the help of other educational authorities should carry out their actual responsibility to supervise and control international schools.
- Valuating the Egyptian national culture through believing in the principles of this culture, being capable of Arabic language as it is the mother tongue of the Egyptian Society.

- Believing in participation between the Egyptian educational authorities and the foreign Associations which responsible for international schools in all practices inside the school.
- Giving a special interest to international schools' teachers sustainable professional development, under the condition of coloring their programs by the Egyptian society national character.
- Being convinced by the importance of benefiting from educational specialists' views and experiences, especially staff members, to know their opinions around means of solidifying national culture at international schools in A.R.E.
- Giving a Special interest to develop parents' awareness of reinforcing belonging to country home feeling, being fluent in Arabic language, and knowing the details of the Egyptian national culture, especially parents who have students at international schools, through home readings, parental discussions, and different other means.

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