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The Master in Research and Innovation in Higher Education (MARIHE) is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree offered by a consortium of University for Continuing Education Krems (Danube University Krems) (Austria), Tampere University (Finland), University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück (Germany), Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) (Hungary), Beijing Normal University (China), and Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology (India). Prior to year 2018, MARIHE was conducted by the four partners Danube University Krems (Austria), University of Tampere (Finland), University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück (Germany), and Beijing Normal University (China).

University for Continuing Education Krems

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background information on the creation of the Master Thesis Reader

Each year, a Master Thesis Reader is published by University for Continuing Education Krems/Austria. This reader collects the master's theses of one cohort. Each graduate writes an extended summary (an extract of his/her thesis), which serves as one chapter of the reader. In his/her summary, the graduate gives insight into the background (problem statement, research question, theoretical background), the methodology (approach in use), the key findings (main results), recommendations (for future research) and references.

This book is a collection of summarized master's theses produced as the final and individual research project within the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree Research and Innovation in Higher Education (MARIHE), cohort 5 (2016-2018).

For further reading, the full master's theses texts are available in the library of University for Continuing Education Krems, accessible on the following link: Basic Search: Discovery Service for DONAU UNI KREMS (ebscohost.com)

1.2Introduction of MARIHE programme

In Europe as well as in other regions of the world, fundamental transition processes are taking place in the systems of research, innovation, and higher education: from regulation to deregulation and competition, from steering to market, from administration to management. Higher education and research institutions need highly trained experts who are able to analyse these new contexts and who have management and leadership skills to deal with the changes. The Master in Research and Innovation in Higher Education (MARIHE) is an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree with a duration of four semesters/two years, leading to a master's degree with 120 ECTS. It is offered by a consortium of University for Continuing Education Krems (Danube University Krems) (Austria), Tampere University (Finland), University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück (Germany), Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) (Hungary), Beijing Normal University (China) and Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology (India). Prior to year 2018, MARIHE was conducted by the four partners Danube University Krems (Austria), University of Tampere (Finland), University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück (Germany), and Beijing Normal University (China).

MARIHE provides students a unique opportunity to develop a sound understanding of higher education systems and university development around the world. Students have the opportunity to study in at least three different universities and countries in Europe and Asia. During an internship provided by international enterprises and organisations, they get insight into fields of practice.

As an Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degree, MARIHE is supported by the Erasmus Mundus Programme of the European Commission. By these standards, it is one of the leading master programmes in Europe. MARIHE addresses university graduates that want to pursue a career in the higher education and research sector as managers, administrators, consultants, policy analysts, researchers and decision makers. Possible employers are higher education and research institutions, public bodies such as ministries for science and education, enterprises specializing in education, think tanks and non-governmental organizations. Graduates of MARIHE are able take the lead in the future management and development of research and innovation in higher education.

International and European reform agendas have recently focused on a number of measures that are argued to lead to the modernisation of higher education as a sector and turn the higher education institutions into strategic organisational actors to develop countries and societies. The programme supports the development with respect to the professionalisation of institutional leadership and management functions accompanied by an emerging training and support structure for institutional managers and leaders. MARIHE is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education that aims to enhance the quality of European higher education and to promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures through cooperation with Third Countries. In addition, it contributes to the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in Third Countries by increasing mobility between the European Union and these countries.

The curriculum of MARIHE reflects on three perspectives on the change logics involved in the worldwide developments in higher education and in higher education institutions:

- the perspective on Systems in Transition, focussing on general developments and on

globalization and regionalization (Europe, Africa, Americas, Asia) in higher education

- the perspective on System-Institution-Interaction (e.g., funding of research and innovation)
- the perspective on Institutional Change (e.g., “change management”).

Furthermore, modules on Theoretical Background introduce fundamental issues of higher education management. Another emphasis is given to Transferable Skills (e.g., research methods, presentation skills, languages). With the implementation of a developed curriculum in 2018, students can choose from four different specialization tracks in the second half of the study programme: Research and Innovation, Leadership and Management, Institutional Research, Learning and Teaching.

For more information on MARIHE, please visit the programme´s website: www.marihe.eu.

Krems 2022, University for Continuing Education Krems (Danube University Krems), coordinating institution of MARIHE.

2 Higher Education Engagement with HEInnovate Self-Assessment Tool: A Case Study of Nine Austrian Higher Education Institutions

Reem AbouElenain

2.1 Background Problem Statement

Entrepreneurial education is spreading widely in higher education institutes around the world. This is evident by the increasing number of entrepreneurial programs in higher education, and the higher education institutions (HEIs) promise to support potential entrepreneurial programs (Nabi, Liñán, Fayolle, Krueger, & Walmsley, 2017; Pittaway & Edwards, 2012). This growth does not only spring from HEIs alone, but it has become governmental and societal demand, which is reflected in policy making and the expectations of stakeholders (COM, 2012; OECD, 2017a). In the EU, the 2010 revised Lisbon Strategy has a vision of making Europe more competitive, innovative, and raise the well-being of its citizens (European Commission, 2010). At the heart of this strategy is the idea of knowledge transfer which aims to reshape the primary role of HEIs by harnessing their education and research activities to shape, develop and innovate the whole society including the industrial sector (Sjoer, Nørgaard, & Goossens, 2016).

With this growth in entrepreneurial education, the European Commission has created number of initiatives to support and inspire innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education (Ruskovaara et al., 2016). Some of these initiatives involve developing self-assessment tools to assist HEIs in their attempts to measure these activities against international standards (ibid.). The self-assessment tools that have emerged from these initiatives are quite diverse in their methods, target audiences, and their goals. However, they do have some commonalities like their aim to be disseminated widely across multiple regions, and their availability on online platforms using web browsers, and sometimes, mobile applications (ibid.). This raises the access to such tools and facilitates their dissemination to a large number of people. However, there is little documentation and empirical research done on how HEIs use self-assessment tools in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education (Pittaway & Cope, 2007; Pittaway & Edwards, 2012; Ruskovaara, Pihkala, Seikkula-Leino, & Rytkölä, 2015; Ruskovaara et al., 2016). The method HEIs engage with self-assessment tools is an

important variable that can have heavy influence on the process of institutional learning and development (Arzeni & Tyson, 2018; Hides, Davies, & Jackson, 2004; José Tarí & de Juana-Espinosa, 2007; José Tarí, 2010; Kasperaviciute, 2013). Therefore, more research in this area needs to be done (ibid.), and it is the gap that this research aims to address.

This study focuses on the HEInnovate self-assessment tool in particular. It is a tool that was initiated by the European Commission and the OECD (Gibb, Hofer, & Klofsten, 2015). It measures not only the pedagogical aspect of entrepreneurial education, but also the institutional side of it, including students' and external stakeholders point of views. This tool started to be available for individuals and HEIs to use in 2013, and it has been used by many HEIs from different countries in Europe, and globally (COVA & Solcan, 2018; OECD, 2017b; Papa & Demo, 2018; Sultan, 2017). The tool is available online and for free for individuals and institutions. It is user intuitive, and it takes individuals a few minutes to learn about it and start the process of self-assessment almost immediately. The website does not provide instructions for HEIs on how to use the tool as an institution, which provides high flexibility and freedom for HEIs. However, the website highly encourages using workshops in the process of implementing the tool, and they provide detailed guidelines on different types of workshops and activities to do so. It is noted that there are no studies that observe how HEIs engage with the HEInnovate self-assessment tool. This research attempts to address this gap by doing a case study of nine Austrian HEIs who have engaged with the HEInnovate self-assessment tool in the first half of 2018. All these HEIs have participated in an HEInnovate country review, hence their engagement with the assessment tool.

2.1.1 Research Questions

The general research question guiding the study is:
How do HEIs engage with the HEInnovate self-assessment tool? Under this main question, four sub-questions are addressed:

1. What are the steps HEIs take to understand, and complete the self-assessment tool?
2. What are the motivations of HEIs to engage with the self-assessment?
3. What are the roles the individuals responsible for leading the process of completing the self- assessment in an HEI? How and why are these individuals selected?
4. How do different methods of engagement with the self-assessment tool affect the outcome

and perceived value of it?

2.1.2 Conceptual Framework

To guide this research, the author constructed a conceptual framework that comes from looking at two elements. First, the author sees similarities between conducting a self-assessment and running a project in an organization. Indeed, Kerzner (2014) indicates that both non-project- driven and project-driven organizations are managed in the form of projects. Thus, from the field of project management, the author aims to ground the conceptual framework basing some of its elements from the Project Life Cycle framework (PLC). Second, since the author has observed that PLC may miss some elements from the nature of conducting self-assessment in higher education because PLC is mainly practiced within business projects, she has analysed a number of institutional self-assessment processes in the area of quality management in HEIs, with a deeper focus on the self-assessment processes used for EFQM Excellence Model and the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS). By looking at these two bodies of literature, the conceptual framework of this study was designed.

From the above, the conceptual framework outlines six stages that self-assessment process implementation goes through. The stages are:

2.1.2.1 Stage 1: Decision to take self-assessment (initiation)

At this stage, HEI leaders or top management perceive value from going through this exercise. At this stage, it is important to understand the purpose of the self-assessment, set clear goals for the exercise, and commit to the process of completing the assessment. At this stage, selecting the person(s) responsible for planning and leading the process of completing the self-assessment is done. This stage is the corner stone for creating strong motivation to engage with the self- assessment, raises the chance of completing it effectively, affects the perceived value of its results, and gaining leadership support when needed.

2.1.2.2 Stage 2: Plan the self-assessment

The person(s) sets a self-assessment plan depending on the goals that the HEI has set, and also on the time and resources available for the institutions. This stage determines the type of data that will be gathered. Moreover, the clearer the plan is outlined the more likely the self-

assessment process be efficiently completed.

2.1.2.3 Stage 3: Communication of Plan

This stage is separated from the planning stage to highlight its significance and its impact. Proper communication would lead to a higher understanding of the process from all stakeholders, and possibly a higher rate of engagement in the process.

2.1.2.4 Stage 4: Executing Self-Assessment

This step happens according to the set plan in Stage 2. It also involves assessment leaders tracking progress of this plan, and problem solving in case any occur.

2.1.2.5 Stages 5 & 6: Closing

These two stages mirror the closing stage in the PLC framework. Stage 5 consists of creating final report, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and establishing an action plan. This stage can define the success or failure of a self-assessment process. If it is not taken, there is a high probability that the self-assessment would have no impact on an organization and the results would not translate to actions. Moreover, the lack of undertaking this step may reflect the effectiveness of all the previous steps. Stage 6 consists of implementing the action plan created in Stage 5.

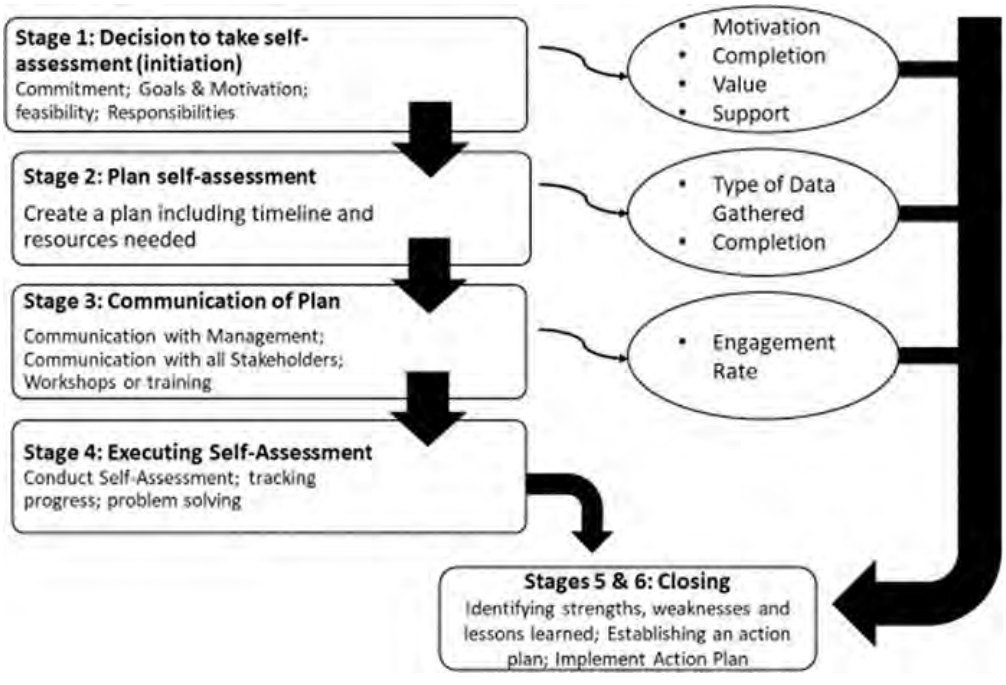

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Stages for Implementing Self-Assessment

2.2 Methodology

In order to understand how self-assessment processes are developed in HEIs, and why specific courses of actions are taken, the case study approach has been selected for this study. This approach is suitable for this study for a number of reasons. As mentioned in the problem statement above, there is a conspicuous lack of research in the area of this research, which makes this approach suitable (Morse, 1991). Additionally, this research method has been chosen because this approach is preferred when "why" and "how" questions are being asked (Creswell, 2014). This research focuses on the details of implementing self-assessment processes in nine cases using qualitative evidence.

The sample of the HEIs selected can be representative of the diverse institutions that exist in Austria. It consists of universities, universities of applied sciences, and one university of continuing education. The number of HEIs that had the possibility to participate in this study was limited. Only eleven HEIs have participated in the OECD HEInnovate country review, ten of which were selected before the country review started, and one was added while the country review was taking place. As part of this participation, HEIs were encouraged to complete the self- assessment as means to prepare for the country review. Therefore, the pool of HEIs from Austria that can participate in this study only includes the ten HEIs that were selected before the country review was initiated. The researcher contacted all of them, and nine HEIs have responded. The participating HEIs are Danube University Krems, Graz University of Technology, Paracelsus Medical Private University, University of Applied Arts Vienna, University of Applied Sciences Technikum Wien, University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, University of Innsbruck, University of Vienna, and Vienna University of Economics and Business.

From this sample, seven of these institutions have completed the HEInnovate self-assessment tool as part of their preparation for the country review. Two institutions have decided not to take the HEInnovate self-assessment for different reasons and have prepared for the country review using other methods. The researcher decided to include the two HEIs that did not take the self- assessment in her study in order to learn why they have chosen not to; and to explore

what other methods these HEIs have used to prepare for the country review.

To collect the main body of the research data, the researcher chose to conduct semi-structured interviews with persons who were responsible for leading the process of engaging HEIs with the self-assessment tool. The interviews were conducted using different formats according to the availability of interviewees. Whenever possible, interviews were conducted in person or using Skype call. Phone calls were used when it was not possible to travel to the institution and internet connection was not reliable. Email interviews were the least preferred way, but the researcher resorted to it when the interviewees did not have a window of time possible for interview but wanted to participate in the study. The researcher conducted interviews with five HEIs in person; two HEIs using Skype call; one HEI using a phone call; and one HEI using an email interview. When two people were responsible for leading the process of the usage of the HEInnovate self- assessment tool, the interview was conducted with them simultaneously to avoid repetition of information and to create a fuller picture. Twelve people in total participating in the interviews from all nine HEIs. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed shortly after they were conducted.

Two additional sources were used to support the main body of the data collected. The first source is a background report created by a team of experts in Austria prepared for the OECD experts visiting the Austrian HEIs. The second source is one unstructured interview with a researcher from WPZ research that assisted in creating the background report and guided HEIs through the process of implementing the HEInnovate self-assessment tool. Both of these sources served as complementary data to the main body of data.

The interviews with participants were not anonymous, and all the interviewees gave consent to reveal their identities, positions, and HEIs they are working for. However, the researcher decided to report the findings of this research anonymously by coding the HEIs and the participants. The reason for this decision is to focus the readers' attention on data collected rather than on different HEIs. Nevertheless, it was essential to request the interviewee's consent for not collecting the data anonymously because the researcher cannot guarantee their anonymity in this study.

2.3 Key Findings

2.3.1 Steps HEIs take to engage with the HEInnovate self-assessment

The steps that the HEIs participating in this study have taken to complete the self-assessment have varied quite extensively. The timeframe dedicated for the process have also varied, taking as long five months, and as little as one month. All the institutions that completed the process of engaging with the self-assessment tool have followed the first four stages of the "Stages of Implementing Self-Assessment" framework. However, they have done so at different degrees of depth. Additionally, some of the HEIs have implemented the stages expansively, while others have gone through the four stages in a short period of time, and almost simultaneously. Three institutions have implemented Stage 5, and only two institutions have expressed the assertion that they will implement Stage 6. The other institutions seem to have stopped the process after the completion of the self-assessment, and it is not clear if other steps would be taken in order to use the results of the process.

2.3.2 Motivations of HEIs to engage with the self-assessment

Within the seven institutions that have completed the process of engaging with the self-assessment, three main motivations were found. First, the self-assessment is used for its intended purpose: "to explore their innovation potential." Second, institutions completed the self- assessment prepare and to be able to participate in the country review. Third, the self-assessment is used as a mean to spread awareness in the institution about the different actions and activities related to innovation and entrepreneurship. HEIs did not strictly have one motivation, but the researcher focused on the primary ones. This research could not establish a link between the type of main motivation an institution had, and plans set to engaged with the self-assessment. It appears that any motivation can initiate the process of the self-assessment, and the commitment to complete the process is linked to other factors.

Rather than the motivation of the institution, the motivation of process leaders appeared to have a considerable impact on the type of plan set to engage with the self-assessment. On the one hand, process leaders who had high trust in the potential of the tool created elaborate plans to engage their institutions deeply with the self-assessment. On the other hand, process leaders who were more critical of the self-assessment tool, and saw its potential shortcomings as a risk, created plans that did not engage the institution with the self-assessment deeply.

2.3.3 Types of plans set to engage with the self-assessment tool

The process leaders in HEIs formed various plans that were different to a great extent. When setting a plan, the process leaders focused on the feasibility of the plan given the timeframe available, and the information they have about the tool and their understanding of it. In this study, four approaches of implanting the self-assessment were found:

- Questionnaire Approach: it entails sending out the self-assessment to potential participants (usually the whole institutions, and as many external stakeholders as possible) without prior contact or orientation about the tool. Four HEIs followed this approach.

- Focus Group Approach: it entails engaging a selected few with the self-assessment. The participants can come from different parts of the HEI or can come from one specific department in the HEI. One HEI followed this approach.

- Snowball Sampling Approach: it entails engaging a selected group of people in the self- assessment, but the selection is not only done by HEI leadership and the process leader, but it trickles down to participants suggesting potential participants to engage with the tool. One HEI followed this approach.

- Workshop Approach: it entails following the suggested workshop schemes by HEInnovate. One HEI followed this approach.

It is observed that HEIs that engaged with the self-assessment using approaches other than the Questionnaire Approach had a much deeper engagement with the process, collected more reliable information, and were able to advance through Stages 5 and 6 of the "Stages of Engagement with Self-Assessment" framework, and therefore, had a bigger outcome and possible impact from the process.

2.3.4 Process leaders' selection and their roles inside their HEIs

The selection of process leaders is one of the most influential aspects in shaping the process of engagement with the self-assessment. This study shows that process leaders come from different departments, positions, and different career levels. Their selection mostly comes

from HEI leadership, but in some cases, process leaders volunteered to do the task. Rather than considering the relevance of the departments the process leaders come from, the selections are mostly made on the basis of individuals' previous knowledge of the HEInnovate tool and framework.

Some process leaders chose to lead the process alone while others worked with another person to lead the process with them, and in some cases, they chose to involve teams or departments to make decisions regarding the process of implementing the self-assessment. A conclusion cannot be reached on the benefits or shortcomings of having more than one person leading the process. Nevertheless, it was observed that process leaders who come from higher career levels are the ones who chose to include other persons in the process of leading the self-assessment. Additionally, high career levels gave the process leaders more power to either create elaborate processes that needed more time and resource investment or reach a definite conclusion that the self-assessment process was not suitable for their institution and made decisions accordingly. Whereas, process leaders who came from mid-career positions, did not have much of the decision-making capacity as the former group.

Additionally, the question of who brings the process to the HEI seems to have a significant influence. In most HEIs in the study, the process was initiated by the HEI leadership. In these cases, HEI leadership arguably gains the most value from the process. In cases when the self-assessment was brought to the HEI from department outside the leadership, the self-assessment seems to take a different interpretation, purpose, and the value goes back to the department initiating the process.

2.3.5 Perceived value of HEInnovate self-assessment

A correlation can be observed between the level of engagement with the HEInnovate self-assessment and the value that the process leaders perceived of it. The relationship between the depth of the engagement process and the perceived value of it is not a causality influence, but rather a simultaneity influence. To illustrate, the deeper the engagement process was, the higher process leaders ranked the value of the tool. Simultaneously, the initial value that the process leaders perceived for the self-assessment tool, the deeper the engagement process was. This shows that the initial contact of process leaders has of the self-assessment can have a potent influence on the process.

2.3.6 Perspective of HEIs that declined using the self-assessment tool

The two HEIs that declined using the self-assessment, applied for the HEInnovate country review in the beginning with the intention of engaging with the self-assessment tool. In both institutions, the HEI leadership was initially positive about the prospect of engaging with the self- assessment. However, a few complications changed the attitudes of these HEIs. Two observations are worth highlighting here:

- Both institutions perceived that the self-assessment may not be suitable for their institutions.

- Both process leaders expressed feeling that leading the self-assessment process pose a degree of threat to their positions, and the reputation of the departments they work for in the occasion of leading a poorly executed process plan. These thoughts combined with the limited timeframe to implement the self-assessment tool and the recent changes in the General Data Protection Regulations (enforced in May 2018) created the foundation for declining to use the self-assessment tool. This shows that it is crucial to create a feasible plan that would meet the expectations of the HEI of participating in the self-assessment. Moreover, it is important to provide a suitable timeframe for the process execution.

2.4 Recommendations for Future Research

There are still areas to investigate in the area of engagement with self-assessment tools in the area of entrepreneurship and innovation. The sample in this research surely does not cover all the potential ways HEIs are engaging with the HEInnovate self-assessment elsewhere. Therefore, it can be worthwhile to carry a similar research to this with similar research questions in different countries and HEIs that have engaged or will soon engage with the self-assessment tool.

Another gap in that needs addressing concerns the impact of the HEInnovate on HEI that have taken it. Therefore, future studies can follow up with HEIs that have engaged with the self-assessment in previous years, and document and analyze its impact.

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3 Tracking Chinese Doctoral Experience Over Time: Navigating the Dutch Academia

Tung Tung Chan

3.1 Chapter 1: Background

3.1.1 Problem Statement

Doctoral education (PhD) has moved to centre stage in policy-making and national innovation strategies around the world (Nerad, 2010). Graduate-level research contributes significantly to the production, expansion, and dissemination of national and international knowledge base, which play a critical role in the innovation and economic growth of a nation (OECD, 2016; Kehm & Teichler, 2016). The Chinese government is actively pushing for a stronger knowledge economy to establish China as the future leader of research and innovation (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2018). Chinese scholars are actively mobilized to spend their education or training abroad with financial support from the China Scholarship Council (CSC). CSC is the national funding agency embedded within the Chinese Ministry of Education, which provides scholarships for Chinese citizens to study abroad, and for foreigners to study in China. In 2018, CSC offered 32,300 funding places for Chinese citizens in various study types and program categories to study abroad (CSC, 2018, January 10). Postdoctoral preparation, doctoral education, and Master programmes are considered as the pathways of educating scientific and technical innovators as countries with higher percentage of doctoral holders in the population signify higher rate of research and development intensity and activity (Nerad, 2010; OECD, 2016).

While much attention has been paid to increase international collaboration and exchange in doctoral education, relative research is done on the process itself (Nerad, 2010). There is scarce research on how the CSC-funded PhD candidate is being repositioned by the Chinese government funding body, and the receiving university. Doctoral candidates come from mostly poorer nations to study in richer nations with well-established research and university systems (Nerad, Rudd, Morrison & Homer, 2009). Yet, host institutions do little or nothing to bring international and domestic students together in ways that enhance students' learning of cross-

cultural skills (Nerad et al., 2009). As nations and higher education institutions set strategies to attract international students, they must also consider the educational and cultural experiences of these students in the destination country (Robinson-Pant, 2009).

According to Shen, Wang & Jin (2016), the Netherlands lose out to top-ranked universities in the English-speaking world in the competition for student talent from China. Nevertheless, the Netherlands is in the third place among EU countries with the highest share of foreign PhD students, after the United Kingdom and France (OECD, 2016). While the British and French PhD system consider PhDs as students who must pay tuition fees, the Dutch doctoral education system does not charge PhDs tuition fees. This originates from a system in which PhDs paid by the university are employed as junior staff members of the university with duties, rights, and salary. Yet, the employee status of PhDs in the Netherlands is not applicable to all PhDs (and in fact not to CSC-funded PhDs either), as the following section explicates.

In general, two PhD appointment types can be distinguished in the Netherlands: (1) internal PhD candidates known as 'assistant-in-training' ('assistent in opleiding', in Dutch) who are employed by the university, and (2) external PhD candidates who are not employed by the university (Waaijer, 2016). There are three groups of external PhDs in the Netherlands: self-funded PhDs, scholarship PhDs who are funded through government, funding agencies or employers (such as the CSC-funded PhDs), and those who do a PhD next to a job. It is important to consider these three groups separately within the external appointment type, as they are situated in different social and economic circumstances which may affect their doctoral experiences. As opposed to internals, externals are not employees of the university, so they do not receive salaries, benefits, and legal protection through collective labour agreements regulated by the Dutch higher education policy framework.

For Dutch universities, externals are an attractive source of knowledge labour as the university pays little or none in terms of wages, and they get a premium of 95,434 euros for every successful PhD completion from the Ministry of Education (Government of the Netherlands, 2014). Since externals are not employees, their status varies depending on the university's administration policy. An external PhD may be regarded as student, visiting scholar or guest researcher at a Dutch university. In any case, an official and consistent institutional recognition of the status of external PhDs at universities is absent in the Netherlands.

A major implication of the distinction between internal and external PhDs in the Netherlands is that we know very little of the latter. The precise figure of internal PhDs can be determined since internals are registered university employees. However, it is unknown how many external PhDs are working at Dutch universities due to inconsistent institutional recognition and the lack of central PhD registration. This may suggest an unequal distribution of presence and participation between the internal and external PhDs at Dutch universities. The difficulty in identifying the presence and position of external PhDs make them a difficult population to reach for doctoral education and academic career research, which prevent further investigation of this group. It is estimated that external PhDs make up 50% of the doctorate population in the Netherlands, with Chinese being the largest group of external foreign PhDs from outside of Europe (VSNU, 2013). Given their substantial contribution to the Dutch knowledge economy, understanding their doctoral experiences will be useful for the recruitment of, and full utilization of intellectual overseas Chinese.

It is highly worthwhile for both the individual and host institution to understand how CSC-funded candidates value and perceive their doctoral experiences in the changing and competitive context of Dutch academia. This study will be the first to question whether the ambiguous institutional status of the present Chinese doctoral students in the Dutch higher education system has an impact on their doctoral experiences and academic identity development. This understanding is critical because it is expected to be highly related to the PhD candidates' sense of self-worth, academic success, and research throughout their doctoral trajectory. Further, the thesis should add to the existing body of higher education studies in the field of doctoral education, academic identity, and research career. The study considers the scholar's nationality, disciplinary profile, PhD phase, and contributes to the meagre body of literature on PhD appointment types and its implication on doctoral experiences in the Dutch higher education system (Waaijer, 2016; Waaijer et al., 2016; van der Weijden et al., 2017).

3.1.2 Research question

The main research question of this study is: How do the Chinese and Dutch habitus shape the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhDs over time?

This question is further broken down into the following sub-questions:

1. How does the Chinese habitus shape the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhD candidates over time?

2. How does the Dutch habitus shape the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhD candidates over time?

3. To what extent do CSC-funded PhD candidates exercise agency over time in their doctoral trajectories?

4. How is academic identity formed during the doctoral trajectories of CSC-funded PhD candidates?

3.1.3 Theoretical background

Identity-trajectory has been successful in addressing both domestic and international doctoral experiences in the Canadian doctoral education context (McAlpine, 2012; McAlpine & Amundsen, 2009; 2011; 2015; McAlpine et al., 2014). It emphasizes that an individual's present intentions, goals, and actions are influenced by the past, which in turn inform and influence the future (McAlpine, 2012). The learning processes of doctoral holders thus emerge from a multitude of contexts, both past and present through informal learning experiences, not just only through work but also one's reflection on work. In this view, learning and identity are intimately linked. Doctoral and academic experience are situated within the broader personal lives of PhD candidates (McAlpine & Amundsen, 2011). The identity-trajectory begins with the individual's doctoral journey and follows the individual's career development through time which is rooted within personal-past-future circumstances (McAlpine et al., 2014). In this theory, doctoral-academic work experience is conceived through intellectual, networking, and institutional strands that are interwoven but develop somewhat independently across time (McAlpine et al., 2013).

The intellectual strand represents the written and oral contributions to the field leading to recognition, the networking strand represents present and past relationships which serve as resources as well as responsibilities, and the institutional strand represents organisational responsibilities and resources. Individuals exercise agency by putting conscious mental effort to be intentional, to plan, to construct a way forward when faced with expected or unexpected

constraints (Engeström, & Miettinen, 1999; Roth, 2004). The daily life of doctoral candidates as active agents is thus determined by an infinite amount of interactions (e.g. discussions, negotiations, or conflicts). Since this study focuses specifically on the Chinese PhDs, it is important to consider how cultural aspects situate the individual within earlier experiences, which shape their intentions and future imagined careers. Thus, habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) is introduced to the identity-trajectory framework to help explain how Chinese PhDs adapt psychologically and socio-culturally when navigating between the Chinese and Dutch habitus throughout their doctoral trajectory – whether successfully or not. It is essential to consider how personal responsibilities and cultural expectations may constrain an individual's time, intention, and decision-making in doctoral work (McAlpine, 2012).

Both the identity-trajectory framework (McAlpine, 2012) and the habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) are based on agency theory. They facilitate explanation of attitudes towards various pressures encountered by Chinese doctoral candidates in Dutch academia, and of their choices of practices which determines their actions as rooted in the underlying structures of the society. By attending to agency and habitus (Bourdieu, 1990) the doctoral experiences of external CSC-funded PhDs offer a developmental perspective – how individual experience the feeling of being able to negotiate or draw on resources across time and space, when dealing with the construction of the intellectual, networking, and institutional strands of identity-trajectories (McAlpine & Amundsen, 2011). The hybrid theoretical framework of habitus and identity-trajectory (see Figure 1) allows the more subtle, invisible, and insidious inequalities at play in higher education (which are always connected to wider social relations and contexts) to come to view, and to be linked to the level of subjectivity, emotion and the embodied context of action and practice of the PhD candidates.

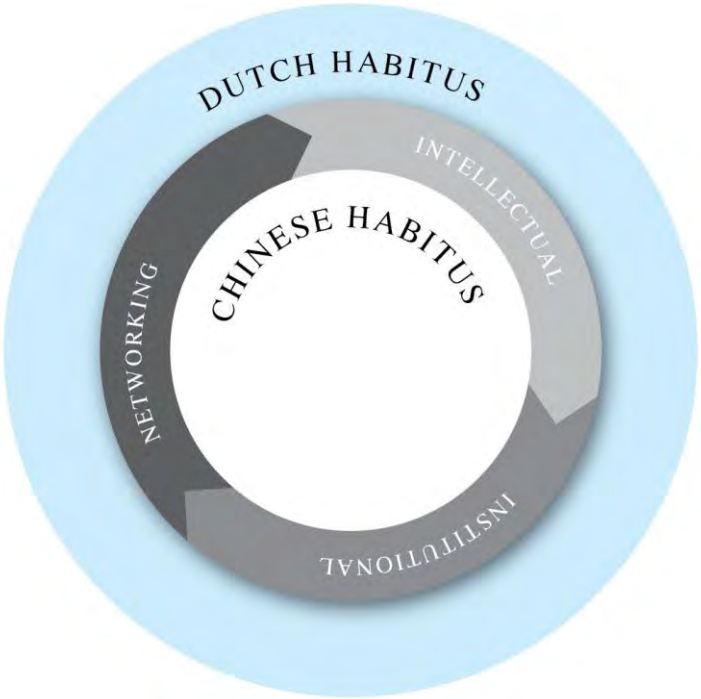

Figure 1: Identity trajectory and habitus theoretical framework
Figure made by author

3.2 Chapter 2: Research Method

External Chinese doctoral holders at six Dutch universities: Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Utrecht University, Leiden University and Tilburg University were contacted to participate in this study. Externally funded Chinese doctoral students were difficult to reach because they were not employees at the universities. Reaching them depends entirely on the PhD student data provided by the graduate school or university (Sonneveld et al., 2010). Fortunately, this qualitative study only requires a small number of participants. An email consisting of both Mandarin and English messages was sent out to the graduate school of the abovementioned six universities to communicate about the research and to invite external Chinese doctoral candidates to be a part of the study. However, this method might not be very useful to reach out to PhD graduates since they are no longer enrolled in their graduate school. Hence, purposive snowball sampling defines the sampling strategy of this research as acquaintances of existing participants were recruited for the study (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

Since the study might run a risk of insufficient recruits, all Chinese doctoral candidates who responded to the email request and accepted the invitation, including those who are CSC-

funded, self-funded and internal PhD candidates were interviewed. In total, 10 out of 15 participants were CSC-funded PhD candidates and thus specifically selected to be included for this research. All participants came from various disciplines, gender, and age to ensure diversity of histories. While there is no specific answer to the number of participants in a qualitative study, Charmaz's (2006) saturation approach was adopted, whereby the researcher stops collecting data when the categories (or themes) no longer speak new insights or revels new properties.

Data was collected from June to August 2017 during the researcher's internship at Leiden Centre of Science and Technology (CWTS). 60 to 90-minute recorded interviews with two participants were scheduled per week. Interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese as interviewees were more comfortable in sharing their life stories in their mother tongue, thus providing for thick and rich description. To facilitate the data collection phase, observations of each participant was kept in a bilingual field diary to chronicle the researcher's own thoughts, emotions, experiences, and perceptions throughout the research process (Creswell, 2013). This step aided in the development of qualitative data analysis, as it progresses concurrently with other parts of the study, namely the data collection and the write-up of findings (Creswell, 2013).

The categorical-content perspective in narrative research developed by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber (1998) is employed for this study. Categorical content is a method which processed the narrative materials of the life stories analytically, by breaking the text into relatively small units of content and classifying them to either descriptive or statistical purposes. This is similar to content analysis, which is the classical method for doing research with narrative materials in psychology, sociology and education (Riessman, 1993). All interview data were fully transcribed in Mandarin.

The steps taken for analysis is as follows:

(1) *Fully transcribe interview data*. Initially, the researcher intends to fully translate all Mandarin transcription to English, however, upon fully translating one interview, English translation of all other nine interviews were put to a halt as this time-consuming process may jeopardize the completion of this thesis.

(2) *Classify interview data into content categories*. The categories are three interrelated strands: intellectual, institutional, and networking strands predefined by McAlpine et al. (2013). The data is sorted vertically through identity-trajectory strands, and horizontally through time (past-present-future) and space (Chinese and Dutch habitus). This process is a circular procedure which involves careful reading and sorting the data into categories using theoretical knowledge and common sense.

(3) *Translate the processed interview data*. In this stage, all quotes relevant to answering the research questions were translated from Mandarin to English for inclusion in the results chapter.

(4) *Drawing conclusions from the results.* The quotes selected for each content category were used descriptively to formulate the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhD candidates. To ensure anonymity and sensitivity of data, individual participant in this study were given an alias, RP, which stands for research participant and a sequence number to ensure anonymity.

The research has positioned herself as a Master student who is curious about the realities and experiences of Chinese doctoral candidates, as this population shares a similar cultural heritage and mother tongue as herself. Born and raised in Malaysia, the researcher is foreign to the Chinese habitus. This fact relieves personal biases which may have influenced the findings. Rich and thick verbatim descriptions of participant's life story is provided to ensure the truthfulness of the data. However, the selection of quotes maybe biased towards the negative aspects of the doctoral trajectory to provide insights regarding the participants' sense of agency and academic identity formation. Further, the English translation of quotes may contain grammatical errors as Mandarin uses neither tenses nor singular and plural nouns. The translation of quotes may miscue the feel for the person, and not conveying the experience of having known him or met her. Despite the imperfection of this study, the researcher hopes to deepen the reader's empathy for the research participants, and effectively portray the historical and social world the CSC-funded PhD candidates are living in.

3.3 Chapter 3: Key Findings

From the accounts of 10 CSC-funded PhD candidates, the external PhD status inevitably

excludes them from developing the institutional and networking strands in the Dutch habitus. They were not involved in attending meetings, providing educational and departmental suggestions, nor creating structures. They were also rarely invited to socialize and participate within the Dutch university, nor provide any form of leadership, but to focus on their doctoral research. The lack of institutional engagement is detrimental to the individual's formation of academic identity and led to an isolated doctoral education experience. As such, all participants struggle to establish their presence and make their voice heard in the university in which they work. While nine participants reported positive doctoral supervision and increased intellectual confidence over time, all participants only frequently interact with their supervisors and feel like an outsider due to the lack of social interaction with the local PhDs and departmental colleagues.

The study of Waaijer at al. (2016), whose research found that externals are at a disadvantaged position with respect to financial situation, offered facilities, and experienced work stress when compared to internals may now be validated. Even though the scholarship amount for CSC-funded PhD candidates was lower than internal PhD candidates' salaries in the Netherlands, none of the participants disclosed financial difficulties. All CSC-funded PhD candidates has a stable funding source – they receive a scholarship allowance of 3,600 euros every three months, amounting to 1,200 euros per month – for a period of four years. All participants in this study also reported to have access to institutional facilities and resources at their respective Dutch university. Many participants suffered from anxiety and low self-confidence due to uncertainty during the start of their PhD and language barrier. However, the anxiety level decreased, and intellectual self-confidence increased over time through the narrative of the participants. Evidently, external CSC-funded PhDs experience different dynamics in their academic, social, cultural and career experiences than internal PhDs in the Netherlands. The narrative of CSC-funded PhDs demonstrate that host institutions do little or nothing to bring international and domestic students together in ways that enhance students' learning of cross-cultural skills during their doctoral trajectory (Nerad et al., 2009).

The following table presents an overview of the answer to the main research question: **How do the Chinese and Dutch habitus shape the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhDs over time?** The Chinese and Dutch habitus – implicit cultural and social norms and practices in relation to the three identity-trajectory strands: intellectual, institutional, and networking (McAlpine et al., 2013) is analysed. Since so little is known about the doctoral experiences of

CSC-funded PhDs, the goal here is to provide an extensive description on the unique rules and conditions of both the Chinese and Dutch habitus which structure the possible actions, practices, and strategies of CSC-funded PhD candidates throughout their doctoral trajectory.

Table 1: Identity-trajectory strands of the Chinese and Dutch habitus

Identity-trajectory strands	Chinese habitus	Dutch habitus
Intellectual	• Low self-confidence and inferiority due to strict upbringing at home and schools • Gender discrimination – female candidates were discouraged to pursue a PhD • Master thesis supervisor identified as the key person who pushes candidates to pursue PhD abroad • Harsh and 'hand-holding' Master thesis supervision • Focus on conceptual research	• Politeness as weakness – apologetic attitude associated with academic incompetence • Use of first names in addressing doctoral supervisors • Curiosity-driven and market-oriented research atmosphere • Encouraging and laissez-faire doctoral supervision • Focus on empirical research • Language barrier due to low English proficiency

Institutional	• PhD study group to prepare for the local doctorate intake examination and CSC scholarship application • Seniors and alumni's successful CSC application affect the candidate's study abroad destination • Exchange programmes and collaborative research projects between Chinese home university and Dutch university increase recognition and preference for pursuing a PhD in the Netherlands	• Dutch professors always the first to reply to email request and offer a PhD position • Lack of knowledge in institutional context which constrained one's academic work • Lack of useful pre-arrival information such as accommodation, transportation, and money matters • Socialization at workplace such as team building activity, social drinks and gatherings were minimal.
Networking	• Alumni from home university in China inform Master students of PhD vacancies in the Netherlands • Contact leading scholars in the field to be one's doctoral supervisor through strategic reading of publications during Master degree	• Difficult to establish Dutch friendships • Candidates who invested in learning the Dutch language reported to have better cultural understanding and improved relationships with their colleagues and supervisors • Due to contractual obligation to return to China, a candidate express preference for establishing a Chinese academic network than a Dutch academic network

Table made by author

3.4 Chapter 4: Recommendations

Participants' motives of coming to the Netherlands, perception of doctoral supervision, the doctoral process, as well as challenges of a CSC-funded PhD candidate were explored in this study. Career aspirations were underexplored in this study, as most participants are still in the early stages of their PhD. All participants had travelled all the way from China and went through many hurdles to become a PhD candidate in the Netherlands. A sense of persistence and desire to succeed can be identified in their life stories. Nonetheless, most participants acknowledged major difficulty in acting as an independent researcher, given the distinct academic practices, expectations, and rules of the game in the Chinese and Dutch habitus. The development of autonomy and possible ways to educate autonomous research skills to non-Dutch PhD candidates thus require attention.

The following table offers individual and institutional recommendations for improving the doctoral experiences of CSC-funded PhD candidates in the Netherlands.

Table 2: Practical implications for the individual and receiving Dutch university

Identity-trajectory strands	Individual	Institution

Intellectual	• Apologize only when a mistake is made • Increase English proficiency through asking questions and daily interactions (academic or non-academic) with others • Cultivate autonomy by learning how to make critical decisions for your research, together with the help of your doctoral supervisors • Read abundantly and mimic the writing and thinking process of Western scholars • Keep asking questions	• Encourage candidates to take English courses in academic writing and speaking skills throughout their doctoral trajectory • Provide a safe space which PhD candidates could confide their challenges with one another • Assign an official PhD advisor and psychologist for external PhDs so that they have other links with the university besides their doctoral supervisors. • Remind doctoral supervisors that their words of encouragement and patience would leave a lasting positive impact on the PhD candidate, and that being apologetic is a polite gesture in various cultural contexts
Institutional	• Collect information on departmental mission, histories and organisational structures, research, and educational activities through official university website to better understand the institutional context and its relation to one's academic interest and career ambition	• Invite CSC-funded PhDs to participate and contribute in educational activities such as teaching and curriculum development • Include external PhDs in departmental meetings and research seminars with local PhDs and Master students

	• Request contacts of other CSC-funded PhD candidates within department and establish friendship prior to coming to the Netherlands, which could facilitate the communication of relevant pre-arrival information	
Networking	• Invest time in learning basic Dutch (A1 level) to increase social interaction with others • Warmly invite a different Dutch colleague for lunch every day to get to know them personally	• Offer free Dutch language courses to motivate foreign PhDs to get to know the culture and increase social interaction • Organise annual team building activities and biweekly social drinks to encourage social interaction between the internal, external PhDs and other staff members

Table made by author

In conclusion, the current study is the first step towards understanding CSC-funded PhD candidates, and opens endless possibility for future doctoral education research in the Netherlands. However, this study is only able to focus on PhD candidates who are currently on their doctoral trajectory. It is not known whether all of them will succeed and complete their PhD on time. It is important to note that two participants (RP1 & RP2) who were in the finishing phase of their PhD at the time of interview, and both had two years of delay, are now doctoral holders. The current theoretical framework can be extended to CSC-funded doctoral holders, to explore their homecoming and career experiences in China. Additionally, the perspective of those who decided to terminate their PhD in the Netherlands should be included to examine the reasons for non-completion. However, this study may be difficult to conduct due to stigma and shame concerning failure. Further studies on doctoral supervisors and their supervision experiences of CSC-funded PhD candidates is called for, to ensure that stories from both sides are heard.

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4 A Systematic Review of Faculty Onboarding Programs: Supporting the Organizational Socialization of Newly Hired Faculty

Kirstin Conradie

4.1 Background

4.1.1 Research Problem

Actively onboarding newly hired staff has been shown to hold significant mutual benefits for employees and employers. In their meta-analytic review, Bauer et al. (2007) found that by facilitating role clarity, self-efficacy, and social integration, effective onboarding improves job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance, and decreases employee turnover. Considering these benefits, it is thus worrying that such practices tend to be either absent or insufficient in the context of HEIs (Billot & King, 2017; Trowler & Knight, 1999). Indeed, the notion that newly hired faculty experience very limited or poor support upon initial employment is extremely well-supported in the literature (see Barlow & Antoniou, 2007; Eddy & Gaston- Gayles, 2008; Henry, 2010; King et al., 2018; Murray, 2008; Pithouse-Morgan et al., 2016; Rice et al., 2000).

The relative absence of new faculty onboarding has historical and structural roots. Historically, in the former elite university systems, smaller populations of junior faculty were primarily socialized into their disciplines and specific departments through graduate education and mentoring (Bourdieu, 1988; Farnham, 2009; Clark, 1987; Clarke et al., 2013). This hierarchical and paternalistic paradigm leaves limited room for considering the needs of newcomers and the nuances of their socialization (Brechelmacher et al., 2015; Farnham, 2009). In terms of structure, because they are "fragmented, loosely coupled organisations, where individual performance [in relation to academic disciplines] is highly valued", it can be difficult to cultivate in academics a strong personal investment in the organisational context of their work (Pellert, 2007, p. 86). Instead of being guided by an organizational ethos or 'strategic mission', academics have traditionally worked within a structure of collegial governance. That is, "the peer review based self-steering of academic communities" (Enders et

al, 2009, p. 39). The traditional emphasis on identity formation within an autonomous disciplinary community obscures the fundamentally socio-psychological dimensions of the workplace itself. This foregrounds induction into disciplinary norms, eliding newcomers' more basic needs for reducing uncertainty and achieving a sense of workplace belonging (Trowler & Knight, 1999).

Presently, as universities have undergone reforms regarding access and economization, the broader organisational context has taken up features which make the academic work environment more business-like (Enders et al., 2009; Hyde et al., 2013). Within this new paradigm, pressures towards greater social and economic relevance have given rise to the use of performance agreements between HEIs and the state, increasing institutional oversight over academic work (Enders et al., 2009; Musselin, 2009). However, increased institutional oversight has not necessarily led to helpful support mechanisms for transition into the workplace. Rather, as Barlow and Antoniou state, "there still tends to be an assumption […] that new staff will somehow absorb the culture and orientate themselves naturally" (2007, p.70).

Further, new faculty are not a homogenous group, neither in terms previous experience, nor contractual status, nor demographic markers such as age, race, and gender (Bryson, 2013; Flora, 2007; Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007; King et al., 2018, Trowler & Knight, 1999). This diversity means that new hires enter the academic work environment with a wide variety of 'pre- socialization' experiences (Eddy & Gaston-Gayles, 2008). Without transitional support, this situation is highly stressful.

These insights are supported by the fact that for nearly two decades and across national systems newly hired faculty from all fields have reported unclear expectations and responsibilities, struggles with time management and work-life balance, feelings of deep isolation, and unclear career paths (Billot & King, 2017; Rice et al., 2000; Yeo et al., 2015). Scholars have begun to link these issues with new faculty turnover (Billot & King, 2017; O'Meara et al., 2014), and to draw attention to the mental health risks associated with lack of support in academia – particularly for those new hires in the early-career phase (Guthrie et al., 2017).

While these challenges may be ameliorated through more thoughtful onboarding initiatives, it

should be noted that they are also linked to broader trends towards the intensification of academic work and the diversification of academic careers (Goastellec et al., 2013). From teaching larger and more diverse student bodies, to engaging in fundraising and project management, today "the range of duties that academics are expected to perform has both broadened and deepened" (Furnham, 2009, p.210). Combined with budgetary constraints, this has given rise to the use of flexible employment contracts outside the tenure system as a cost-cutting measure (Musselin, 2007 & 2009). These full or part-time contracts terminate after a fixed period and are typically differentiated by both seniority and content; newly hired junior academics are more likely to face contingent employment related to teaching-or research-only contracts (Bryson & Barnes, 2000; Musselin, 2007 & 2009). This use of sessional teaching staff and contract-based researchers alongside more traditional academic appointments leads to more frequent work relocations and creates an increasingly complex employment landscape within HEIs (Bradley, 2004; Farnham, 2009; Finkelstein et al., 2009; McAlphine, 2012).

It is in this context that newly hired faculty receive either very limited or poor transitional support (i.e. onboarding), and there is much evidence to suggest that "adjustment to academic life is often stressful and demoralizing" (Murray, 2008, p.108). A growing body of literature explores how best to intervene in this problem-area, either through gathering evidence regarding the experiences of new hires and/or the early-career period (Barlow & Antoniou 2007; Brechelmacher et al., 2015; Eddy & Gaston-Gayles, 2008; King et al., 2018; Rice et al., 2000) or through launching supportive interventions (Burnstad, 2002; Clark et al., 2018; Geber, 2009; Mujtaba, 2007; Schrodt et al., 2003; Taylor & Berry, 2008).

The present study reviews the latter body of work in so far as it relates to planned onboarding programs for newly hired faculty. Notably, it explores whether this literature evidences an over- reliance on generic information provision and training practices enacted by institutionalized (highly formalized and structured) socialization tactics as proposed by Trowler and Knight (1999) and echoed by Billot and King (2017) more recently. In this regard, Trowler and Knight (1999) argue that such practices and tactics emphasize the acquisition of explicit forms of knowledge at the cost of imparting less measurable and more tacit knowledge, which leaves new entrants unprepared for the daily intersubjective engagement of departmental life. However, research that tests this assertion has not yet emerged, and there is no synthesis of reported onboarding practices, the socialization tactics they employ, or their outcomes.

In sum, while the vulnerability of newly hired faculty and the problematic transitional support they receive frames the present study, the specific research problem is the poor insight into the nature of faculty onboarding programs and the outcomes they produce for individuals and institutions. Deeper insight into these phenomena would support the work of those interested in researching and improving the integration and adjustment of newly hired faculty.

4.1.2 Research Purpose and Research Questions

While the core problem that any systematic review addresses is a particular kind of research gap, individual systematic reviews are conducted for an array of reasons. These include the generation of new theories or meta-theories, appraising the effects of interventions, determining whether certain policy decisions are advisable, mapping out areas of uncertainty, bridging between related areas of work, and identifying research gaps and weaknesses (Biggam, 2011; Petticrew & Roberts, 2005; Russel, 2005).

The present systematic review brings two related areas of work together, whereby concepts and analytic tools from a more established research tradition (organizational psychology) are used to map gaps and weaknesses in an emerging field of activity and academic inquiry (faculty onboarding). The primary aim of this project is to clarify what is documented about actual faculty onboarding programs, the purpose of which is to guide both future research on and the practical implementation of such programs.

Thus, the over-arching research question is '*What are the nature and outcomes of faculty onboarding programs?*', and this question is broken down as follows:

1. What practices do faculty onboarding programs consist in?
2. What socialization tactics are used to enact these onboarding practices?
3. What kinds of outcomes are described for staff and institutions?

4.1.3 Theoretical Background

The study conceives of 'academic induction' as 'faculty onboarding'. In doing so, it frames the study of faculty workplace entry as a human resource management (HRM) issue, and so opens it to critical scrutiny from this perspective.

Pynes defines HRM as “the design of formal systems in an organisation to ensure the effective use of employees’ knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics to accomplish organisational goals”. These formal systems concern “the recruitment, selection, training and development, compensation and benefits, retention, evaluation, and promotion of employees, and labor- management relations within an organisation” (Pynes, 2009, p.3). Yet, while universities have inherited a certain high regard for academics, the notion of harnessing the abilities of these academics as resources for achieving organisational goals is a more recent phenomenon. There has thus been a slow reform process from traditional staff administration to a more dynamic form of management (Pellert, 2007; Pynes, 2009). Indeed, in their extensive report on trends in higher education for the OECD Education Committee, Santiago, et. al. (2008) argue that the intensification of academic work and the diversification of academic careers mentioned in the problem statement above require a both a stronger focus on, and greater institutional autonomy in, managing academic employees.

From such an HRM perspective new faculty entering the academic workplace becomes an organizational, rather than a disciplinary, issue. Foregrounding the academic workplace itself over induction into a particular branch of academia highlights the fundamentally *organizational context* of faculty work. Focusing on this organizational context opens the issue of faculty workplace entry to critical scrutiny from the discipline of organizational psychology, which posits a basic set of socio-psychological mechanisms at play within any workplace environment. Thus, like any workplace, academia is populated by employees who have socio-psychological needs.

Notably, onboarding addresses those needs that are most salient at the point of organizational entry, defined in the literature as the needs for uncertainty reduction and to form a sense of belonging (Chao, 2012). This refers to the experience of *initial* organizational socialization, within what Feldman (1976) originally described as a three-phase process – beginning as a person develops expectations about their future role, continuing once they are hired and attempt to adjust to that role, and developing further as they settle in to the role.

Indeed, socialization is generally understood as “a learning process by which an individual develops as a social being and a member of a society or group” (Brim, 1966 cited in Chao, 2012, p.580). Thus, organizational socialization refers to a process at the group level whereby

individuals learn and acquire the knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes necessary for successful participation in a workplace, and move from being outsiders to being members of an organization (Klein & Polin, 2012; van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

However, in Chao's (2012) review of the organizational socialization research, she found that no cohesive theory of this phenomenon has achieved wide acceptance. In lieu of an inclusive theory, she identified four prevalent theoretical assumptions behind the current study of organizational socialization (Chao, 2012, p.583-586). These are, respectively; Uncertainty reduction, the need to belong, social exchange theory, and social identity theory. The first two assumptions are broadly understood as 'needs theories', referring to basic socio-psychological needs. The second two are mid-range theories from the field of social psychology. Taken together, these propositions provide a broad overview of (1) why people engage in organizational socialization, (2) how people become socialized in the organizational context, and (3) why organizational socialization is important (Chao, 2012, p.586).

With regards to the first point, it is argued that the human drive to reduce uncertainty and the need to belong to social groups provide the impetus for organizational socialization. This is grounded on the claim, also advanced by evolutionary psychologists (cf. Gilbert, 2000 & 2001), that individuals experience anxiety upon encountering uncertainty, particularly in social contexts.

To reduce anxiety and achieve a sense of belonging within an organization, social exchange must occur, whereby individuals have frequent contact with group members over time. Social exchange theory posits that, as people interact, they exchange both material and immaterial goods and services (Chao, 2012, p.584). Here 'immaterial' refers to things such as information, approval, or recognition. Over time, socially based exchanges become somewhat predictable, leading to a reduction of uncertainty, so that individuals may develop relatively stable knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes. This allows for the formation of workplace identities.

In this regard, social identity theory posits that identity consists in the collection of mental categories that allow a person to perceive themselves as a "class of stimuli" in the world (Chao, 2012, p.585). While personal identity is based on one's perception of oneself as unique from others, social identity is based on one's perception of similarities between oneself and

groups of others. In this way, one may form multiple social identities, based on different group affiliations. In the context of organizations, it is argued that this identity formation occurs mostly within the immediate work group (Moreland et al, 2001, cited in Chao, 2012).

Thus, organizational socialization is central to the process of workplace identity formation, and this identity becomes the foundation for workplace activity (Chao, 2012). These processes are important, since the stability and productivity of organizations depends heavily on the ways that newcomers identify themselves and learn to carry out their tasks (van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

4.2 Methodology

Systematic review is a research methodology currently most popular in the medical and health sciences, though it has its origins in psychological and educational research from the late 1970's and early 1980's (EPPI-Centre, 2016). At its core, it entails using systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant research, in answer to a clearly formulated question (Moher, et al., 2009). Thus, systematic reviews take *existing research data* as their object of inquiry, rather than undertaking new primary research. They differ from traditional literature reviews in a few keyways, chief of which are differing goals, methodological components, author characteristics, timeline, and scope. Crucially, a systematic review is more concerned with answering a focused question than a literature review, and while the latter proceeds along the often unarticulated discretion of their author, systematic reviews introduce specific methodological components and additional reviewers in an effort to eliminate subjective bias. The method consists in searching all relevant databases, using a clearly defined and systematic search strategy along with pre-specified eligibility criteria, to identify and select relevant research articles. Thus, systematic reviews are more time-intensive than traditional literature reviews, typically taking a year or longer to complete (Kysh, 2013).

For the purpose of selecting research from the database searches, an inclusion statement was developed:

A study must report on an established onboarding program with a duration ranging from one semester or longer, targeted at faculty in their first year of employment, and aiming to

facilitate the newcomers' transition into the new workplace.

A further crucial aspect of the systematic review process concerns the method employed in bringing together the findings of individual studies. Meta-synthesis is used to interpret the results of qualitative studies (Erwin et al., 2011), while either a meta-analysis (using statistical methods) or a narrative summary is conducted to aggregate quantitative data (Biggam, 2011; Dixon-Woods, 2006; Thorne, 2008). However, the present study concerns descriptive research, which can be either qualitative or quantitative (Kothari, 2004). In this regard Kothari explains that quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantities or amounts and is thus applicable to phenomena that can be expressed numerically and statistically, whereas qualitative research is concerned with phenomena relating to the quality/nature of experiences of respondents (Kothari, 2004, p. 3). Notably, a cursory analysis of the studies included in the present review reveals that the study of faculty onboarding programs has not progressed past basic descriptions of onboarding interventions and their impact on participants and HEIs, much of which is anecdotal. Like case studies, the articles under review outline existing local onboarding initiatives and some indications as to their possible effects. Since case studies are a form qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Zainal, 2007), meta-synthesis is taken to be a more appropriate method for the present project.

While there are a variety of approaches to the meta-synthesis of research (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009), *framework synthesis* presents itself as the ideal method. Originally applied to the synthesis of primary research in healthcare, framework synthesis is characterized by the application of an established analytical frame to the coding of secondary data (Dixon-Woods, 2011). It is unique among meta-synthesis methods in that it is the only one where *a priori* categories are used to interpret the studies under review (Barnet-Page & Thomas, 2008; Dixon-Woods, 2011). These categories are drawn from existing conceptual frameworks related to the review topic. Thus, since the study brings together two related areas of research, whereby concepts and analytic tools from organizational psychology are used to map gaps and weaknesses in the emerging field of inquiry into faculty onboarding, framework synthesis is suitable.

Therefore, drawing on the field of organizational psychology, an analytical lens is developed to help unearth the answers to the research questions outlined above. Firstly, the Inform-Welcome- Guide framework for researching onboarding practices is applied (Klein & Heuser,

2008; Klein & Polin, 2012; Klein et al., 2015), establishing which kinds of onboarding practices are reported in the reviewed literature. Then, the typology of organizational socialization tactics is applied (Jones, 1986; van Maanen & Schein, 1979), outlining the strategies used to enact these onboarding practices. Third, the outcomes of the onboarding programs are delineated using a socialization outcomes-framework based on the work of Klein and Heuser (2008) and extended by insights from Bauer and Erdogan (2012) and Chao (2012).

4.3 Key Findings

The study identified only 8 articles that met the inclusion criteria. The smallness of the sample size and the chiefly descriptive nature of the research means that valid and reliable generalizations are not impossible. Thus, all findings should be treated as suggestive, serving as way-markers towards establishing a larger and more empirically robust body of work on faculty onboarding. Nevertheless, the small size of the sample could in itself be considered a kind of research finding, demonstrating the need for further research. This is underscored by the chiefly descriptive nature of the research, indicating a level of theoretical and empirical paucity on the issue of faculty onboarding programs.

With these insights in mind, in response to the first research question (‘*what practices do faculty onboarding programs consist in?*), the analysis suggests that the onboarding practices may typically emphasize ongoing guidance, with information provision (initial training, the provision of resources, and the communication of information) playing a secondary role. Welcoming practices are the least frequently reported and least well-spread in the sample. However, a key limitation in the data is that the onboarding practices are reported in an inconsistent manner. For example, only two studies fully elaborate the content of their orientation programs, which would entail initial training, communication, and resource provision practices. In this way, the high representation of guidance over inform practices is based on the specific sample and its inherent limitations.

The findings regarding *socialization tactics* are undermined by the poor elaboration of specific practices, meaning that in some cases it is not possible to determine with certainty the exact strategies employed for enacting them. Nevertheless, the programs have an institutionalized locus of control, favouring a staged process (sequential) with clear and time-delimited steps (fixed) aiming to support organizational entry and to make it as smooth as

possible (investiture). Further, newcomers are typically treated as a group (collective) and are distinguished from others in a structured way (formal). Finally, role models are provided to newcomers (serial socialization), though only one frequently cited practice utilizes this tactic in the form of senior mentorship arrangements. Thus, the data shows that induction tends to favour institutionalized tactics over tactics that have an individualized locus of control. Put differently, the sample suggests that newly hired faculty tend to be socialized in a manner that emphasizes formal and structured learning, as opposed to learning from their daily working experiences.

In terms of *program outcomes*, the sample is marked by a number of weaknesses. That is, while the analysis translates the diverse outcomes reported in the literature into more unified categories, the originally reported outcomes are themselves not supported with sufficient evidence. In this regard, only six outcomes have both terminological consistency with the outcomes-framework and evidentiary support, namely; Knowledge of tasks, organizational knowledge, task mastery, social integration, newcomer proactivity, and retention. The data also presents an interesting expansion of the possible distal benefits of launching onboarding initiatives, namely that such programs may aid faculty recruitment.

However, none of the studies provide any baseline data that would demonstrate the impact of the programs with reference to a control group or previous incoming cohorts. Notably quantitative data such as retention figures are not informative without further contextualization. Thus, disregarding retention, there are five meaningful outcomes reported by three studies; Knowledge of tasks and task mastery (Thomas & Goswami, 2013), organizational knowledge and social integration (Kensington-Miller, 2018), and newcomer proactivity (Cullen & Harris, 2008). These three studies may therefore serve as way-markers for the development of more evidence-based faculty onboarding programs.

For example, if task-based outcomes are desired (cf. Thomas & Goswami, 2013), utilize workshops and mentors to guide newcomers in learning about and executing said tasks, and check for progress through anonymous surveys and a concrete measure such as a capstone project. Alternatively, if more relational outcomes are desired such as organizational knowledge and social integration (cf. Kensington-Miller, 2018), take a more interpersonally based approach that emphasizes social interaction across academic silos. In both cases, it appears that using predominantly institutionalized tactics may be beneficial, supplemented by

individual mentorship relationships.

In turn, the outcome of newcomer proactivity attributed to the Cullen and Harris (2008) study might be connected to the two practices that are unique to this program, as well as the unique way that one prolific practice is enacted. That is, the common practice of positioning a central office as a source of information and support is enacted on both a formal-collective (workshops) and an informal-individual (open-door policy) basis. The authors take pains to emphasize that they communicate and underscore this open-door policy for newcomers. Further, this program contains the only instance of off-campus social events for the families of all staff connected to the incoming cohort, as well as the only mention of organizing an individual-level career planning meeting between newcomers and their department-level manager. The tentative suggestion is thus that such practices and tactics may create more optimal conditions for newcomers to act proactively in building relationships and seeking out information.

However, all five of the above outcomes operate at the level of the individual, rather than that of the institution, meaning that no credible evidence is presented as to the broader benefits of onboarding programs for institutions. This is a serious omission, since such indicators would carry great value in terms of justifying a potentially resource-intensive and time-consuming intervention such as an onboarding program.

Finally, in applying an emerging analytic tool from this field (the IWG typology) to the novel analytic context of HEIs the study revealed that while the IWG typology frames orientation programs as one practice within the broader 'inform-train' category, such programs typically also entail the provision of resources and communication with newcomers. This suggests a conceptual error in the typology that may have relevance outside the context of HEIs. That is, if one practice has a causal relationship to others, it necessarily operates at a higher level of abstraction. This suggests that the broader 'inform' category should be reconceptualized as 'orientation'. This, in turn, allows for a clearer distinction to be drawn between initial training and ongoing guidance in the onboarding period. Further, the HEI data suggests that confining initial career planning to the category of resource provision is too narrow, given that all programs reporting career-related support did so within the guidance context of workshops.

In contextualizing these research findings, it is also important to emphasize that the sampled

research does not investigate the socialization of new faculty and thus does not constitute an empirical research endeavor. That is, the faculty onboarding programs are all justified with reference to a practical problem, rather than a research problem. The specific practical problem relates to the need for targeted support for new faculty, either as the result of a necessary increase in hiring, or in response to an awareness of the difficulties newly hired academics face. The studies thus do not aim to determine what is the best way to socialize new faculty, but rather describe different concrete approaches to new faculty integration (without reference to any theories of organizational socialization).

Put simply, the studies do not aim to *establish* the socialization outcomes of onboarding interventions. Instead, they consist in the efforts of HEI staff who are involved in faculty induction reporting on their interventions and the outcomes achieved with regards thereto. This point was introduced in the problem statement above, where it was stated that a growing body of literature has begun to either gather evidence regarding the experiences of new hires or to launch supportive interventions. It is this latter body of work that is reviewed in the present study, where the aim is to see what these supportive interventions entail. Thus, while none of the studies demonstrate the impact of onboarding programs on specific pre-determined and pre-assessed variables, they do provide insight into the kinds of activities HEI induction practitioners undertake, how they enact them, and what ends these activities are taken to serve.

4.4 Recommendations

What the above findings indicate is a need for further research regarding the impact of onboarding practices on the socialization of new academics. This cannot be achieved unless the work on faculty onboarding develops a more unified research program, based on the same theoretical constructs, which asks targeted, empirically verifiable research questions. This would begin the process of constructing an evidence-base for the practice of academic induction. In turn, this would allow researchers to draw causal links between specific practices and tactics and more distal outcomes such as retention and job performance, thus demonstrating the broader value of faculty onboarding.

Beyond this, there are further recommendations relating to the field of higher education research on the one hand, and the HRM research on the other. These recommendations

concern both theoretical and empirical questions. With regards to the HRM research more broadly, it was found that Klein et al. (2015) leave their finding that 'guiding' practices were perceived as most helpful to newcomers' adjustment, while not being correlated with learning socialization content, unexplored. However, this suggests that newcomers consider being guided by colleagues to be more important for their initial adjustment than formally learning information about the workplace. Future research should explore the overlaps and disconnects between outcomes and perceptions of usefulness. Further, a key limitation in Klein et al.'s (2015) research relates to the issue of correlation, which does not imply causation, meaning that future efforts should investigate causal, rather than correlational, relationships between the use of specific practices and socialization outcomes.

At a more theoretical/conceptual level, it is suggested that the reconceptualized 'OWG' typology, based on the original work of Klein and Heuser (2008), be applied to larger bodies of literature, or to actual cases, in order to test its validity. Further, the higher education research also suggested that recruitment may be included when it comes to considering onboarding program outcomes. This presents an interesting and novel avenue for further investigation.

Regarding faculty onboarding in the higher education research, there is simply a dearth of further research to be done. Mainly, however, this work relates to establishing a theoretically grounded research agenda. Furthermore, the absence as to credible evidence of the broader institutional benefits of onboarding programs requires serious attention. It is suggested that outlining the benefits of planned onboarding initiatives should devote attention to common indicators of institutional success. From a policy perspective, if onboarding initiatives are to be implemented, their benefits to HEIs should be more tangibly demonstrated. This would also involve paying attention to different national and international matrices, such as, for example, the Research Evaluation Exercise in the UK. Further, the analytic framework developed in the study may in future also be applied to the disciplinary literature related to practitioners transitioning from industry roles into applied fields such as education and nursing.

Finally, some recommendations for practitioners may be made. Two broad strategies for implementing and/or evaluating faculty onboarding programs are suggested. First, for those seeking to implement an onboarding program, consult the disciplinary literature in the field of

organizational psychology. Drawing on extant theoretical and empirical advances saves unnecessary duplication of work. Further, and in line with this disciplinary literature, outline and utilize success indicators or targets, and measure the actual baseline conditions. This allows for the demonstration of program impact and supports the process of justifying resource investiture on the part of the institution. While this strategy is also highly relevant for those seeking to evaluate extant onboarding programs, an additional recommendation relates to efforts to combat researcher bias. In this regard, only three of the sampled studies (Kensington-Miller, 2018; Schechner & Poslusny, 2010; Thomas & Goswami, 2013) demonstrate any awareness of the possible conflict of interest in having responsibility for both program success and program evaluation. This risks the exaggeration of program benefits and may lead to a situation where what is measured is simply what the researchers were already looking for.

4.5 References

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5 Analysis of the Autonomy and the Regulations of the Private Higher Education in Mexico

María Diez Uriarte

5.1 Background

Private higher education institutions began in Mexico in the early 1910's, as the private sector saw the opportunity of granting education away from the government's ideology (González, 2012). Nevertheless, its expansion was very short due to the lack of recognition by the government (Rodríguez & Ordorika, 2011). For this reason, the birth of the private Mexican university is located in the second half of the 1930's and, from this moment on, private higher education has multiplied considerably (Urquidi et al, 1967), especially during the 90's, when neoliberalism policies were introduced in the country (Instituto de Investigaciones sobre la Universidad y la Educación México, 2002). Thus, by 2011 Álvarez estimated a total of 2,815 private higher education institutions, considering the different branches, whose quality vary considerable from low quality institutions to high quality ones.

The Mexican private university is regulated by different instruments: the Mexican Constitution, the General Law of Education, The Law for the Coordination of Higher Education, and the Agreements 243, and 17/11/17. The Mexican Constitution (Poder Ejecutivo Federal, 2017 as amended 1917) in its third article, and the General Law of Education (Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión, 2017 as amended 1993) clearly state that private entities can provide education in all its different types and modalities, and the state recognizes this program through the Recognition of Official Validity of Studies (RVOE). The Agreements, in particular, establish the general conditions and basis that the institutions need to fulfil to get the Recognition (Agreement 243: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1998), and the procedures they must follow during the process (Agreement 17/11/17: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2017).

The RVOE is granted by the Ministry of Education, and does not assure quality; on the contrary, it merely assures that the minimal requirements established by the law are met (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2015). Buendía (2016) mentions that the Ministry of

Education approves the majority of applications to obtain the RVOE, rejecting only a minority. As requirements are minimal, higher education institutions enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

Nonetheless, institutions enjoy it in different degrees, according to the parameters defined in the Agreement 17/11/17 (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2017). Also, there are some institutions that are granted the RVOE by presidential decrees, which enjoy even a higher degree of autonomy.

The autonomy of higher education institutions has been studied to a large extent, especially in the recent years. Different authors (Raza, 2009; Volkwein and Malik 1997; Berdahl, 1990; Enders, de Boer & Weyer, 2013) have analysed it from several perspectives, creating diverse classifications for its better understanding. Today, the most widely accepted categorization for the autonomy consists of analysing the concept according to the activities or the operational dimensions of a higher education institution. Therefore, according to Estermann, Nokkala and Steinel (2011), the institutional autonomy has four dimensions: 1) organizational autonomy, 2) financial autonomy, 3) staffing autonomy, and 4) academic autonomy.

Based on this categorization, in general terms, the organizational autonomy refers to the capacity of choosing its leaders and its governance structures; the financial autonomy relates to the possibility of deciding the mechanisms used to raise the resources needed for its operation, as well as the capacity to manage its finances; the staffing autonomy has to do with the capacity of establishing norms and procedures for selecting, hiring, promoting and dismissing its workers; and finally, the academic autonomy appertains with the student's selection, and the competency in creating and offering new programs.

A private university in Mexico enjoys high degree of organizational autonomy, financial autonomy, and staffing autonomy, but faces constraints in the academic autonomy. In other words, it is able to organize itself and decide its form of government, having its own internal rules and procedures; also, it is able to hire and remove its academic and administrative staff as pleasing, and to decide which students will study in it. In addition, it has freedom of teaching and researching, and the ability to decide what to do with its resources and how to spend the profits it makes (Marsiske, 2010). Namely, the need of authorization is reduced mostly to the plans and study programs, as well as the ability to issue titles and degrees. Other

minimal considerations regarding the accreditation of the staff and the conditions of the real state, where the process of education takes place, are also considered (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1998).

In addition, most of the mechanisms used to regulate the private higher education sector in Mexico are a priori, which means that they regulate before the educational act takes place. Only few a posteriori instruments assure that the minimal requirements are in reality met by the private institutions. As Kent (2004) and Canales (2016) point out, the lack of actual supervision after getting the RVOE, and of proper sanctions when requirements are not met, are the main problems of the system. Also, there are some institutions that enjoy the "simplify regime" or administrative simplification, in which private universities with historic tradition in granting a high-quality education, when applying for the RVOE do not need to detail the study programs (Rodríguez, 2004a; Buendía, 2011).

This has led several authors like Rodríguez (2004a), Silas (2008), Acosta (2011), Cuevas (2011a), de Garay (2013), Álvarez (2011) and Buendía (2016), to conclude that there is a very flexible and low regulation policy towards private higher education in Mexico, contributing to the establishment and proliferation of low quality and low cost institutions, who grant university degrees to a low and medium low economic sector of the population that is left without accesses to the public education. These institutions either operate without the RVOE or with a partial recognition in some of their programs (de Garay, 2013; Aguilar, 2003).

Regulatory mechanisms seem not to be sufficient because, in recent years, many low quality private higher education institutions have flourished. Therefore, in order to understand how these regulations, constrain or enhance the institutions' capacities and explore their role in the proliferation of low-quality institutions, this study analyses in depth the nature of the private higher education in Mexico, the current mechanisms that regulate the sector, and the different degree of the autonomy that they enjoy in their several dimensions. Thus, this study is guided by the following questions: How is private higher education perceived in Mexico? To what extent private higher education is regulated in Mexico and what level of autonomy does it enjoy in its several dimensions? How are regulations and the existing level of autonomy related to the proliferation of the low-quality institutions?

5.2 Methodology

To achieve the purpose of this study, a qualitative research, and more specifically, an exploratory qualitative inquiry research, has been carried out, as it seeks is to understand how reality is interpreted (Merriam, 2009; Flick, 2007). A qualitative research is based on the assumption that there is no single reality as it is socially constructed throughout the different interpretations given to diverse events. Therefore, its basis lies in the philosophical perspective of the constructivist paradigm. Constructivism assumes that there are multiple realities as each person interprets reality in a different way (Crotty, 1998; Merriam, 2009; Flick, 2007). In a basic research, data is generally collected through interviews, observations, and the analysis of documents, comparing and contrasting this information to find commonalities and discrepancies and to identify the connections among each other.

Hence, first of all, this research started by analysing the private higher education and the characteristics of the autonomy it enjoys, as well as the current mechanisms that exist for its regulation. Second, it reviewed the policy documents that today regulate the private higher education in Mexico (The Mexican Constitution, The General Law of Education, The Law for the Coordination of Higher Education, the Agreement 243 and the Agreement 17/11/17), and the contributions that other authors have made over time, to have a better understanding of the phenomenon. Third, it analysed the information collected in nine interviews, in order to comprehend the interpretations of those involved in the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Thus, a purposive sampling was selected, and semi-structured interviews were carried out to explore the perspectives of different actors that are part of the higher education system in Mexico. The diverse sample was chosen to collect a wider perspective of the phenomenon that was being studied, considering public and private institutions (both elite and demand absorbing), different regulatory bodies (Ministry of Education, quality assurance agencies, public higher education institutions), diverse positions of power, and various roles in the system.

As Creswell (2009) recognizes, the process of analysing the data consists in giving sense to the information that has been collected. The analysis begun with the identification units of meaning, which are words, phrases, or “meaningful or (potentially meaningful) segment of data” (Merriam, 2009, p., 176), that contain relevant data for answering the research questions. This process is called by Creswell (2009) open coding. Then, these units were coded into subcategories, and later they were grouped into categories. After creating the codes, these categories, as Creswell (2009) and Wolcott (1994) mention, were positioned

within the theoretical framework that has already been researched, into the axial or analytical coding.

Finally, hierarchies and connections were established among them, to identify the results of the study, based on the participants' perspective.

In order to present valid and reliable information, this research was carried out with rigor and in an ethical manner. Reliability or consistency was achieved by carefully planning the research, by presenting a detail theoretical framework that guided the investigation, by carrying out an exhaustive literature review on the topic, by taking care of the way the information was collected, analysed and interpreted, and by double checking the interview's transcription. Validity was achieved through respondent validation and through the triangulation of methods of data collection and of multiple sources of data.

5.3 Key findings

As the purpose of this study was to analyse in depth the nature of the private higher education in Mexico and the current mechanisms that regulate the sector, as well as to explore the different degrees of the autonomy that they enjoy in their several operational dimensions, in order to understand how these regulations constrain or enhance the institutions' capacities and to explore their role in the proliferation of low quality institutions, the following can be concluded, based on the research questions.

First, how is private higher education perceived in Mexico? Private higher education is perceived in Mexico as a fundamental sector of the tertiary education level. In this sense, higher education institutions are meant to contribute to the economic, political, social, and cultural development of a country (Duderstadt, 2000; Rhodes, 2009; Brennan, King & Lebeau, 2004) and such is the case of the Mexican private sector, as some of the participants coincide. The private higher education sector in Mexico has developed as a fundamental part of the tertiary sector, playing a specific role for the formation of the elites that opposed the ideology taught at the public sector (Levy, 1986, 2011; Altbach, 2005a; Acosta, 2005; Olivier, 2007; González, 2012; Silas, 2005; and some participants of this research). Today the private sector is extensively varied, although, in general terms, two different kinds of institutions can be identified: the elite / quality / non-profit, and the demand absorbing institutions / low

quality / for profit (Altbach, 1998b; Levy; 2007, 2009; Instituto de Investigaciones sobre la Universidad y la Educación México, 2002; Luengo, 2003; Kent & Ramírez, 1999; Aguilar, 2003; Rodríguez, 2004; Silas, 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Cuevas, 2011b; Baptista & Medina, 2011; Muños & Silva, 2013; de Garay, 2013; Buendía; 2016; Álvarez, 2011, all of the participants of this research).

Second, to what extent private higher education is regulated in Mexico and what level of autonomy does it enjoy in its several dimensions? Throughout this research it has been shown that private higher education institutions in Mexico face few constrains from the regulations, enjoying, subsequently, a general high degree of autonomy in its several operational dimensions. While some participants restrain from using the term autonomy to the capacity enjoyed by the private higher education institutions to govern themselves and make their own decisions in their multiple dimensions due to the constitutional controversy (Serna, 2006; Pinto, 1974; Poder Judicial, 2005; Carpizo, 2002), other participants agree that they enjoy certain freedom to administer their institutions without the direct control of the government. All participants also agreed with Roversi-Monaco et al (2003), Narro (2011), Estermann and Nokkala (2009), and Henkel (2005), that this capacity has to have some limits established by the government.

In general, participants perceive a high degree of autonomy enjoyed by private higher education institutions, as regulations do not seem to limit very much their ability to act and self- govern. While they enjoy higher degrees of autonomy in the financial, organizational and staffing dimensions, the academic dimension is the most constrained, as Anderson and Johnson (1998), Bernasconi (2011), Geiger (1988) and Levy (2011) had pointed out. Interestingly, this dimension is the one that gives identity to the institutions (Henkel, 2005), being the axis of any educational institution (Grau, 2013). Nonetheless, as Fumasoli, Gornitzka and Maasen (2014) had also noticed, most participants also perceive an increase on the academic autonomy, but still would like more flexibility in the regulations to this dimension.

In contrast with the general trends of autonomy, private higher education institutions in Mexico seem to enjoy more autonomy in the organizational dimension, being able to determine their legal entity, and in the financial dimension, having more capacity to determine their sources of money and to invest in financial markets. However, the staffing and academic dimensions suffer similar limitations with the general trend. Participants coincide that there is

no need to increase the financial and the staffing regulations, but they disagree with respect to the organizational autonomy where, for some, there should not be more limitations, but for others, assessing the probity of the leaders and investors, should be included in the regulations. The following table 1. “Degree of autonomy of the private higher education institutions (semi- independent) in Mexico and the regulations that constrain it” summarizes the findings regarding the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the Mexican private higher education institutions and the instruments that constrain it.

Table 1. Degree of autonomy of the private higher education institutions (semi-independent) in Mexico and the regulations that constrain it

Dimension	Activity	Degree of autonomy	Regulatory mechanisms					
			A priori mechanisms			A posteriori mechanisms		
			Type of mechanism	Mechanism	What is indicated	Type of mechanism	Mechanism	What is indicated
Financial	Keep surplus	Medium				Taxes	- Payroll tax - Property tax - Participation in INFONAVIT	Pay regular taxes of any business. However, non-profit institutions are exempted from property tax
	Borrow money	High						
	Own buildings	High						
	Charge tuition fees	High						
	Determine tuition fees	High						
	Invest in financial markets	High						
	Decide expenditures	High						
	Determine sources of money	High						
	Grant scholarships	Medium	Specific norms	Agreement 17/11/17	- 5% to scholarships			
Organizational	Determine legal status	High						
	Define internal rules and procedures	Medium	Specific norms	Agreement 17/11/17 Approval	- Aligned to the Constitution - Inclusion of some specific topics			
	Select members of executive board and academic bodies	High						
	Establish criteria and durability of leadership positions	High						
	Dismiss the university's head	High						
	Select external members in the governing bodies	High						
	Determine structures	Medium	Specific norms	Agreement 17/11/17	- Have certain departments like School Services, and a library			
	Create a legal entity	High						
	Decide the orientation of its governance bodies	High						
	Decide mission and goals	Medium	Specific norms	Agreement 17/11/17 Approval	- Aligned to the Constitution			
Staffing	Recruit and select academic staff	Medium	Specific norms	Basic requirements checklists at Agreement 17/11/17	- Degree level - Activities that must be carried out			
	Recruit and select administrative staff	High						
	Determine salary scales	High						
	Establish staffing policies	Medium	Specific norms	Federal Labor Law	-Regular working conditions			
	Dismiss staff	Medium						
	Promote staff	High						

Dimension	Activity	Degree of autonomy	Regulatory mechanisms						
			A priori mechanisms				A posteriori mechanisms		
			Type of mechanism	Mechanism		What is indicated	Type of mechanism	Mechanism	What is indicated
Academic	Decide the number of students	High							
	Determine academic profile	High							
	Open/close programs	Medium	Legislation	Constitution General Law of Education Law for the Coordination of Higher Education		- Need to have the RVOE for being part of the National System of education but can operate without it	For assuring compliance	Supervision	Ordinary and extraordinary visits to the institution to assure that the requirements are met. The authority decides when and how many
			Specific norms and procedures	Agreement 243					
				Agreement 17/11/17	Mechanism for establishing and recognizing programs	- Recognition of Official Validity of Studies granted by the Ministry of Education at both Federal and local levels, and by some public autonomous universities			
					Basic requirements checklists	- Need to fulfill requirements to get the RVOE: infrastructure, resources, equipment, activities and curriculum			
	Design curriculum and content	Medium	Specific norms and procedures	Agreement 17/11/17	Approval	- The program and the fulfillment of the requirements are reviewed by the authority in order to get the RVOE			
	Establish admission mechanisms	High							
	Design and implement quality assurance mechanisms	Medium					Voluntary external quality assurance	Internal audits and self reports	-Fulfill requirements established by private accreditation agencies (FIMPES, accreditation agencies recognized by COPAES, or international agencies) and present the evidence. Or by ANUIES which is a non governmental organization
								Peer review	
	Make research decisions	High							
	Select language of instruction	High							
	Award degrees	Low					For assuring quality	Recognition of degrees	Authentication of the degree is needed for it to have validity, and the granting of the professional license (Only programs with RVOE)

Third, how are regulations and the existing level of autonomy related to the proliferation of the low-quality institutions? In contrast to what was found in most of the literature review (Kent, 2004; Buendía 2016; Luengo, 2003; Álvarez, 2011; Muños & Silva, 2013), the lax regulatory policy was not identified by most of the participants as the main reason for the proliferation of the low quality institutions, but the inability of the public sector to grant higher education to all who pursue this level of studies, as Kent and Ramírez (1999) had also pointed out.

In short, after analysing the instruments it can be concluded that most of the mechanisms used to regulate the private higher education institutions in Mexico are a priori. Therefore, other mechanisms seem to be missing. As Kent (2004) and Canales (2016) commented, supervisions rarely occur, as it is also confirmed by most participants. The mechanisms of control have not increased over time, contrary to the findings of Huisman and Currie (2004), Henkel (2005) Nybom (2008) Volkwein and Malik (1997). Supervision is very sporadic, and the main reason seems to be the lack of economic resources, the lack of personnel and the lack of competent personnel, as the participants highlighted. Some of the participants also pointed out the problem of enforcing the law, especially because of the corruption issue from the

authority that regulates it, but also from the institutions.

Hence, it does give the impression that the regulatory policy is very lax, but more than lax it is a policy that is not focused or intended to guarantee quality on one hand, and on the other hand, it is incomplete, since a handful of mechanisms are insufficient to regulate a whole system. Nevertheless, not all the regulatory policy is wrong and there are many aspects that must be rescued and preserved.

5.4 Recommendations

Among the limitations encountered during the creation of this research, the conditions of time and space undoubtedly stand out. The investigation was carried out while the researcher was studying abroad, becoming a challenge the accessibility of the participants narrowing down the possibility to expand the sample, as communication is slower when there is a distance and time difference of between. Although the interviews were stopped when redundancy was found, the possibility of expanding the data collection to enrich this work remains as an opportunity for a future research.

Undoubtedly, several topics arise as a possibility for further research. It has been very interesting the link the participants have pointed out between the proliferation of low-quality institutions and the lack of access to higher education. This is certainly a topic that should be explored in greater depth in the future, as the lack of accessibility has mostly been addressed from the inequality and social justice perspectives, and it has been mainly linked to the public sector. Other interesting topic that assuredly generates great interest is the quality assurance policy. Although it has been more analysed in the literature, studies are missing to understand why the policy is structured in the way it currently is. In other words, further research to comprehend why the regulation does not guarantee quality, why it is only done by program, and why accreditation of quality is voluntary, can be carried out in the future.

Finally, other topic that drew attention during the elaboration of this investigation was the institutions that enjoy more autonomy granted by presidential decrees. This was a difficult topic to address because of the lack of literature on this issue, and because the agreements are different for each university. Without a doubt, a comparative study of the degree of autonomy these institutions enjoy in their different operational dimensions would be very interesting, in

order to understand the scope of these decrees. Undoubtedly, many more topics can be mentioned where it is necessary to investigate more. Therefore, a great opportunity is pending for the future.

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6 Student Financial Support System in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Adisa Ejubovic

6.1 Background

Financing of higher education has been quite a debated topic for some years in many countries. (Vergolini & Zanini, 2011) In relation to this, the public contribution to financing higher education, one of which is student financial support systems, has been gaining more relevance due to various reasons. Goldrick-Rab (2009) maintains that the most rigorous studies have shown a positive relationship between student financial support and college success, adding that it is *expected* that financial aid has a positive impact. Different pieces of research claim a wide array of positive effects exerted by the financial support, some of which are academic achievement, education commitment, engagement and persistence to graduation. (Nora, Barlow, & Crisp, 2006) However, the importance and impact of student financial support has not been without controversies in academic debates. Certain influential academics and pieces of research have negated or downplayed the importance of student financial support in higher education success and attainment (see Tinto, 1987; Adelman, 2007). Certain researchers maintain that a more important predictor for enrolling into higher education systems is previous academic achievement and a predilection towards higher education (which is usually owing to one's socio-economic status). While it is true that student financial support is not the only factor that can influence (prospective) students' decision-making process in terms of enrolment and persistence in higher education, its importance in contributing to some extent to students' behaviour cannot be simply brushed away. If the student financial support did not exist, the number of students accessing higher education would most likely be lower. (Goldrick-Rab, 2009)

6.1.1 Definition of student financial support

Student financial support, also commonly referred to as student financial aid (both of which are utilized in this study) has three main objectives: to increase access (enrol more students),

to increase affordability (make higher education cheaper for students and their families), and to promote equality of opportunity (make sure disadvantaged students can receive education). (Gillen, 2010) Therefore, it is aimed at all students as well as specific groups, and in both cases, it attracts students by alleviating the credit constraints. The result of such an endeavour is finally a diversification of student body (Carneiro & Heckman, 2002).

There are both tangible and intangible components and benefits associated with financial support allocated to students. Nora points out the tangible components such as: "receipt of aid to offset college costs; amount of financial aid received; different sources of financial assistance." (Nora, 2016, p. 6) The intangible benefits include "reduction in stress; development of positive academic and social attitudes; money for books, housing, tuition, entertainment" (ibid.). All of these elements, as stimulated by the student financial support should help students make a step of enrolling, persevering and finally graduating from higher education institutions (HEIs).

There are three types of financial aid for students: direct, indirect and in-kind. (Vossensteyn et al., 2013, p. 13) This study will only focus on direct (loans and scholarships) and one type of in-kind support, namely tuition subsidy, since they comprise the largest and most important forms of student financial support in B&H.

6.1.2 Relevance of socio-economic status

Research has shown that student financial support does not influence all students alike. More precisely, it has been found that there are different responses to student financial system along the lines of socio-economic status (SES). The SES is a characteristic of an individual based on different socio-economic factor and is not determined the same in all countries. However, one of the most common indicators is the parents' background – their education, income and occupation, while some countries also use a combination of different variables. (Jerrim, 2013) In the context of higher education, it has been traditionally the case that low-SES students are generally under-represented in higher education systems, as opposed to their high-SES peers who are often over-represented. Since (higher) education has a potency to bring about upward social mobility of low-SES individuals, it is deemed quite important to inspect the variable of SES in this study in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) where economic underdevelopment and poverty are rather prominent.

It has been found that low-SES are more responsive to changes in tuition fees and financial support available and are more likely to under-invest in higher education if costs of studying increase and financial support does not increase in order to offset these increases (Heller 1997 in Kim, Desjardins, & Mccall, 2009). At the same time, high-SES students are believed to be not affected by the availability of student financial support.

6.1.3 Research gap and research questions

Research in the area of public student financial support in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) has not been carried out anywhere so far. The overview of what particular forms of student financial support exist and what student groups receive them is lacking, as well as the evidence of whether the given forms of support are effective. For those reasons, policymakers do not have an insight into whether the resources they are investing for these purposes are doing the job they are supposed to and are henceforth unable to make corrections and other improvements of the support system, in the absence of such evidence. This research aims to fill the aforementioned gaps and based on the results provide concrete steps for the possible improvements of the public student financial support system. In addition, this research will contribute to general debates on public financial student support and add to the growing body of literature on issues that are still widely contested and under-researched in Europe, that is everywhere outside the USA (Dearden, Fitzsimons, & Wy, 2014).

The main objective of this research project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the current public financial student support in B&H according to four dimensions selected: information provision, financial stress, amount of support and enrolment. The main research question is as follows:

> To what extent is the student financial support in B&H effective?

In order to answer this question, it will be broken down into further several questions, which are as follows:

1. Is the amount of financial support enough?
2. To what extent does the financial support aid in relieving financial stress?
3. To what extent are students informed about public scholarships and loans?

4. To what extent does the financial support stimulate enrolment?
5. Are there differences in given dimensions according to the SES of students?

Before answering the aforementioned questions, the thesis will answer the following peripheral questions that are deemed relevant.

1. What types of financial students support exist in B&H?
2. What types of financial support do students receive?
3. Is there a difference in the receipt of public student financial support to the SES?

The four dimensions have been utilized against the backdrop of the two theoretical frameworks in this study, namely: human capital theory and cultural capital theory.

6.1.4 Brief Sketch of Human Capital Theory and Cultural Capital Theory

The theoretical framework utilised in this study will be the crossection between human capital theory and cultural capital theory, as seen through the prism of four dimensions of effectiveness of financial support. Human capital theory has grown to become one of the most relevant underpinnings of education policy discourse in different systems in the world (Gillies, 2015). The origin of human capital theory dates back to as early as 18th century, but it was in 1960s that human capital theory was recognized as one of the key elements of economic growth in modern day economy. (Kwon, 2009) Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964) utilized human capital theory to suggest that individuals derive economic benefits from investment in education, training, health and nutrition. This theory is based on the rational decision-making model, and according to its tenets, students compare costs and future earnings that come out of higher education attainment before making a decision to enter higher education. (Hans & Steiner, 2004) As rational beings, students decide to forego immediate gratification in the *present* by accessing higher education, so that after they receive their university degree they can enjoy higher wages and better consumption and leisure opportunities in the *future*. (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2009) Human capital theory also assumes that everybody has access to the same information (perfect information), in this case information of financial support, and based on that people are yet again able to make a rational decision.

However, the reality and empirical evidence has shown that students don't always act according to the principles of rational decision-making in economy. Specifically, research has shown that not all SES groups of students behave in the same manner when it comes to higher education. Thus, this research will incorporate tenets of cultural capital theory as well. The development of cultural capital theory can be mostly ascribed to the French sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu. According to him, there is a difference in access to higher education according to SES, and this difference is tied to cultural capital an individual possess, and which in turn is primarily passed onto individuals via the institution of family. Bourdieu (1886) extrapolates three forms of cultural capital: embodied, objectified and institutionalized. Embodied capital or "the long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" (ibid, 1986, para 5) refers to cultural habits that one incorporated into oneself and that are, thus, inseparable from oneself (different knowledge and skills such as playing the piano). This form of capital cannot be transferred to someone else, and it is a result of time investment. The objectified cultural capital refers to the capital in its material form such as paintings, pianos, etc. and unlike the embodied capital, this capital can be transferred (sold, given, etc.) to someone else. Institutionalized cultural capital refers to a capital conferred to by an institution (e.g., a Bachelor's degree). Bourdieu deems cultural capital to be the essential part of the maintenance of status quo and perpetuation of social exclusion. (Bourdieu, 1986)

Another important aspect of cultural capital theory is tied to habitus. Habitus refers to a set of dispositions such as tastes, stances and patterns of behaviour that help individuals make sense of the world around them and determines how they react to the situations they are in. (Bourdieu, 1984) According to Bourdieu, education system and institutions, the academic content, methodology, language, codes and tacit rules are all intertwined so as to favour individuals in possession of large amounts of cultural capital. Furthermore, those in possession of ample cultural capital are more aware of the importance of education, higher education in particular, and hence they transfer this awareness to their offspring, so that they acquire habitus which makes higher education a logical choice and a *natural* course of actions in the future. Henceforth, those who possess high amounts of capital are more likely to access and successfully complete their higher education since they possess "college-going habitus" (Grodsky & Riegle-Crumb, 2010). At the same time, those who do not possess this "taste for education", that is lower-SES individuals, are more likely to underscore the importance of education and thus not enrol.

6.2 Research Design, Method and Instrument

This study will predominantly incorporate quantitative research design. Quantitative research design "can be construed as a research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data" (Bryman, 2012, p.35), and usually requires the use of statistical tools. (Black, 1999) Main characteristics of quantitative research are that it:

- entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the accent is placed on the testing of theories;
- has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism in particular; and
- embodies a view of social reality as an external, objective reality.

(Bryman, 2012, p. 36)

The study will be based on the cross-sectional survey research and desk research. Majority of social research studies are of cross-sectional nature as they focus on examining a single point in time or taking a one-time snapshot approach. (Neuman, 2007) Desk research will mostly be contained to analysing various documents related to scholarships, tuition fees and loans. When looking concretely at financial support, Leslie & Brinkman (1988) point out that there are three ways in which the impact of the student financial aid can be assessed, those being:

> opinion surveys or studies that ask students if student aid influenced their choices; trend studies that examine the association between funding levels for federal programs and college enrolments; and econometric studies that examine the influence of aid on actual choices made by students, controlling for other factors that influence their choices. (Leslie & Brinkman, 1988, p. 18-19)

This study will take the first approach. The recipients of the financial support (students) will be the target group rather than providers of the same support (Ministries) as they will be able to paint a more accurate picture of the state of affairs of the student financial support with regards to four dimensions (for instance, as financial stress is one of the dimensions, it is only students who can say whether they have financial difficulties/feel worried). Furthermore, a survey design was picked rather than an interview since the survey allowed for faster collection of the larger sample, which would not be possible with an interview.

Due to time-constraints, it was not possible to collect the sample from the entire country, and

thus one Canton was chosen, namely the second largest one – Tuzla Canton. In the first phase, the Faculties of Tuzla University were contacted so as to establish the means of surveying students. Out of all (13) faculties contacted six of them gave positive replies and allowed their students to be surveyed. Those are: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Special Education and Rehabilitation and Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. By sampling from different faculties, the study was able to incorporate a variation of areas by having respondents from humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. In the case of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, it was required that a written request for surveying students be lodged in person to faculty, so that Scientific Council of the Faculty can make the decision. The request was filed at the end of March and the official approval was received at the end of April. After that, individual department heads were contacted, and a reply was received from all departments apart from the Department of Sociology and Philosophy.

The research instrument used for collecting data is a structured online survey. The survey consists of 26 questions, some of which are multiple-choice (radio button), multiple choice (checkbox), 4- scale and open-ended questions. The platform used to administer this online survey is the Slovenian software solution called *En Klik Anketa – 1KA* (https://www.1ka.si/). The questionnaire consists of 3 pages: the introduction page where a short description of the research is provided; the main body of the questionnaire where all questions are provided and "Thank you" page. The link generated after the questionnaire was completed was sent to heads of departments and vice presidents for research. Those individuals further disseminated the link to their students using either their email addresses or electronic boards. The collection of the data lasted for two months. After the data was collected the whole dataset was exported in .sav format (only usable respondents were exported). As such, it was further imported into IBM SPSS Statistics 2.0 software. The data was further cleaned by deleting unnecessary columns so that only the variables remained. After that the back-up copy was made and the data was ready for the analysis.

Statistical methods utilized in this study were descriptive statistics and bivariate statistics (Chi- square, t-test and ANOVA). Qualitative data generated through the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire was analysed using QDA Miner Lite software. All the text was imported into the software and based on the available text categories were created with which

the text was coded.

6.3 Main Findings and Implications

The results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the survey and other documents and pieces of work do not paint the best picture when it comes to public student financial support in B&H. Hence, the main research question can be answered with the assertion that public student financial support in B&H is *rather ineffective*. Based on quantitative and qualitative answers of respondents, as well as desk research the following findings and implications are teased out:

6.3.1 One of the greatest detriments of the current public financial support system is the amount and number of scholarships provided, while tuition subsidy amounts, and numbers are set appropriately

When it comes to the tuition fees, according to the number of students who receive them (almost 90%) and the amount of costs it covers (if granted a tuition subsidy students are in most cases only paying €50 per semester or less), it can be said that the amount and number of subsidies is set relatively appropriately. However, with respect to scholarships, only around one quarter of students receive them with the amount covering in 65% cases less than 25% of student expenses. Furthermore, students are not able to cover their expenses through undertaking employment as already explained and thus it is parents who are the most dominant source of funding for as high as 93% of students. This dependency on parents' funds has in turn serious implications for equity and serves as a barrier for low-SES students entering higher education. (Doolan, Dolenec & Domazet, 2013) As seen in this study, the low-SES students make up the smallest proportion of the student population and are under-represented compared to national statistics. This goes hand in hand with cultural capital theory which postulates that if the credit constrained is not reduced properly for this group of students (as it isn't) these students would not be stimulated to enrol. On the other hand, high-SES students are acting more according to the tenets of human capital theory, and despite the fact that they are less likely to receive the financial support, they still enrol to the point that they are over-represented.

6.3.2 *Students are not well informed on availability of loans and scholarships and all SES groups are equally uninformed*

Less than 50% of students know where to find information on loans and scholarships and even fewer students (38%) had information about scholarships and loans before enrolling. Indeed, desk research revealed that these forms of support are difficult to find and, in some cases, not even provided in digital forms. In addition, there is not a designated area section at ministry pages where this information is provided, rather this information is haphazardly scattered around different sections where it is difficult to navigate. Taking a look at the theory, the assumption of human capital theory that all students have perfect information is not thus met. Therefore, in the absence of such information it cannot be expected that people act according to rational decision- making. Cultural capital theory is disproved in this dimension as students of all SES are equally uninformed. In response to the lack of information or misinformation on available financial support, which can prevent students for opting for higher education, governments and different organizations in developed countries provide potential students and their families with a constant access to user-friendly, low-cost materials, student counselling, mentoring and different preparation programs. (Loyalka et al., 2013) In the context of B&H such initiatives are rare, if any.

6.3.3 *Financial support does not alleviate financial stress, and low- and mid-SES students are more likely to be stressed than other student groups*

Financial support in the state that it currently is does not contribute to alleviating financial stress, with large percentages of students being considerably stressed (over 80%). Implications for this sort of disposition of students can lead to sub-optimal academic performances as students' mental wellbeing suffers. Eventually, aggravating financial stress could lead to dropping out. At-risk groups are particularly low- and mid-SES students for whom this study revealed to be exhibiting significantly more financial stress than it is the case with their high-SES peers.

6.3.4 *Public student financial support system does not stimulate enrollment*

The lowest figures could be seen in the questions related to enrolment. Very low percentages of students state that public student financial support influenced their enrolment decisions (almost 90%). When looking at the amount and number of scholarships, as well as

information channels, none of which meet the assumptions of human capital theory, it is easy to understand why enrolment is not stimulated with the current public student financial support. More effort is required on the side of policymakers as a continual and fast drop in student enrolments is evident in all entities, paradoxically despite the increase in the number of HEIs across the country.

6.3.5 Criteria for allocating scholarships is not designed appropriately

Criteria for allocating scholarships in 3 cantons is designed in a manner that excludes a large group of student population by allocating scholarships only to students whose fathers are war veterans. The Bosnian war ended 23 years ago, and fewer and fewer students will qualify for these scholarships in the future, yet the exclusive criteria remains. In addition, criteria are devised as such that students cannot benefit from two different scholarships (even when one of them is private). Other exclusive criteria include age limits, which has implications for adult learners and life-long learning opportunities.

6.3.6 Delays in publishing calls for applications, results and payments of scholarships are a significant obstacle

Based on the desk research and reports from the students, an important issue that can hamper effectiveness of scholarships is the fact that there are important delays in the administrative aspects of scholarships. Delays in publishing calls for applications have negative implications in that this can put a considerable amount of financial stress on students (as it is the case) and in the absence of security that the calls for applications come at a certain time can make potential low- SES students refrain from enrolling while existing students are at risk of dropping out. The process of result delay is problematic because it leads to delays in signing contracts and finally receiving the payment, which could lead to similar results as the previous delay. Delay in the actual payments may not necessarily force students to drop out, since the funds are secured, but it can inflict a certain amount of stress, which in turn can hinder the focus on the actual studies.

6.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Based on the abovementioned findings and implications the following list of recommendations for policymakers is generated:

1. Increase the *amount* of financial student support (scholarships) so that it can cover a larger proportion of overall expenses during studying. This can be achieved by devising a specific formula for an individual student so that expenses can be calculated on the individual basis together with expected family contribution, and according public coverage can be provided.

2. Increase the *number* of scholarships provided so that more students can benefit from them.

3. Create better *information* channels on what forms of scholarships exist and centralize the information so that it is easily accessible and digestible.

4. Create early *awareness* campaigns and outreach programs so that potential students are informed while still in secondary school about possible ways to fund their studies.

5. Design scholarship award *criteria* so as to include different student groups. If only one type of scholarship exists in the given canton, do not limit them to one group only (e.g., children of war veterans) OR create different types of scholarships where different set of criteria apply (e.g. need based and merit-based scholarships).

6. Allow students to be allowed to benefit from *different types* of public and private financial support systems.

7. Invest more effort and will to deliver *timely* and time-specific scholarship calls for applications, results and monthly payments.

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7 Salvadoran Universities and Research Capacity Building: A Quest for Major Impediments

Oscar Flores Perez

7.1 Background

Few would dispute the fact that the mission of universities, in the sense that is currently understood, goes beyond traditional scholastic teaching. In modern times it is difficult, if not impossible, for higher education institutions to obviate the need for an increase in research capacity. In the light of a changing environment where an important growth-related value is attached to research endeavours, and where the development of information and communication technology have posed serious challenges to universities worldwide (Altbach, 2010) it is necessary to explore the reasons behind the limited scientific productivity of some higher education systems.

The reality of many Latin American countries is far from an appropriate balance between teaching and research; in the region there has been a disregard for the research dimension and most of the countries have traditionally favoured a professionally oriented and a teaching-focused model of higher education (Bernasconi, 2007). Túnnermann (2003), sees Latin American universities as possessing, among others, these three main particularities:

a) Professionalization orientation (postponing the development of scientific research).

b) Administrative organization deficit

c) Financial chronic crisis and a lack of external economic support

This particular characterization of HEI has led many scholars and critics to call for a shift in the educational paradigm. Andres Oppenheimer (2010), for example, criticizes the way in which Latin American higher education seems to be obsessed with the past and ignore the future. He claims that the largest Latin American universities are full of students in the humanistic careers or other areas that are totally divorced from the twenty-first century

knowledge economy. He points out that Asian universities are growing in terms of quality and research capacity, and universities in Latin America, in contrast, are getting stuck in a twentieth-century mindset, organization and discourse.

El Salvador's case is not different from the rest of the region; that is, the country's higher education system relies on the implementation of a teaching-oriented approach with minimal or insufficient research capacities (USAID, 2015). Hernández (2017) provides an accurate description of the current Salvadoran university; the traits he has identified expose, to some extent, the lack of research capacities in those universities. Some of these characteristics are:

a) Centralization of resources on teaching.

b) Low investment in R&D

c) Low participation in national problem-solving programs.

The aforementioned traits provide a basis to make the case that in El Salvador academic research has been displaced in favour of scholastic teaching. Research attempts, with few exceptions, are limited to undertakings that are totally disassociated from the business sector's reality (Picardo, 2007). A 2015 USAID study found that research endeavours are rare because the number of faculty involved in research activities is very limited. In the same way, authorities of the National Center for Science and Technology (CONACYT) observed that university patent registration -an important indicator of research capacity- has basically been non-existent in the last couple of years. Another observation to consider is that universities have reported a reduction in the scientific and technological services they offer. CONACYT (2016) also stated that from the total amount of researchers in the country, only 48 individuals are registered in their databases as PhD holders. Moreover, this institution also reveals that only 1.1% of the total academic staff is considered to devote full-time dedication to research. With this background in mind and based on the perceptions of some Salvadoran authors (Picardo, 2006; Pineda, 2015) it is evident that academic research in El Salvador is confined to a state of semi-abandonment.

El Salvador has tried to devise specific policies in order to address the pressing situation of universities and their research mission achievement. A legal framework intended to ensure

that HEI pay heed and support research endeavours has been implemented; however, as discussed above, reality keeps telling a different story. According to the statistical information released by the Ministry of Education, in 2016, 72.13% of the universities' budget was allocated to salaries of the academic and administrative staff; on the other hand, only 2.11% of the budget went to research activities; unfortunately, universities reported that from that research allocation just 1,67% was actually used for the research activities projected (MINED, 2017). With this statistical information it is possible to make the case that although there is a regulatory framework intended to promote and develop research activities in universities, the low financial resources and the preference for teaching make it very difficult, if not impossible, to meet the goals and follow the regulations stated by the current educational legislation in terms of research endeavours. At the light of all of these insights, it can be stated that EL Salvador needs long-term commitment to create and sustain strategic initiatives aimed to strengthen capacity.

Salvadoran universities then need to rethink the configuration of their organization and the prioritization of their institutional mission if they are to enter the arena of national and regional competition. Assets such as skilled human resources, funding opportunities, outstanding scholars, etc. depend on how well they balance and improve their research production. Therefore, and considering the importance and implications of higher education for socioeconomic development, a study of the major factors affecting the advancement and dissemination of research capacity in Salvadoran universities has proved itself to be necessary and worthy.

In order to address those issues, some research questions have been proposed and they are presented as follows:

Main question:

- What are the main factors impeding the development of scientific research in Salvadoran public and private higher education institutions?

Sub questions:

- What are the espoused beliefs and values about research among the Salvadoran higher education community?

- What can governmental and institutional authorities do to boost academic research?

These questions are set to identify which the main obstacles for research capacity in the Salvadoran context are. Up to date, there have been very few academic papers on any area of the research dimension in El Salvador. Such studies have concentrated in the analysis of statically produced official data; however, none has fully explained Salvadoran academics and official perceptions. Therefore, this study is intended to provide novel knowledge on what the main obstacles for research are and how they can be overcome. The research questions are aimed at detecting weaknesses and flaws that might be affecting the abilities of the sector to produce scientific research and to promote an adequate culture of teaching-research balance.

7.2 Methodology

Since this study was exploratory and interpretative in nature, the participation of knowledge-rich individuals was required. The study attempted to examine system and institutional perspectives, that is why university representatives as well as government functionaries were asked to take part and express their ideas on the topic. The individuals chosen for the interviews were selected by means of a qualitative technique known as purposeful sampling; more specifically through the use of a strategy called Criterion-i. According to Patton (2002) this strategy can be used to locate and select cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance. In other words, Patton recommends the use of purposeful sampling when attempting to identify those specific cases from which it can be learned the most in regard to the main line of inquiry. In the case of this study, the individuals were all directly related to higher education offices or to university research units; they were considered to be individuals who possess high-quality information regarding research capacity and its related areas.

Since this study was concerned with the perception of authorities in relation to the issues affecting research capacities of Salvadorian universities, it was determined that the qualitative approach was best suited for this purpose. This implies that the study mainly concentrated on research that produces descriptive data—people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour-(Potter, 2013). Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. This method is then intended to facilitate an inductive style that focuses on individual meaning providing the opportunity to have a better approximation to the reality that

the Salvadoran higher education system currently faces in terms of research capacities.

In relation to the collection of data, semi-structured interviews and online questionnaires were administered to participants. After the information was gathered, coding and categorizing the data into different themes was necessary to make pertinent interpretations that serve the ultimate purpose of this study. To provide a richer background, the use of secondary data already gathered by other researchers was indispensable. Moreover, statistical information released by national agencies or other organizations was also incorporated and processed for analysis and interpretation. All in all, the combination of various data sources served the purpose of providing a comprehensive scope to determine the factors that affect research capacity building in Salvadoran universities.

According to Marshall (2014) in qualitative studies, researchers follow a flexible research approach; that is why having the freedom to choose among diverse philosophical worldviews, provides the researcher with the necessary tools to explore the topic from a more comprehensive perspective. Qualitative research can offer insights into complex, multiple, even evolving truths; however, disseminating findings from studies that use qualitative methods can present great challenges to the researcher (Hughes, 2003). Given the nature of this study and in order to overcome qualitive-research-related obstacles, interpretivism has been considered as one of the essential elements for the discovery of patterns, themes, worldviews, notions, beliefs etc. that can contribute to make appropriate assumptions. Reasonable interpretation, then, will be the basis for drawing conclusion out of the data gathered.

It is also important to mention that this study took into consideration ethical issues to protect the rights and privacy of the participants. Basic principles for ethics such as respect for participants, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity were considered at the time of the interviews and interpretation of data. (Orb, 2001). Commitment to the observance of an ethical behaviour was procured by means of respecting the aforementioned principles.

7.3 Key Findings

This section introduces the research findings generated by the conduction of interviews, and the administration of questionnaires. The findings are organized under key themes related to

the problem being investigated. The statements drew out of the interviews are presented in the form of institutional and system level and followed a thematic description model. The former level is composed of the insights and observations made by the research directors of seven universities. The latter level is comprised of the perceptions and opinions of three government representatives serving in higher education offices. Relevant implications drew out of the questionnaire are presented as a complement to the system level analysis. In this regard, it is important to recall that the questionnaires were only administered to research unit directors, therefore, the insights obtained from this instrument is only relevant to the perceptions identified in the institutional level.

During the interviews the participants individually expressed their views on the issues of higher education research capacity; interestingly, all of the participants expressed similar concerns. After data processing and analysis, a list of patterns and general points started to emerge. All those issues mentioned by more than four (4 out of 7) participants were treated as "patterns" and all other general matters expressed by two or three interviewees were identified as "general points". The number of references was also considered to organize the impediments by order of importance. The perceived impediments presented in this section are expressed in an order that denotes the more mentions and the number of participants making references to them. The patterns and general points identified in this study are presented as follows:

7.3.1 Patterns Identified at Institutional Level

- Lack of Competencies
- Financial Constrains
- Cultural Barriers
- Institutional Vision Issues
- University-Industry Collaboration Obstacles
- Domestic Political Issues

7.3.2 General Points Identified at Institutional Level

- Minimal Internationalization
- Limited Infrastructure

- Language Barrier

7.3.3 Questionnaire Responses

Results from the questionnaire confirm some of the statistical information provided by official agencies and independent authors. The following points are considered to be the most relevant pieces of information extracted from this research instrument:

- From the total number of participants, 85.7% mentioned that their universities are teaching- oriented; only 1 participant (14.3%) considered his institution as to be both research/teaching focused.

- In relation to financial issues, 83.3% selected “students fees” as the main source of income for their HEI. The university of El Salvador is the only one that mentioned “government funding” as their main financial source.

- The quality of the physical and digital research infrastructure is regarded by a 66.7% as not to meet the quality criterion required for the development of research activities.

- The participants were requested to express what would be the specific action that would bring more benefits in relation to research capacities. 57.1% agreed on the idea that “support for obtaining postgraduate degrees” would offer the most benefits for the researcher strengthening of their HEI.

- In the final item of the questionnaire, participants were inquired to identify the main impediment for the development of research capacities in their universities. The number one obstacle, according to 57.1% of the participants, was “the lack of highly-qualified academics”

Most of the responses obtained from the questionnaire are very similar to the statistics presented by the government. At the same time is important to note that one of the main observations to emerge from the conduction of the questionnaire is that the lack of competences is confirmed to be the main challenge in order to strengthen the system’s

research capacity

7.3.4 Patterns Identified at System Level

The views expressed by government offices were similar to those provided by university research unit directors. The issues identified by the system level participants were also classified as patterns and general points. Patterns are those mentioned by two or more participants; all other general matters expressed only by one interviewee were categorized as "general points". The observed impediments are expressed in order of importance:

- Cultural Barriers
- Lack of Competences
- Financial Constrains
- Labour Market Issues

7.3.5 General Points Identified at System Level

As explained earlier on this paper, general point are those issues that were identified by only one out of the three participants at system level. They are considered to be worth mentioning because they express the point of view of national higher education authorities and because they are definitely pertinent to the ends of this study. Four "general points" were generated as a result of the conduction of interviews. These points offer different insights from the ones that emerged at institutional level. They are presented as follows:

- Lack of Incentives
- Distrust between universities and the Industry
- Academic Workload
- Language barrier

The study findings can be divided in three different categories of obstacles: in the first one we can find individual impediments (lack of competences). The second one is made up of the institutional impediments (financial constraints, collaboration barriers, institutional vision) and on the third one it is possible to identify system impediments (lack of competences, cultural impediments, political issues). This specific arrangement does not respond to an ordinal

categorization; it only serves the purpose of simplification and presentation of data in a structured way. The impediments enclosed in each of the categories pose a series of similar yet different challenges for both the state and the universities; investment, awareness campaigns, high-level training and organizational restructuration might be among the aspects and measures that need urgent attention.

The findings of this interpretative qualitative investigation complement those of earlier reports addressing research capacities in Salvadoran HEI. The present study makes some particular contribution to the identification of specific factors affecting research capacity building. All other (few) previous studies attempted to explore and describe the current status of the research dimension in the country; however, none of them sought to deepen our understanding on the precise issues blocking the research capacity. By identifying specific impediments, this study then offers a tool to contribute to the building of research capacities in the Salvadoran system. The findings hereby presented, enhance our understating of how the higher education system of a non- industrialized nation in the Central American region is configured, and it also provides a comprehensive view on how national and institutional authorities perceived the challenges that the knowledge society poses to higher education institutions in terms of research capacities.

7.4 Recommendations

The findings of this study suggest that there is potential for additional research; the remainder of this section will lay out some of the more immediate avenues for future exploration.

A considerable opportunity exists for the critical examination of cultural aspects that impede Salvadoran researchers to possess the research skills needed in the twentieth-first century. At the light of the results of this study, it seems necessary to explore the specific reasons why Salvadoran students are not pursuing master's or doctoral degrees. The very limited number of individuals holding a postgraduate degree is certainly a factor that plays a negative influence on the research capacity of the system; therefore, a study on the values, mindsets and perceptions about the academic track would be advisable at this stage.

Another possible area of future research could be university-government-industry collaboration contextualized to the Salvadoran reality. In one of the interviews, a university

representative stated that "*sometimes we feel like if we are working alone, with no support from the government or the industry.*" Therefore, it would be important to investigate how to enhance the channels of communication among the three actors involved. A study on this topic should add some significant elements to start overcoming long-standing negative views on the relation among university, government and industry. Therefore, investigating on stakeholders' willingness to adopt a triple- helix model offers opportunities with no precedent in the history of higher education in the country.

It is also suggested that further research can be undertaken in relation to the perceptions of academic staff (teacher-researchers and researchers) involved in research projects. Their points of views and perspective might add essential elements to better understand the limiting factors of the system. A study on this topic would provide interesting insights about the individuals actually doing investigations in a system that does not seem to offer support or motivation for it.

More researcher is also needed to determine which are the factors that can contribute to a change in the mission and vision of university. There are actually some antecedents of other higher education systems that have successfully redirected efforts to improve indicators related to research productivity (Costello, 2000; Arunachalam, 2003; Amerson, 2015; Mueller-Langer, 2017) then, it would be noteworthy to make a cross-national study to understand what is specifically needed in the country in order to deliver real changes to the system.

All in all, the building of research capacity for a developing country such as El Salvador offers an important opportunity for the integration of society to the knowledge economy. As stated throughout this paper, research plays a seminal role in the development and improvement of socio-economic indicators for any nation. Educational, industrial and government leaders in El Salvador should revise their policies, goals and missions in order to improve the research capacities of the higher education system. This tremendous effort needs to be comprehensive and unified since the solution to the problem cannot be addressed in isolation; the cooperation of all stakeholders is needed in order to take the country to a route of development by means of world-class research.

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8 Ukrainian Higher Education in the Time of Armed Conflict: Perspectives of Crisis Management

Uliana Furiv

As a result of an armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, the Ukrainian higher education suffered a massive decline in student population and a halt in the education process for some institutions. In the process of military actions in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, 18 state universities, two private universities and 11 research institutions were evacuated. Limited understanding of the impacts of the armed conflict on the higher education institutions in Ukraine guided this research. The aim of the study is to identify the impact of armed conflict on the Ukrainian higher education institutions and crisis management mechanisms that have used to coping with the crisis. This study used a qualitative research design. The researcher selected five conflict-affected higher education institutions as a research site using a purposive sampling technique. The participants of the research were sampled using the expert and snowball sampling techniques. The data was collected with the help of the qualitative semi-structured interviews and the secondary data analysis. The research findings revealed the armed conflict negatively impacted the universities' human resources, educational and research infrastructure, organizational operations and institutional legitimacy. The institutional crisis management capacity has been undermined and delayed due to lack of a national and university evacuation plans, inconsistent and weak communication efforts and untrained self-appointed crisis personnel.

Key words: Higher education, crisis management, crisis, conflict, Ukraine

8.1 Background

Ukraine is one of the former Soviet republics, which gained its independence in 1991. Since then, Ukraine has undergone a transition period from a planned to a market economy. The population of Ukraine is 45.5 million, the number has been decreasing since 1991 due to the declining fertility rates and a large migration of Ukrainians to the West during the 90s (UNESCO-CEPES, 2006). The current per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of Ukraine is the fifth lowest among the former Soviet republics (OECD, 2017). However, Ukraine's

expenditures on education are one of the highest among the developed countries, around 6% of the GDP. It is 1% higher than the average spending of the OECD countries (CEDOS, 2015). While the spending on education is indeed high, it should be noted that Ukraine funds a ramified and dispersed education sector, the supply of which does not correspond with the demand. Of the total education spending, 36,8% is allocated to higher education. Due to the economic struggles of Ukraine and attempts to optimize the state spending, the higher education sector has undergone cuts of 5% since 2011 (CEDOS, 2015).

An essential step in Ukraine's higher education advancement occurred after the historical Revolution of Dignity in 2014. The revolution created necessary conditions for transformation. The Ukrainians demanded a total reformation of the public sector, moving away from the Soviet era. Ukraine has a strong civic engagement, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a considerable strong lobbying power which enabled implementation of a new "Law on Higher Education", enacted in 2014 (MESU, 2014). The law challenges the state power and numerous old academic traditions, such as giving more autonomy to universities, curbing the immunity of leadership of higher education institutions, establishing internal and external quality assurance procedures (British Council, 2015). It also has many prospects, positively influencing the university autonomy, accountability, transparency, quality assurance and enabling tighter international cooperation (Knutson & Kushnarenko, 2015). Indeed, the ramifications of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014 brought some advancement for the stagnant post-Soviet higher education system. However, after the revolution followed the political and economic turbulence, caused by the annexation of Crimea by Russia and the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. Suffice to say, higher education of Ukraine did not stay immune during this turbulent time. Ukrainian higher education institutions suffered a massive decline in student population and a halt in the education process for some institutions.

Ukraine's higher education system during an armed conflict in the East has undergone many transformations. A total of 18 public higher education institutions have been displaced from the occupied territories of Ukraine. By now, almost all of them have resumed their operation, struggling to survive on scarce resources. Little is known regarding the impact of a violent armed conflict on these institutions and the mechanisms they have been utilizing to cope with the constant disruptive changes. Therefore, the study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of the armed conflict on the displaced higher education institutions and identify

crisis management mechanisms that allowed the higher education institutions to survive and cope with the ongoing crisis caused by the conflict.

8.2 Problem statement

The nature of the conflict in eastern Ukraine has been a subject for discussions due to a lack of available facts regarding the number of casualties and parties involved in the conflict. In this study, the events in the East are characterized as armed conflict. This perspective is supported by works of Kovalov (2014), Szpak (2017), and OSCE (n.d.), who name number of criteria that classify the events in eastern Ukraine as armed conflict. These primarily are: prolonged nature of hostilities, organization of separatist groups, armament of the separatist groups and number of victims involved.

As a direct result of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Crimea, 18 public higher education institutions, 2 private universities and 11 research institutes have been evacuated from the rebel-held territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. The displaced universities suffered a period of cutbacks, as economic austerity and defence spending became government's' priority. Around 40.000 of students and more than 3.500 of research and teaching staff were forced to leave the occupied territories (CISID, n.d.). Currently, Ukraine has 1.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs) who moved from the occupied territories (Kvit, 2015). In total, the educational infrastructure of Donetsk and Luhansk regions suffered losses of $4.9 billion (Euromaidan Press, 2017).

The universities suffered heavy material, infrastructural and institutional losses, being deprived of any adequate service delivery capacity and competent managerial and technical personnel support. The physical destruction of the university campuses has been devastating. Shelling raged over the universities' premises during the first months of occupation of the eastern Ukrainian territories by the self-proclaimed rebel groups in 2014. The Luhansk National University has been under the series of attacks ten times before the university administration vacated the campus. The actions to relocate the universities from the occupied territories were not executed immediately, due to a *non-existent national evacuation plan*, which could have addressed such problem more swiftly. After many demands and requests to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (MESU) to take decisive action, the government evacuated the universities (Euromaidan Press, 2017).

During the evacuation, the government, as well as the universities found themselves in the absence of information and approaches that ensure their preparedness to crisis events, such as armed conflict. While many of the crisis consequences were difficult if not impossible to plan for or predict (i.e., total university evacuation), some efforts could have been better initiated to avoid certain impacts (i.e., forfeiting university database with study plans and curricula). Currently, all of the displaced universities have resumed their education process in various locations, where they found a "temporary home," albeit struggling to survive on the scarce resources and shattered reputation.

The conflict in eastern Ukraine certainly played a crucial role in the destabilization of these institutions. However, the lack of an existing evacuation plan played an essential role in forfeiting not only the premises and assets of these universities, but also losing a share of university academic staff and students. In most of the displaced universities, the enrolment rate has drastically dropped, where universities were able to retain only one-third of their student population and academic staff. The losses were unusually heavy for technical universities, who lost their laboratory facilities for natural and engineering sciences. Likewise, there is a lack of resources for the research activities and limited access to library resources.

8.3 Research gap

The issue of higher education in crisis-affected contexts is not new by itself. The primary research gap lies in the lack of its instrumentality. The available literature mainly exits in the form of memoirs, chronicles, journals and book chapters which are descriptive accounts of history, and which fail to present any critical empirical evidence on crisis management and recovery of higher education systems in conflict-affected areas (Rudy, 1996; Storz, 2012; Irish, 2015; Mikhailov, 2009; Steinacher & Barmettler, 2013; Milton & Barakat, 2016). The existing literature lacks scientific rigor, being void of any theoretical or analytical approach or adequate scientific methodology (Krohn, 1993; Dounaev, 2007; Kryvoi, 2011). Besides, the scientific publication on higher education and crisis management could be argued as being dominated by the publications produced mostly in the English-speaking parts of the developed world, such as the US, UK, Australia and Europe (Barakat & Milton, 2015; & Milton & Barakat, 2016; Milton, 2013). These higher education systems, on relative terms, have been operating under democratic and mostly stable political systems where armed conflicts and war have

been rare occurrences. The oversaturation of the western literature on crisis management creates a one-dimensional image of the crises faced by the higher education institutions and the solutions that are proposed to resolve a crisis.

Such evidence is not representative of the realities in a significant proportion of the world, and we need to address different types of crises and approaches to managing it. For example, the higher education systems of a number of countries in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe and other parts of the developing world are facing challenges of political crisis and full- fledged wars (Barakat & Milton, 2015; Milton & Barakat, 2016; Milton, 2018), and the consequences suffered by the higher education systems in those countries vary significantly from those encountered in the moderately stable contexts. Against this background, it becomes relevant to investigate higher education systems affected by violent conflicts to offer an alternative view to crisis management, taking Ukrainian displaced universities as a case study.

8.4 Research questions

The study will be guided by the central research question:

- How the Ukrainian displaced higher education institutions have been impacted by and are coping with the crisis?

Under this guiding inquiry, the following sub-questions will be addressed:

- What have been the impacts of the armed conflict on the Ukrainian displaced higher education institutions?
- Which crisis management mechanisms are being used by the Ukrainian higher education institutions to cope with the crisis brought by an armed conflict?

8.5 Analytical framework

The study has adapted the crisis management framework that has been developed in the field of management and later applied in empirical studies set in the context of higher education (Burrell, 2009; Sutherland, 2013; Garcia, 2015; Gladyushyna, 2017). While the discussion of

the impacts of crisis and crisis management tools stems mainly from the business management perspective, some elements of the crisis management framework can be drawn for the study of higher education institutions in crisis. The aims of higher education institutions and business organizations to ensure the continuity of operations and functions they fulfil makes the approach to crisis management somewhat similar in both contexts.

The distinctive functions, such as teaching and learning, research, and societal impact, make academic institutions more susceptible to the changes in the environment and political, social or technological changes. The peculiarities of academic institutions make the process of responding to crisis more challenging. Therefore, these functions were considered when considering the impact of crisis and crisis management mechanisms in the higher education context.

To answer the first sub-question (*impacts of the armed conflict on the displaced universities in Ukraine*), the study carefully considered crisis impact areas suggested in the academic literature (Smith & Tombs, 2000; Sutherland, 2013; Barakat & Milton, 2015 and Milton, 2018). This research adopted the following impact areas that specifically hindered primary functions and decision-making power of the Ukrainian displaced universities: *impact on human resources, impact on infrastructure, impact on operations, impact on legitimacy, impact on leadership and management, impact on communication.*

The impact areas are further explained as follows:

Impact on human resources: This impact area regards the displacement of academic populations, enrolment and retention of students and faculty, as well as physical, psychological and social damage incurred by the students and employees of the five case displaced institutions.

Impact on infrastructure: This impact area is concerned with losses of material, facility, information and communication infrastructure incurred by the displaced higher education institutions as a result of conflict. For example, loss of campus buildings, educational and research infrastructure, student housing, etc.

Impact on operations: This impact area concerns specifically the teaching and learning and

research functions of the university. For example, organization of study process, facilitation of research activities, training of staff, student activities, structural reorganization, etc.

Impact on legitimacy: This impact area is related to the ability of higher education institutions to attract students, partnerships, and maintain quality of services.

Impact on leadership and management: This area is concerned with the conflict's impact on the decision-making power of the university administration and management, their ability to take initiative and fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Impact on communication: This area concerns with the impact of crisis on the ability of university leadership and management to notify the target academic groups about the conflict, the state of university and how the university is answering the needs of the target groups. Communication breakdowns and other communication irregularities, such as miscommunication, communication sabotage will be monitored.

To answer the second research question (*crisis management mechanisms used by the displaced Ukrainian universities to cope with crisis*), the following works investigating the crisis management of business and public organizations, and higher education institutions were considered: Fink's (1986), Mitroff's (1994), Spillan (2000), Hough and Spillan's (2005), Zdziarski, Dunkel, Rollo, & Assoc. (2007), Burrell (2009), Sutherland (2013); Garcia (2015), Drennan et al. (2015).

By combining the crisis management approaches from different perspectives, the study compiled a crisis management framework composing of three phases of crisis management, which were applicable for the Ukrainian context. A short description of these phases is presented as follows:

Planning phase. This process usually entails designing of contingency plans, guidelines that explain the types of crises and possible responses, as well as roles and responsibilities of those directly involved in responding to the crisis. University leadership, administration, faculty, staff, and students need to be informed through various media about the existence of such plan.

Prevention phase. The process involves actions that need to be taken by the university administration or those in the roles responsible for reducing the likelihood of crisis or the consequences of the crisis when it occurred. Universities identify resources that can be utilized for such event.

Response phase. If contingency plans are in place, this step involves a review of such plans, training of staff how to respond to the crisis, as well as educating students how to act in the situation of crisis. During the response, universities enact emergency systems (if available), operationally deploy resources, and use communication systems to notify those affected by the crisis. Communication effort operational deployment of resources, communications.

Although a comprehensive crisis management, as the literature indicates, also includes the steps of recovery and learning, this study excludes these steps from its empirical analysis since the crisis under investigation is ongoing, and sufficient data on these two phases is currently unavailable, making a meaningful analysis a challenge. The literature suggests that the recovery phase broadly covers the period in which organizations focus on returning to a state of normalcy. During this phase, efforts are streamlined to renew the operation process of an institution, purchasing equipment, searching for donors. The learning phase, on the other hand, is the last phase where organizations review their pre-crisis policies and response measures to learn what functioned well and what failed, update existing plans and debrief crisis responders, which constitutes a critical piece of the crisis response process.

8.6 Methodology

The study used a qualitative research method. According to Creswell (2005) and Silverman & Marvasti (2008), the qualitative design is appropriate, as it provides a method to analyse in-depth information on the process, its nature and implications. The study used a qualitative case study strategy to explore the phenomenon in-depth. This strategy allowed to consolidate the experiences of the Ukrainian universities impacted by the armed conflict, to understand emerging characteristics of higher education systems in crisis and establish patterns regarding the crisis management mechanisms utilized by the universities in crisis situations. The perspectives of diverse stakeholders and examination of data from different sources was gathered to understand the problem comprehensively. Purposive sampling was used to select the universities for multiple case studies. The universities that were displaced as a result of the

armed conflict were considered for this research. All 18 displaced universities were contacted and invited to participate in this research. The administration of five universities contacted the researcher expressing their interest in the study. The sample size of five displaced universities was considered appropriate, manageable and one that ensured fair representation of the displaced universities and allowed for generalizability, as well as helped avoid oversaturation of data. Universities of different types, sizes and from different regions were selected to ensure maximum variation in the purposive sampling (CIRT, n.d.).

In this study, case institutions were public entities owned by the government. The five case institutions belong to the category of national universities. The study relied on two data collection methods: in-person interviews and secondary data (e.g., Ministry Decree, University Statements). Interviews were an appropriate method in this qualitative research because they allowed for collecting of an in-depth information and obtaining of insights into complex phenomena. This research used semi-structured interviews which provided some structure for the interviewee and a direction to pursue, but also allowed for clarification, expansion or narrowing of the questions discussed.

The collection of secondary data was performed through analysis of higher education proclamations, national higher education policies, strategic plans, performance reports, institutional plans, legislative documents, and other relevant documents. This research employed a combination of convenience, expert, and snowball sampling to select the interviewees. The data of the study was collected in April-May 2018. This included 25 in-person interviews with the top management, faculty and students from five Ukrainian displaced universities. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. This study analysed the data based on 25 semi-structured interviews, site observations and document analysis. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. In addition, the analytical framework was used to generate categories, themes and help in the process of coding the data and making interpretation.

This study strived to provide an honest, unbiased, objective portrayal of the Ukrainian displaced universities to the extent possible. While designing the interview questions, the author took into account the core principles of research design, to extract the most truthful answers from its respondents. To do so, the questions were designed in clear, fair, objective, and sensitive manner. The reliability of the paper was ensured by incorporating the variety of

research techniques. The researcher used a prior review of documents as a supporting tool for cross-checking the data gathered through interviews. The reliability was also enhanced by careful guidance of the author's supervisors, who possessed professional knowledge in the matter.

There are some potential limitations of the study. The study only represents the perspective of 18 displaced universities in Ukraine, and therefore cannot serve for exact generalization of impact of crisis and crisis management mechanisms for higher education institutions in Europe or beyond. In addition, the institutions that have been evacuated by the government are public universities, the information on the private universities is unavailable. Another limitation described in the gap is the lack of available literature in dealing with public organizations, specifically in dealing with HEIs.

Lastly, due to the fact that most countries, where higher education systems are engulfed in armed conflict, are not English speaking, it is difficult to be absolutely confident that the study of similar nature has not been conducted prior. Researching the displaced universities was challenging, because the sensitivity of the issue for the participants. The researcher made sure to answer all ethical norms. Before the researcher's site visit, an informed consent form was sent to participants. The form informed the interviewees about the purpose of research and its benefits, emphasizing on the protection of the participants' rights during the data collection and analysis processes. All participant names remained anonymous in this research.

8.7 Key findings

The Ukrainian higher education in the time of political and economic tensions and a full-fledged war in the Donbass region has suffered inevitable losses. The direct consequence of hostilities taking place in the East resulted in the evacuation of 18 public and two private universities, and 11 research institutes from the rebel-held territories. Additionally, some 40.000 students and over 3.000 of research and teaching faculty fled the occupied territories, adding to more than one million internally displaced persons around the country. Limited and non-empirical information on the experience of universities in crisis in Ukraine and worldwide, inspired this research. The study investigated the impact of conflict on higher education in Ukraine and identified crisis management mechanisms that allowed displaced universities to survive and respond to the ongoing crisis. The study answered two primary

research questions. A summary of the discussion is presented as follows:

- What have been the impacts of the armed conflict on the displaced Ukrainian HEIs?

The findings of the study about the first question revealed that five displaced universities that participated in this study were impacted by the armed conflict in the following areas: human resources, infrastructure, operations, and legitimacy. Concerning human resources, the sampled universities emphasized on the problem of staff and student retention, due to the unfavourable living and working conditions. On average the universities were able to retain less than two-thirds of academic staff and students. The regular propaganda, intimidation and physical assaults by the pro- Russian military groups have led to the physical and psychological distress of students and employees. The poor social conditions and low financial support of the internally displaced students and employees have led many to pursue opportunities in other cities of Ukraine or abroad.

The conflict had a crucial impact on the infrastructure of the displaced universities. The armed rebels have seized university campuses, dormitories, sports halls and used them for strategic military or personal purposes. All infrastructure, including educational and research facility, has remained on the occupied territory and the displaced universities were unable to retrieve it. Some universities evacuated to branch campuses or carried out their educational activities using the infrastructure of other universities. Those universities who had no option were offered to rent buildings that had no educational and research infrastructure. The main challenges pertaining to infrastructure were lack of adequate facilities essential for academic functions, such as the library, information and computer technology, laboratories, sports facilities, dormitories, lecture halls and other. Additionally, during the transition period, the universities were in critical need of essential office and material supplies, necessary for routine operation.

Another area impacted by the conflict is related to vital operations of the displaced universities. The conflict delayed the start of the educational process by few months and interrupted the routine university operations, such as student recruitment, teaching and learning and research activities. The active use of distance education and online learning tools of some universities before the conflict enabled more efficient and less disruptive transition and allowed these institutions to retrieve educational material to ensure quicker academic

continuity after displacement. Due to the critical shortage of teaching faculty, some universities established a "rotation mode of study" in which students were provided lectures and seminars for two weeks twice in an academic semester. As a consequence of a decreased number of staff and students, all five displaced universities underwent a reorganization of institutional structures, by revising educational structures and re-allocating staff. The population displacement and humanitarian crisis created a severe vacuum of administrative and managerial knowledge and experience, to which the displaced universities responded by promoting less knowledgeable and experienced personnel. Such practices also made it possible for young staff to fill in those positions, which allowed for novelty and unconventional ideas to come forward, in contrast to the previously dominant Soviet style of administration of the academic organizations.

The last area analysed in this study is the legitimacy of the public displaced universities. The findings indicate the conflict negatively impacted the universities' enrolment, quality of applicants, partnerships opportunities, and created imbalanced competition. Interviewees also stated the universities are subject to social stigma associated with concerns for stability and security, quality, and opportunities at displaced universities. Finally, the conflict has displaced universities from their local communities into a new environment, to which the universities had to adapt. The interviewees reported the detachment from the home base and the community they used to serve, led to the assimilation process, causing universities to gradually lose their regional significance and the function they carried out on the former territories. In turn, it could pose challenges for the reintegration of these institutions to their home territories in the future.

- Which crisis management mechanisms are being deployed by the Ukrainian universities to cope with the crisis?

Answering the second research question, the study revealed the limitations and effective crisis management mechanisms utilized in the case universities. All case universities reported unavailability of crisis planning and prevention efforts. The universities were evacuated in the Second World War; however, the evacuations were not recorded, which made it impossible for universities to extract any experience for future learning. The case universities had no available crisis management plans to facilitate the response efforts, resulting in inconsistent, unsystematic, uncoordinated and ambiguous actions taken by the different stakeholder groups.

The findings also revealed the absence of a national evacuation plan and negligence by the Ukrainian government to prioritize security of universities and take preventive actions.

The efforts of the universities to respond to the crisis were subverted by the illegitimate self-proclaimed pro-Russian authorities, who occupied the national security and governing structures, which effectively eliminated any opportunity for the universities in crisis to acquire assistance. The study also found that most of the university leadership and management sided with the pro-Russian authority and it, sabotaged the evacuation efforts by those who acted in disagreement. Findings revealed that the pro-Russian position of the top leadership delayed the process of evacuation and decreased the number of employees and students the case universities were able to retain. Additionally, the respondents reported that during the time of crisis, many administrators and managers self-removed themselves from their positions and transferred the responsibilities to less experienced staff. On the other hand, the study showed the crisis management response at the case universities mainly comprised of the establishment of the informal crisis management teams, the successive decision-making by the universities and the government, enactment of crisis communication and the coming-in of humanitarian assistance. According to the findings, the self- organized crisis management teams negotiated with the government the displacement of universities and responded to numerous legislative and organizational challenges in the process, the most significant of which was retention of staff and students. The case universities also reported the lack of a clear and consistent crisis communication plan. Some of the frequently used communication mechanisms to coordinate the transfer of staff and students were the establishment of the national online registration forms and toll-free hotlines. Lastly, the displaced universities reported the effectiveness of informal communication channels, such as social media and news outlets in coordinating the actions and informing the target university audiences.

8.8 Concluding remarks

The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine affected the core missions and operations of the higher education institutions. The conflict-affected universities suffered significant loss of human resources, destruction of infrastructure, disruption of daily activities, and loss of legitimacy and reputation. While in many ways these challenges emerged as a result of the conflict, they have been aggravated by the lack of planning and prevention efforts of the government and the higher education institutions themselves. The study concluded that the crisis management

activities were not prioritized appropriately at the displaced universities and by the Ukrainian government. Limited information on the emergency planning and prevention and a lack of a written emergency policy led to poor crisis management procedures and uncoordinated response of the displaced universities. This, in turn, caused massive displacement of staff and faculty, drained the institutional resource capacity, deterred the education and research processes, and negatively impacted the quality of higher education. The universities were unable to effectively communicate the information regarding the evacuation of crisis-affected institutions. However, the use of informal communication channels enabled the students and faculty to exchange information quicker when official communication channels were unavailable or unsecured. The individual proactiveness partly appeared as a lack of strong leadership. However, the self-appointed proactive teams have not been trained in crisis management response, which constrained the speed of response and the quality of decision-making.

The study also revealed good practices that determined the ability of some displaced universities to mitigate the impacts of the conflict on the displaced universities. For example, the ability of universities to preserve important documentation, operational and academic information during a crisis is determined by the extent to which the universities integrate the information and communication platforms in their day-to-day operations before crisis. The use of distance education and online learning tools by the faculty and staff was equally crucial due to the shortage of physical resources that were crucial for launching the study process. The establishment of the university consortiums and sharing of the library, academic and laboratory infrastructure is another useful practice that enables the institutions to compensate for the loss of infrastructure necessary to carry out their primary functions.

8.9 Recommendations for policy and practice

Based on the informed analysis of problematic areas of the crisis-affected academic institutions and awareness about effective responses initiated, the state should create a national evacuation plan to prevent and respond to a variety of risks and crises in the future. In addition to proactively planning the response to any emergency, the policymakers should address all stages of crisis management. The governments should prioritize the planning and prevention efforts to avoid or reduce the likelihood of risks. Besides, close and active cooperation between the authorities and key stakeholders is required, which should establish a

shared understanding of a national evacuation plan, type of crises and the roles and responsibilities each party before, during, and after the crisis. The authorities could consider mandating the integration of crisis management practices in all Ukrainian higher education institutions. Regular educational sessions about the campus security and prevention of crisis should be conducted to educate academic stakeholder groups.

It is highly essential for the government to understand the need for providing not only financial but all-rounded support, including technical and expert assistance, legislative support, coordination, protection, and support in recovery, and reintegration of the universities in crisis. The governments need to understand the unique needs of the crisis-affected universities, in contrast to those operating in normal conditions, and need to work to address these needs actively.

Additionally, in the absence of an explicit state strategy for the further development of the crisis-affected higher education institutions, merging or liquidation of some struggling displaced institutions that cannot compete with local and other national higher educational establishments should be considered as an optimization and strengthening tool and a strategy to preserve the regional identities of these institutions by effectively combining their resources and missions.

Higher education institutions in crisis should record the current experience to assess the damage and extract useful strategies to learn how to prevent future crises. The university leadership and faculty should generate an institutional crisis management plan. The institutions should re-assess the limitations and good practices about the crisis response in higher education and narrowly focus on the contingency planning. Crisis management plan enables higher education institutions to prevent or mitigate the consequences of crisis regarding their essential functions and operations.

8.10 Suggestions for future research

The application of the crisis management framework has been previously utilized mainly through the business management perspective. The study of higher education institutions affected by conflict using the framework is, therefore, unique and presents significant contribution to the study of higher education. A more meaningful application of crisis

management framework in higher education can be supported by other educational theories. For examples, further study can combine the crisis management framework with the institutional theory and consider the organizational culture impacted by crisis and mechanisms used in response to it. The combination of crisis management framework and resource-dependency theory can be used to study the impact of resources on the functioning of higher education institutions in crisis. The contribution of this study to higher education field is also in pointing out the special status and needs of the higher education institutions in crisis. Future research can reflect on the methods and tools to protect and safeguard it.

In addition, the study focused on examining the crisis impacts and management practices of the displaced higher education institutions only. The data used for the analysis and extraction of findings were collected based on the interviews with the top management, faculty, and students of the displaced universities. Future studies can focus on a narrower approach, for example by investigating the impacts of the crisis on individual stakeholder groups, or by evaluating the crisis management mechanisms from the perspective of one group only.

It would be also appropriate to investigate the perspectives of other stakeholders that helped to coordinate and steer the management efforts of the universities, such as the representatives of the Ministry. The coordination efforts administered by the Ministry can provide an insightful glimpse into the role of the government in managing crisis of public higher education institutions. It is also essential to analyse the legislative documents issued by the government to understand their effectiveness and limitations in supporting the crisis-affected higher education system.

Examining the reintegration problem of the higher education institutions evacuated due to a natural disaster or violent conflict can also offer useful insight for understanding the problem of conflict-torn higher education systems. Also, the study hinted at the psychological trauma suffered by students and faculty as a result of the conflict and evacuation. Further studies can focus on investigating the effect of psychological traumas on the academic and professional performance of students and faculty, and how higher education institutions are responding to that problem.

Lastly, it would be valuable to examine the humanitarian assistance for higher education during an armed conflict or any crisis. This could help provide a better understanding of the

kind of help that is provided to these institutions and the areas that are being prioritized by the humanitarian organizations to aid higher education systems in crisis.

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9 Exploring the Roles of the Head of Department as the Middle Level Manager in a Higher Education Institution in the Quality Assurance of Teaching and Learning

Abdul Rasyid Ghazali

9.1 Introduction

Even though quality assurance in a higher education institution is a systemic process which involves and evaluates the entire activities of higher education, the focus of quality assurance in many universities leads to the aspect of teaching and learning (Biggs, 2001; Netshifhefhe, Nobongoza, & Maphosa, 2016; Pavlenko, Bojan, & Trif, 2008; Szymenderski, Yagudina, & Burenkova, 2015). This research purposes to explore the roles of the heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. Moreover, this research reveals the contributions of the heads of departments in the form of the support they are giving to the aspects of quality teaching and learning. Therefore, the researcher formulates one research question as follow:

(1) What are the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning?

In the studies of quality assurance of teaching and learning, there are two major strands namely the management strand and the education strand (Steinhardt, Schneijderberg, Götze, Baumann, & Krücken, 2017). The management strand views that quality assurance of teaching and learning is a top-down approach that is managed and regulated by the university top management through certain policies and mechanism (Hénard, 2010; Roseveare & Hénard, 2012; Steinhardt et al., 2017). On the other hand, the education strand views that the teaching and learning quality is assured by the teacher's efficacy and teaching effort as the quality assurance system from management strand does not "recognize educational and cultural issues" (Steinhardt et al., 2017, p. 230). In the education strands, teachers believe that they are the subject to reward for quality education and student achievement and satisfaction

since professional and quality teaching is the key point of university operation (Scott & Scott, 2014).

In the Indonesian context, research that has been conducted in higher education quality assurance or teaching and learning is abundant, yet mostly concentrates on the educational strand. To this extent, most of the research shows that quality teaching and learning strongly depends on the teacher's characteristics (e.g., Benawa, Bali, & Lakonawa, 2014), efficacy (e.g. Eryadini, 2014; Mediawati, 2010), and teaching method (e.g. Purwanto, 2014)). This research viewed quality teaching and learning as the product of learning (Harvey, 2006).

Research from the management strand in quality assurance of teaching learning in Indonesian HEI has also been conducted. Asmawi (2005), for instance, points out three major concerns regarding the management of the quality assurance of teaching and learning, namely: students as input; teachers; and the teaching and learning infrastructure. Furthermore, Alba (2011) identifies that quality assurance of teaching and learning depends on how well the institutional management can promote a teacher's competence through mechanisms such as incentives and soft-skill training. In addition, Danarwati (2013) revealed several challenges to managing quality of teaching and learning such as the lack of leadership personality, lack of follow up or control regarding evaluation, and lack of quality culture. Research by Rifandi (2013) and Yudistira, Pasek, Sumetri, and Suryadi (2016) found that three major concerns of teaching and learning quality improvement are the professionalism of teachers, medium of instruction, and learning infrastructure.

Nevertheless, Scott and Scott's (2014) finding and Steinhardt et al.'s (2017) meta-analysis show that there is a stronger tendency of management strand in the quality of teaching and learning in most higher education institutions. This means, top-down and structured management is more influential as they give more initiative to the quality of teaching and learning, yet not taking aside the "infrequent" bottom-up initiatives.

9.2 Analytical Framework

This research focuses on the management strand of teaching and learning quality assurance in higher education institution (c.f. Steinhardt et al., 2017) with the main purpose of exploring the role of the middle level manager in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. First of

all, to understand how quality assurance of teaching and learning is developed and conducted, this research employs Elton's model of quality assurance. Elton's (1995) model forms an ideal theoretical basis for investigating the role of middle managers in the quality process for two reasons. Firstly, it begins with the demands of a university's professionalism from the public (one of a university's key holders). Indeed, Elton's (1995) model centres very much on the role of stakeholders in the quality process; it requires self-evaluation from teachers, academic staff and management as well as peer and student evaluation. As O'Mahony and Garavan (2012) pointed out, middle managers are in the ideal role to deal with the majority of stakeholders. Secondly, the model adopts TQM, which is a quality management process used in many universities worldwide. It originated as a model in business, but its success quickly led to it being adopted in HEIs (Kanji, Malek, & Tambi, 1999).

According to Elton's model (Figure 2.1), teaching and learning quality assurance occurs in the student learning environment –teaching and learning processes. In a shorter sentence, quality assurance in this context is how the internal stakeholders such as teachers and management are involved in the teaching and learning process. Indeed, Elton (1995) has explicitly mentioned that the third to fifth steps in the model is the "major quality assurance activities" (p. 140). This research, however, is also going to examine the second stage that is the standard and objective setting. This stage, even though it is not the major three activities in the quality assurance system, is the reference of the entire quality assurance system –i.e. result of quality assurance is to set objectives and standards (Elton, 1995).

Furthermore, to find out the contributions of these managers in the teaching and learning process –i.e., student learning environment (Elton, 1995)– this research employs Gibbs' (2010) dimensions of quality teaching. Specifically, the presage and process dimensions are selected because the two are determinant to the product dimension of quality (Gibbs, 2010). Muljono (2006) also said that the learning outcome is the result of all aspects of teaching and learning. Therefore, knowing the support given by the middle level managers in both presage and process dimensions of quality will benefit primarily to other middle level managers at universities and to the higher education studies as well.

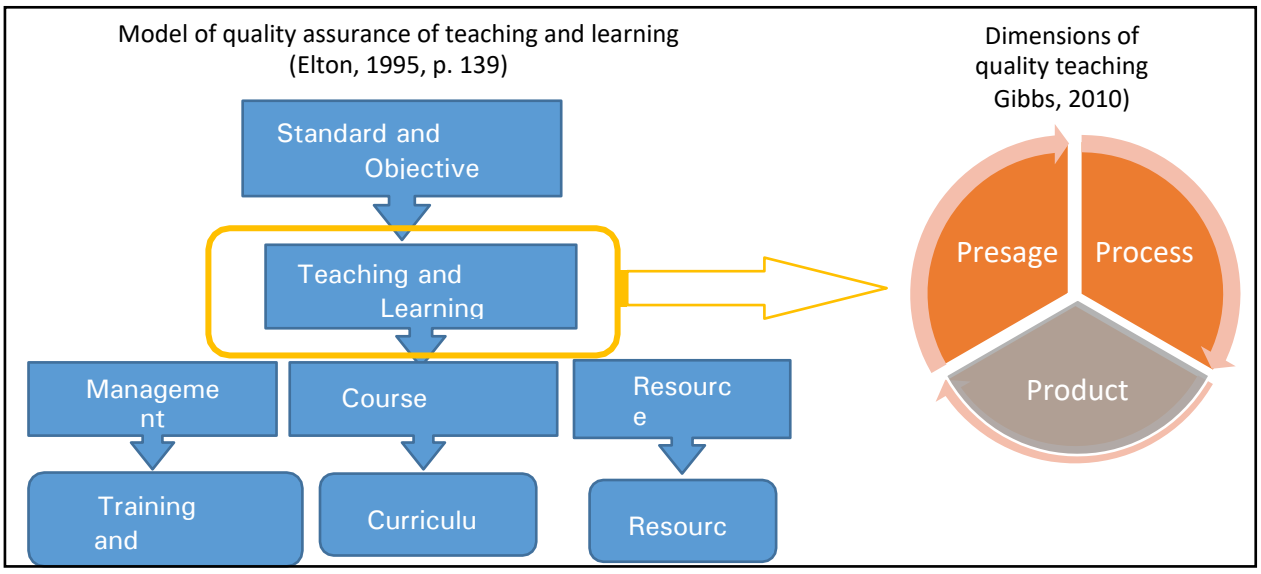

Figure 1. Analytical Framework

9.3 Methodology

This research is designed as a single case study. Case study research design is the most suitable for this thesis as this research tries to deeply explore a phenomenon or fact (c.f. Yin, 2009). In this research, the fact that occurs is the University of which the departments achieved an excellent grade in quality assurance. According to Yin (2009), a case study explores how and why certain situation, phenomenon, or fact occurs. In addition, the characteristic of this case study is exploratory. An exploratory case study tries to explore the factors, activities, or elements to "develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry" (Yin, 2009, p. 9) based on the data collected through interviews and document analyses. In relation to the research question, this exploratory case study design is very suitable as this research would answer to the question what are the roles the heads of departments in Case University in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

This research was conducted in Case University. The case university is a private university in Yogyakarta province, Indonesia. Even though the university is still young (less than 40 years old), the quality grade achieved has always been excellent (highest grade) for the past decade. Case University as the object of this research has been awarded the *excellent* (A) grade in the accreditation system –quality label by the government. The label can represent that the university possesses good quality in education, research, and social service.

There were two main data that were collected in this research. The first was documents

concerning quality assurance of teaching and learning and the second were interviews with the relevant middle level managers. Both documents and participants of the interview were selected based on specific criteria. The selection of case university and the departments, from which the documents were taken, and interviews were conducted, were based on the accreditation result. The 'A' grade accreditation result reflects the current status of academic quality of the department which is excellent according to the national standards. Therefore, the selection would allow the result of this research, how the quality assurance is managed at the department, to be the model to other departments at the case university or even beyond the institution.

This technique of participant selection which considers certain criteria of the participants of the research is known as purposive sampling (c.f. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Basically, the researcher selected only the departments with the 'A' grade accreditation. In total, there were eight interviews conducted in this research. In addition to interviews, the other data collected in this research was documents in relation to quality assurance. The researcher had collected the necessary documents regarding quality assurance at both department and institutional level.

It took approximately three weeks (16 May – 8 June 2018) to collect the documents and conduct the interviews. The data were taken mainly on the site of Case University. By this means the researcher analysed the documents by checking and confirming to the authorities over there regarding the meaning of certain sentences, figures, numbers, etc. The documents were mainly in a form of hardcopy; there was almost zero available electronic form or soft copy of the documents.

The analyses of data in this research were done using abductive reasoning –a mix between deductive and inductive reasoning. "Inductive reasoning uses the data to generate ideas whereas deductive reasoning begins with the idea and uses the data to confirm or negate the idea" (Thorne, 2000, p. 68). Deductively, the researcher used the framework described in the Literature Review chapter to identify the roles and the support given by the heads of departments. However, as the research is exploring more specific roles of the middle level managers in the quality assurance in teaching and learning which are not specified in the framework, the researcher also analysed the data inductively. The data obtained from the interviews and documents were analysed by giving a code and placing the data based on

the suitability of the theme. Furthermore, the data are grouped based on the similarity of the theme and analysed manually to identify the final results of the study. With this, the researcher would find either conforming/neglecting findings to existing literature; the researcher might also find new finding – the roles which are not covered in the literature.

9.4 Key Findings

In this research, the heads of departments are perceived as the middle level managers in a university who are responsible for the entire provision of education, research, and social services in a department in a university. With specific regard to quality teaching and learning, the roles of middle level managers are analysed from their activities in the stages of quality assurance process and the supports given to the dimensions of quality teaching and learning.

This research uses Elton's (1995) model of quality assurance of teaching and learning. The model suggests three major stages of quality assurance under which the roles of heads of departments in the quality assurance are analysed. The first major stage of quality assurance is setting standards and objectives. In this stage, the role of heads of departments as the middle level managers are, first, to set strategies and objectives of the department. This includes setting the goals and objectives of quality teaching and learning by initially translating the university mission. Second, middle level managers are subject to empower subordinates and to create partnerships. This includes involving staffs and other parties in the activities of quality assurance.

The second stage of quality assurance is the learning environment –the teaching and learning process (c.f. Elton, 1995). At this stage, teaching and learning take places and the roles of all stakeholders are intertwined to contribute to achieving quality teaching and learning. Under this stage, specifically, the heads of departments are responsible for, first, teaching and learning quality. This means the quality of learning materials, instructions, and teachers are subject to be assessed by the heads of departments. Second, in the learning environment stage (c.f. Elton, 1995), the heads of departments are academic conventions leaders. They must lead any academic forums, including setting, analysis, and reviewing the curriculum or the education goals of the department.

The third major stage consists of the reviews of management, curriculum, and resources. The

stage is actually followed by follow-up activities, namely staff training and development (management review), course development (course review), and resource allocation (resource review). Under this stage, the heads of departments are mainly department managers. Their roles are to plan, manage, monitor, and evaluate every department activity including quality assurance of teaching and learning. In addition to the roles as programme managers, the middle level managers are the hub between upper and lower management. In this case, heads of departments must become communicator and aspiration container from either deans or rectors and the lower-level managers or teachers. Last but not least, the quality assurance of teaching and learning expect the heads of departments as fund tacticians, as the authority on funding is limited. The main role under this term is to propose and allocate budget for activities of quality assurance.

This research also explores the two main domains in which the heads of departments can give significant supports namely presage and process dimensions of quality teaching (Gibbs, 2010). The presage domain consists of funding, student-staff ratio, quality of teaching staffs, and quality of enrolled students. In funding and student-staff ratios, however, the heads of the departments in Case University have limited authority which leads to the unlikeliness of the realisation of such expectation. This is very common, though, since funding and student-staff ratio depends on the size and reputation of the university. Nevertheless, the heads of the departments still have to initiate programmes for quality teaching and learning. For instance, in funding, even though the basic funding is limited, the heads of departments could propose some excellence funding to the top management. Also, in student-staff ratios, heads of departments can propose activities to accelerate student graduation so that the number of students is balanced with the number of staffs. On the other hand, the heads of departments play a significant role in teaching staff recruitment that is to make sure that the accepted teachers are met university expectation, academic qualification, and university capacity. Also, in student enrolment, heads of departments are subject to set the minimum score of the students to get enrolled. This must be done carefully by seeing the trend of previously applied students, the capacity of the university, and the need for quality student.

Furthermore, in the presage dimension of quality teaching, heads of departments have limited room for support in determining the class size. Indeed, class size is a university-wide matter and the decision to the class size needs to consider the capacity of teaching staffs, the university stage of development, and the funding condition of the university. On the other

hand, heads of departments have full authority to support the quality of teaching, level of curriculum, student engagement, and student support. To the quality of teaching, head of department's support can be in the form of creating activities or programme for teaching staffs to create their own teaching material, such as by incorporating their research into teaching material. Meanwhile, support to the level of curriculum is given by empowering the lower-level management concerned with curriculum –concentration or tracks community- and collaborating with other unit related to curriculum development such as the library and the research centre. Furthermore, in maintaining student engagement, heads of departments in Case University provide room for direct communication between student and faculty and increase the trust of the students with the teachers by embedding such anxiety-matter understanding in the course. Also, Case University collects feedback from students to observe their engagement in the class with particular teachers. The feedback is utilised for teacher evaluation to maintain student engagement. Last but not least, in student support, heads of departments in Case University provides scholarships for the students of underprivileged, reward for students of excellences, and room for counselling for students.

Moreover, to succeed the entire quality assurance of teaching and learning, heads of departments must possess academic competencies, leadership traits, communication skills, collaboration skills, and creativity to initiate programs for quality improvement. In addition, the middle level managers are also to cope with some challenges such as such as reluctance of the subordinates to change, lack of professionalism of the lower leaders, and that the position as a hub between the top and lower management is challenging.

Finally, the research concludes, from the management strand of quality assurance to position, train, and support the heads of departments in a higher education institution is crucial as their responsibilities and roles are determinant to the achievement of quality teaching and learning.

9.5 Limitation of Research and Recommendation for Further Research

There are many factors influencing the quality of higher education, ranging from the government's will and strategies for higher education and institutional commitment. In a more specific institution-wide commitment is the role of heads of departments in the quality assurance of teaching and learning. This case study reveals the success of quality assurance of teaching and learning in the specific university from the perspective of heads of departments

as the middle level managers. Began from Elton's (1995) model of quality assurance, this study explores the activities and contribution of the heads of departments in the dimensions of quality teaching and learning (c.f. Gibbs, 2010).

The narrowness of the topic of this research perhaps becomes the limitation. During the case study, the researcher found that, first, it is very necessary to have an akin perception of quality definition for all layers of stakeholders. It is important to scientifically research whether or not teaching and learning in a university which follows the quality definition lead to the success of quality teaching and learning. Therefore, further research on the relationship between the understanding of the quality definition and quality achievement is necessary.

Second, the study also found the funding mechanism which is proposed by the top-level management which results in effective quality assurance program management. As the decision maker for some dimensions is in top level management, heads of departments as the middle level managers experience role ambiguity –their authority in some domains are limited. So, the question is to what extent the middle level managers can be very supportive. This research, even though has richly described the role of middle level managers, does not come into a comparative conclusion –whether the level of the role is high, medium, or low.

In addition, the findings suggest that the collegial system of a higher education institution prevents the placement of the strongest leaders in the layers of the organisation. However, this research did not dig deeper as it is beyond the topic. Therefore, it is perhaps necessary to research the relationship between the higher education system and quality assurance –whether the system of governance in the university affects the quality of teaching and learning.

Last but not least, another limitation of this research is that it is very context-based. Therefore, the result might have less implication for higher education institutions in other countries or in a different context. So, it is necessary to conduct further studies in different contexts to draw out a valid pattern of the roles of the heads of departments as the middle level manager in a higher education institution in the quality assurance of teaching and learning.

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10 The use of performance-based funding at Finnish universities: reducing time-to-degree (the case of University of Tampere)

Alina Meloyan

10.1 Background of the Study

In higher education (HE), performance-based funding (PBF) is defined as a system of allocation of the governmental budget according to a number of performance indicators, for example, course completion, degree completion, student employability, etc. The system is based on goal setting, measurement of progress and indicators in different areas as well as on financial or regulatory incentives (Council of Ontario Universities, 2013). The proponents of the method believed that if to tie the performance of HE institutions to the financial incentives, they would succeed by meeting and striving to excel the targets set by the ministries (Shulock and Snyder, 2013). However, the studies show that despite a long history of PBF use, especially in the USA, the method is found to be failing in living up to its proponents' expectations due to the wrong perception of universities' organizational behaviour (Hillman, 2016; Kivistö, 2015) as well as the fact that performance based public funds constitute a minor share of all financial sources universities get (Kettunen, 2015).

In Finland, nonetheless, PBF is proving to be of more positive use as it covers the biggest part of the overall university funding– starting from 75% and more (de Boer et al, 2015). Finland is scoring higher than other countries in using the PBF method due to the absence of tuition fees for students. Since Finnish universities do not charge students with fees, universities have to make sure they still attract enough students to teach and do research as their numbers are reflected in the percentage of the degrees in the national funding formula (Kettunen, 2015).

The current form of the Finnish formula was introduced in 2013. To ensure the efficiency of the current model, it has been revised twice since then, in 2015 and 2017 (Halonen, 2018). Regardless of the time, a substantial part of funds in the formula is dedicated to education. Its output indicators are called to improve the situation with the graduation rates (a number of students who completed their programs and graduated) and the duration of studies (an amount of time taken by students to complete their study programs). For the Finnish education policy,

the duration of studies is an issue, as the duration of studies in Finland is among the longest in the OECD countries. In 2013, on average it took students 6.5 years to complete their Master degree (Melin et al., 2015; Jalava, 2013).

Taking into consideration the aforementioned problem, *the purpose of this qualitative study* is to understand how the governmental funds are allocated inside the University of Tampere (UTA) and to explore the policies for reducing time-to-degree covered by these funds at the Faculty of Management. For this research the Faculty of Management at the UTA was chosen as the unit of analysis as it allows us to focus on one setting and to perform its detailed examination in relation to the problem stated above, what, in overall, corresponds to the core idea of a case study (Bernard, 2000; Berg & Lune, 2012). According to the Stake's (1994) typology of case studies, the future research will represent a single instrumental case study of exploratory/descriptive nature that will focus on one issue and will be tied to one bounded case to illustrate this issue.

Main research question:

Does the Finnish performance funding mechanism trigger the Faculty of Management of the University of Tampere to implement relevant policies to reduce time-to-degree taken by students?

Sub-questions:

1. What are the aims of the performance-based funding in the Finnish higher education system and how does it intend to impact the students' study success?

2. What is the internal allocation of the funds at the University of Tampere and the Faculty of Management?

3. How well does the mechanism of internal funds allocation related to study success comply with the governmental and university targets?

4. What policies does the Faculty of Management implement to reduce time-to-degree?

5. What are the perceptions of different stakeholders towards the performance-based funding mechanism as a tool to reduce time-to-degree?

As it was briefly outlined earlier, a case study will serve as a research method. Case studies are often adopted for post-facto studies, rather than ongoing issues or questions. This contributes to the perception that they are atheoretical (Berg and Lune, 2012). However, Yin (2014) argues in favour of using a theory "to determine the priorities for data collection."

For meeting the purpose of this research and answering the aforementioned questions, Institutional Theory will provide a fit framework to do so. The essence of the Institutional Theory is in the suggestion that organizations reflect the norms, values, regulations and policies of the environment they are embedded (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Under the environment, we understand the norms that are posed by the external agent, in our case – the Finnish government (Bess and Dee, 2008).

For this research, the Institutional Theory will help to explain the influence of the governmental policies (since the government is the main environmental force for driving the institutional behaviour) on reshaping the PBF formula inside UTA, as well as to see how well the HE institution meets the set of environmental expectations. Also, the Institutional Theory can guide us in analysing the policies taken to reduce the time-to-degree incentivized by the state funds at the Faculty of Management. In this case, we will step down from the government-university level to the university-faculty level.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) explain that external environmental pressure of institutional change causes homogeneity among organizations. To frame this phenomenon, they introduced the concept of isomorphism and identified three mechanisms of institutional isomorphic change: coercive (rules, norms, regulations), mimetic (imitation resulted from uncertainty) and normative (professionalized standards).

In this research, coercive isomorphism is seen in the attempt of universities to conform the governmental targets prescribed in the performance contracts and the guidelines suggested in the state PBF formula on funds allocation, along with the incentives scheme. Here it is assumed that regardless of wide autonomy granted to the universities, they still have to reshape their internal funding schemes in a more or less similar fashion in accordance with the

ministry's expectations (Claeys-Kulik and Estermann, 2015). However, we understand that each university in Finland allocates funds internally taking into consideration a number of factors: university profile, structure, priorities as well as its vision and mission realization (Claeys-Kulik and Estermann, 2015; Melin et al., 2016)

The measures that are taken to reduce the time of degree completion can be practices borrowed from leading universities that are tackling the same problem with successful results – what reflects mimetic isomorphism. The most common incentives to shorten the time-to-degree are tuition fees, vouchers and graduate taxes (Kivinen and Nurmi, 2011, as cited in Meyer et al., 2013). In Finland, the Parliament has passed new regulations to introduce mandatory tuition fees for non-European Union students since 2017, like, for example, it was done in Sweden back in 2011. So far, this measure will only push international students to keep up with their study plan, but with the governmental budget cut of 500 million euros for the post-secondary education in the current term (up to 2019) and the previous cut of 200 million euros, tuition fees are seen as an additional funding source for university to begin relying on (ICEF, 2016). In this research, we will also see what policies are taken at the faculty level to eliminate the problem with studies prolongation.

10.2 Methodology

In the current research, the following sources are primarily used for the collection of data:

- Documentation or desktop research (primarily from UTA, Ministry of Education and Culture, *further* MoEC);
- Semi-structured interviews.

Desktop research was the first method employed for obtaining the data for the current study. However, this method took its place throughout the whole research, at its different stages. For collecting relevant resources, we used the following search engines and databases: Google, Google Scholar, Google Books, ERIC, JSTOR, Wiley Digital Archives, Research Gate, Science Direct, Taylor and Francis, etc. A fair share of resources was pulled directly from the official websites of the organizations that published them, e.g., OECD, EUA, EC, Technopolis Group, etc.

The analysis of the documents related to the case study itself includes the following sources:

- Performance agreement between UTA and MoEC (Finland) 2013-2016;
- State performance-based funding formula (model) and university performance-based funding formula;
- University Act;
- Reports issued by MoEC (Finland) and other government-sponsored reports;
- Europe 2020 Strategy: Finland's National Program (by the Ministry of Finance);
- UTA Strategy and its action plan, etc.

The second source of data for this study came from interviewing relevant stakeholders to understand the selected participants' standpoint in this research problem. This method was chosen because it provides adequate understanding of the complex research problem and sharpens the focus of the talk. The semi-structured type of the interviews, unlike the structured one, allowed us to make variations during the conversation and deviate from the guide in case of utmost importance to clarify the issue.

The interviews were held with different stakeholders, starting from students (4) and academics (3), scaling up to Faculty Board of the School of Management (2), University Board (2) and the department of finance, and crowning with the representative of MoEC (1).

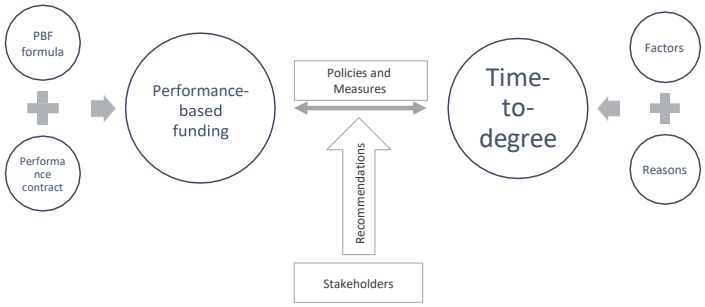
Participants' discussion on their views and experience allowed to gather information not available in the official sources and thus to supplement the key findings from the document analysis. The interviewing process lasted for 2 weeks in late April 2018. The interviews lasted approximately from 30 to 50 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded with the interviewees' prior consent. Later, the audio data were transcribed using MAXQDA (2), but later mainly NVivo (10) qualitative data analysis software.

After completing the transcription, transcripts were sent out back to each interviewee so that they could make revisions and clarifications or provide additional information to ensure that the interview was valid. The reason for the member check (Creswell, 2009) lies in the fact that, though knowing the general outline of the interviews in advance, some of the questions were identified as difficult to answer at that point in time.

For processing the data obtained via interviewing qualitative content analysis was chosen as an apt method. The reasoning is manifold. The method is considered to be systematic (Mayring, 2014), flexible to a certain degree (Boyatzis, 1998, as cited in Schreier, 2012), and it reduces data (Babbie, 2010). Qualitative content analysis is flexible in the way that a researcher can adjust the coding frame to his material.

The categories or dimensions for the coding frame of this study were predefined on the stage of the literature review and based upon the research question and sub questions. The subcategories emerged from the collected data, both primary and secondary. The coding scheme guides us in shaping conclusions. The logic of the coding frame in this study is presented in figure 1. I also allow that such categorization is too generic. But, after all, 'no coding frame is perfect' (Schreier, 2012, p. 147).

Figure 1. The logic of the coding frame



10.3 Findings

Following the logic of the above pictured coding frame, here are the main findings of the current research.

10.3.1 Performance-based funding model and Performance agreement

In the Finnish state PBF funding formula of 2013/2015, the government placed a strong focus on education (41%). The biggest percentage share is given to two most important output indicators for our research – Master's degrees and a number of students who have gained more than 55 ECTS per annum. A number of Master degrees is perceived by MoEC as a quite stable basic funding factor, because the Ministry uses 3-year averages. As for 55 ECTS, though students are expected to take 60 ECTS per year, the lowered number in credits is

explained by the possibility of yearly fluctuations. Another output indicator is student feedback accounting for 3%, which is perceived as a political decision between the National Student Union and MoEC.

The university model is found to be of almost the same composition. However, when it comes to study success indicators, the student feedback was not adopted internally, but the weights of other remaining indicators were significantly increased. Such findings show that the university finds education as its top priority for a designated period and puts bigger emphasis on improving study success rates. The internal model of funds allocation at UTA is considered to be a more stable mechanism rather than its original template, due to giving more weight to such stable indicators like a number of Bachelor and Master degrees. The following strengths were mentioned in the course of the interviews: transparency of the model, what limits interest lobbying by universities, easiness in drawing comparisons among universities, involvement of universities in modifying formula components.

UTA, like any other HE institution in Finland, concludes the performance agreement with MoEC for a 4-year period. All performance agreements include 2 sections. First states joint objectives of Finnish HE system and is the same for any university. Second identifies the role of a university, its profile and priorities. This part is the subject for negotiations between the ministry and the university.

In the agreement for 2013-2016, the Ministry recognizes the importance of study success in the general section and emphasizes the improvement in the quality of teaching what will promote better learning. In the part, which is specific to UTA, the only financial target pertinent to study success is 55 ECTS, namely what rate was achieved in comparison with other universities in 2011, and what rate is expected by 2016. All in all, performance agreement serves more as a document that develops the sense of commitment to what is expected of the university, rather than an actual guiding scheme, and is of a complementary nature.

10.3.2 Stakeholders' recommendations

As claimed by the Ministerial representative, the state model still hasn't gained much flexibility in adapting to each university profile what evokes conflicting interests and some

inadequacy in differentiation among institutions. Though, claimed by McKeown-Moak (1999), that formulas represent a compromise between public accountability and institutional autonomy, fixed indicators of the formula are perceived as sign of limited autonomy. Findings also reveal that a simpler formula with fewer number of indicators is hoped for, what would release the stress of constant reporting and applying for smaller funds.

10.3.3 Factors affecting study success

10.3.3.1 Institutional:

Melin et al. (2015) identified one of the institutional factors that affect untimely graduation in Finland, and it is related to *matriculation backlog*, what limits the student access to universities. UTA access accounts for only 10% out of the whole applicants' pool. The other factor pertains to *inadequacy in career and study services* stressed by interviewed students. Regarding the *type and availability of financial support* as another institutional factor, there are two types of financial aid available for Finnish students: grants and loans (DEA, 2015). However, when trying and pacing up with the schedule, this factor is claimed to be secondary, as Finnish students primarily try to avoid possible complications with the courses and prefer to do them on time.

10.3.3.2 Personal:

As for personal factors, surprisingly, they were more recognized by the academics rather than students, most probably because they have worked with late finishers a lot. If students were not eager to share the details of their *personal life situation*, the academics see this factor popping up quite often, and it usually involves health issues either of a student or a student's parent, and a parent's death. Academics also spot the inadequacy in writing skills what relates to the personal factor on *prior ability*. Especially, when it comes to writing the final thesis. *Intrinsic motivation*, recognized by students and academics, was both related to studies and thesis writing. The MoEC recognize the problem of long study times, but a bigger underpinning factor of it is that Finnish students start their HE studies later in life, because many prefer to take (a) gap year(s).

10.3.3.3 Economic:

Though, financially speaking, the Finnish government is quite generous, 2/3 of Finnish

students have to *work during their studies*, as the grants do not cover all living costs in order to survive. Usually, the delays in studies are observed among Master students rather than Bachelor ones. Interviewees explain it by the tendency of Bachelor students to graduate as soon as possible to find a kick-off job cognate to their studies, and then starting Master programs.

The Finnish case also confirms the hypothesis by Messer and Wolter (2010) that the lower unemployment rate is, the higher time-to-degree rate becomes. If to consider the researched time span 2013-2017, the unemployment rate in Finland was gradually increasing[1], what reflected on better completion rates among university students (Kettunen, 2016). As the interest rate is tied to the cost of education, a similar hypothesis cannot be tested in Finland, as there are no tuition fees for Finnish and EU students.

10.3.4 Reasons for study prolongation

During the interviews, several reasons were discovered for study prolongation at the Faculty of Management, but the one that scored highest among students was full- or part-time work. This reason is also recognized by all interviewed stakeholders. The other reason that was identified is active engagement of students in student/university structures and bodies, e.g., Student Union Council, University Collegiate Body, etc. One of the reasons, that resonates with the findings from the literature review, is the additional course load. Another reason that echoes previous research as well is the change of a major, what automatically gave a student more time to stay at university.

10.3.5 Policies and measures to reduce time-to-degree

10.3.5.1 National level:

When it comes to *funding and financial incentives*, the Finnish MoEC is working on implementing solutions in both categories of this policy area. In respect to funding, the PBF mechanism for Finnish universities has two instruments: a model and an agreement. The

[1] https://www.google.kz/publicdata/explore?ds=z8o7pt6rd5uqa6_&met_y=unemployment_rate&hl=ru&dl=ru#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met_y=unemployment_rate&fdim_y=seasonality:sa&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country_group&idim=country_group:eu&idim=country:fi&ifdim=country_group&hl=ru&dl=ru&ind=false

agreements no longer contain any information or indicators about time-to- degree, though they used to. As for the PBF model, it has three quite weighty indicators described earlier.

As for the financial incentives, a part of the financial aid provided by Kela, a governmental agency on social security, constitutes study grants. Grants are earmarked, usually for living expenses, so the amount of each grant is strictly individualized. Additionally, under certain conditions loans are also an available option. In regard of *teaching and learning organization*, an admission reform, alongside with other smaller-scale reforms, is taking place that is called to reduce the gap years and the average age when students enter HE (an indicated reason for long time-to-degree).

10.3.5.2 Institutional level:

The primary existing *financial* instrument that navigates UTA in dealing with the problem of time-to-degree is the adoption of the state PBF model and redesigning it in accordance with the university's profile and specific goals. In terms of *organization of teaching and learning* UTA is taking several steps to mitigate the consequences of such unfavourable status quo. First, they introduced a reform 8 years ago on broadening the structure of the programs, what allows students to change the major more easily. Second, prior learning recognition scheme was introduced. Third, a certain degree of flexibility in taking courses was introduced as well, so that students can choose alternative ways of studying. Additionally, the university has introduced pedagogic training for academics, which is voluntary at this stage to improve their teaching skills. Last policy area of *information and support services* has been put into effect at UTA by allocating resources to student counselling and Career Service Center what required substantial financial investments. Also, there is a service of a study psychologist. A creative instrument to inform students about the importance of keeping up with the schedule is a launch of "Club60" project.

10.3.6 Stakeholders' recommendations

First, students feel that some professional assistance and consultancy in re-designing a study plan when applying for extra time is needed. The other suggestion is to minimize the university resources when applying for study prolongation to complete a master thesis by exempting a supervisor to fill out forms on student's behalf. And finally, recruiting teachers that are really passionate about their subjects and have good teaching skills. The latter can be

supported via collecting student feedback which will be included into the teacher's paycheck. Academics make a special focus on the thesis supervision. Also, an external review of the student feedback forms should be held. Its results could be later reflected in the annual performance appraisal of academics. Even though, the state model has an indicator of student feedback, it is not currently perceived as a significant indicator in terms of guiding similar policies at the university level.

A concern was raised by the University Board, that nowadays there is too much trust put into the funding model as a tool to solve the ongoing issues, including study success, rather than the appropriateness of the organizational structure of the unit that could improve the status quo.

Regarding the *main research question*, if the performance funding mechanism trigger the Faculty of Management to implement relevant policies to reduce time-to-degree, we come to the substantive conclusion that PBF mechanisms used at UTA do not make any direct impact on policy implementation to improve the study success rate at the Faculty of Management. The reason for coming to such a result has several ends. First is the centralization of the student counselling services on the university level what allowed students to access the services of the same form and quality. Since the inception of this policy, the student counselling stopped being a service that was functioning in respect with the departmental status quo but capped the whole university. Second is that the system of funds distribution inside the faculty is not earmarked, what gives program coordinators, upon receiving the money, bigger autonomy to use the funds depending on their targets. Third, the money receivers do not really know the status quo on study success rate in relation to their programs, what leaves the question on if they need to do something to improve the situation open. Forth, as identified both in the literature on formula funding and elicited from the interviewees, the PBF mechanisms do not really work well in smaller units like faculties and departments, and they require a more tailor-made financial approaches in steering the unit.

10.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward for the reader's consideration as this study, like many others, has its own limitations and perspectives for further exploration:

- Due to raised concerns by university administration on limiting the university autonomy when it comes to achieving certain targets, what makes the university adopt a very similar PBF mechanism to a national one, more retrospective research is needed on the previous internal model, that resembled the national model much less and was simpler, and how that model propelled and/or hindered UTA in achieving governmental targets. This idea mimics the previously described hopes of university stakeholders on making future editions of the model less complicated;

- Although this research intentionally focused on universities and left out university of applied sciences, there could be done similar research among the latter, as their PBF model has study success indicators that are much heavier than the ones in national model designed for the universities. As they are more education oriented, and their success rates are reported to be better than of universities', it makes sense to examine the policies and practices that make them champion in such an issue;

- As this research is entirely qualitative, some quantitative data on evaluating the efficiency of the time-to-degree policies implemented at UTA is recommended. A quantitative study would allow to develop the assessment frameworks to scrutinize the efficiency of the utilized policies;

- Basing on the findings of this study, a closer look at the faculty level of funds distribution is needed as it still remains a 'black box';

- Other than that, similar research can be carried out to explore the status quo across the faculties of one HE institution, as well as the faculties that belong to the same field of studies of several institutions with similar profiles;

- Lastly, more research is recommended on the non-financial policies and other steering mechanisms to improve the study success rate at Finnish universities.

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11 Russian Graduate Student Mobility: Current Trends, Further Considerations

Ekaterina A. Minaeva

11.1 Background of the Study

11.1.1 Context

Internationalization of higher education is no longer a new phenomenon – it is an established trend with its leaders and followers, its markets, and its social, political, economic and cultural implications. The rationales for internationalization vary. For example, there are great economic and political interests, as well as education rationales involved. But there is one common trend seen around the world – nation-states are trying to understand this phenomenon in order to regulate the flows of incoming and outgoing students (She & Wotherspoon, 2013).

Student mobility is a big part of internationalization, and it has significantly transformed the higher education landscape in the last decade (Knight, 2012). On one hand, there are a lot of positive effects of this phenomenon for many actors involved. Research shows that international experience has a positive effect both on individuals and at national levels (Malicki & Potts, 2013), and enriches economic, political, social and cultural aspects of development (Knight, 2014; Chankseliani, 2016a). However, for many developing countries, internationalization of higher education has brought not only opportunities but challenges, as well. For example, international student mobility became one the mechanisms of migration of highly skilled labour (Gribble, 2008; Ziguras & Gribble, 2016); statistics shows that many of the "best and brightest" (i.e., highly talented international students) prefer to stay in the developed countries where they have obtained their degrees (Altbach, 2013). This process relates to a more widespread phenomenon of brain drain, which is defined as a movement of human capital, where the net flow of expertise is heavily in one direction (Salt, 1997) or the departure of the most talented occurs at an appreciable rate (Bushnell & Choy, 2001). In conditions of global competition for talent, developing countries need to take a proactive position in their search for balance between student brain drain and internationalization of

higher education. For that purpose, they may look for new forms of student mobility, and new policies and initiatives which can provide meaningful solutions.

Russia is one of the major actors in the international education market. It is ranked as the seventh most popular destination for international students worldwide (de Wit at al., 2015).

Historically, in Russia inbound mobility was more developed and took many forms.

Consequently, the research on motivations of incoming students is well-elaborated (Rubinskaya, 2014). However, Russian outbound mobility, especially mobility to the western countries, was not developed as much, and this pattern is still visible to the present day. While the data show that the absolute number of Russian students immigrating through education is not high (consistent with the overall number of outgoing Russia students), both scholars and government authorities express their concerns that those who are immigrating through education are Russia's best and brightest students (Florinskaya & Mkrtchan, 2018).

11.1.2 Research Gap

While multiple reports on student migration and brain drain from Russia can be found in news and media, there is not much research literature available on students' motivations for obtaining higher education abroad and their attitudes towards choice of study destination and plans after graduation. There are some available data from international reports; however, the purpose of these research works was to understand Russian attitudes towards specific countries, for example, in relation to the Netherlands (NUFFIC Report, 2012), Norway (Karlsen, 2017) or the United Kingdom (Chankseliani, 2016b). At present, there is no complete picture grounded in data on students' attitudes towards studying abroad and further immigration, and no comprehensive analysis of push and pull factors that affect Russian students.

11.1.3 Research questions

This research project seeks to answer the following research questions:

N1. Who are the Russian students that plan to go abroad?

N2. What are the factors that encourage students to seek higher education outside Russia?

N3. What are the motivations of Russian students and their attitudes when choosing a country and a specific institution in a foreign country?

N4. What are the attitudes of Russian students towards employment in the host country after graduation?

11.1.4 Purpose of the Research

The research aims to better understand motivations of Russian students who seek to study abroad and their attitudes to emigration after graduation. The study investigates educational aspects of students' decisions, and the impact of political, economic, social and cultural factors affecting their choice. Better understanding of students' motivations and attitudes may help to develop a comprehensive picture of trends in outbound student mobility in the Russian case, and related risks and challenges. In addition, it may contribute to the development of policies and improved forms of student mobility for the Russian context.

11.2 Methodology of Research

11.2.1 Research method

This research project provides an analysis of push and pull factors that affect students' attitudes towards going abroad for studies, using a pre-structured (deductive) qualitative survey (Fink, 2003). Qualitative survey as a research method is not widely mentioned in the literature (Jansen, 2010). While quantitative surveys are used to define quantitative descriptors of the population and numerical distributions of variables (Groves et al., 2004), the qualitative survey is recommended for studying the meaning of experiences (Fink, 2004).

The research has no hypothesis, and its main goal is to explore the overall trend in students' attitudes towards studying abroad and the importance of various factors for their choice of study destination.

11.2.2 Research Instrument

In this research, a deductive type of the survey with pre-constructed codes and dimensions (Jansen, 2010) has been applied. The dimensions have been formulated based on the push and pull factors from the literature analysis (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2) and presented in the form of a questionnaire (see Appendix 3). For each dimension, the related theory and the level of choice was identified. The dimensions were considered from the perspectives of the two levels of choice–the country level and the institutional level—in order to determine which attitudes of respondents relate to the choice of the study destination (i.e., country) and which are more connected to the choice of an institution.

11.2.3 Procedure

The research focuses on prospective students who expressed their interest in studying abroad. on a graduate level. There are two reasons for choosing this group as a sample for this research:

1. Graduate students are close to entering the job market in two to four years and, therefore, the research allows to investigate both motivations for studying abroad and choosing a job market to focus on after graduation.
2. Graduate students are usually older than undergraduate students, and therefore their decision-making can be assumed to be more thought through and responsible and "strategic" in nature.

In order to select the representative sample, the survey was implemented among Russian students who had reached out to the private international education agencies. An education agency is a company which helps students to choose universities and provides support during the application process. There are public education agencies which work only with specific countries and universities (for example, Campus France, British Council, Education USA), and therefore they cannot provide comprehensive data for the students' attitudes towards all international student destinations. Instead, the survey was implemented among students of two private education agencies working in Russia, which do not focus on one specific study destination but provide support for students applying to all countries; in addition, both companies provide advice for self-paying students and those who plan to apply for the governmental and university scholarships or to apply to study in countries with low or no

tuition fees. The agencies operate in all regions of the Russian Federation, which enables an analysis that is not tied to a specific region. The sample size is 184 students, which is about 50% of customers who usually apply through the agencies each year.

In order to ensure data privacy (Sales & Folkman, 2000), any questions related to a student's current program of study and university are not included in the survey; respondents also are not asked to provide their names. Prior to the participation in the survey, students were provided with information about the purpose of the research, which was included in the description of the survey on the survey webpage. Students participants were guaranteed that the results of the survey were used by the researcher only for scientific purposes and is not distributed to the third parties.

11.2.4 Survey items

Control variables

As the survey was sent to all students in the education agencies' database, there were several control variables which allowed consistency of the sample to be achieved:

- nationality, and

- a degree which students want to obtain abroad (as the research focuses only on prospective graduate students).

The survey consisted of four parts, which aimed to determine the following issues in accordance with the sub-goals of this project:

1. Background of Russian students who plan to obtain a graduate degree abroad.

This part of the survey explored statistical data on age, gender, education background and GPA, and current job status.

2. Motivations to study abroad.

This section aimed to determine what encouraged students to consider obtaining a degree

abroad in the first place (push-factors and pull-factors) and what their major concerns (barriers) were with respect to their prospective international education experience.

3. Attitudes towards study destinations (choice of country and institution and major concerns related to study abroad experience).

This part of the survey was focused mostly on the pull-factors of different countries and institutions, which students use as basis for their choice of study destination.

4. Plans and attitudes towards employment after graduation (which focused on factors other than education)

This section explored attitudes of students towards employment in the host country after graduation.

The survey is attached in Appendix 1. The survey was written in Russian, as the researcher is a native of Russia and fluent Russian speaker, and the target respondents are also all Russian. Most of the questions in the survey were presented in Likert scale form, allowing respondents indicate the importance they attribute to various factors on the scale from "1" to "5", where "1" is "not important" and "5" is very important.

11.2.5 Validity and reliability

In order to ensure the reliability of the research, a pilot survey was conducted 6 months prior to the launch of the formal survey (Srinivasan, 2017). The sample size of the pilot survey was 150 students. The pilot survey allowed the reformulation of several questions to avoid their misinterpretation by the respondents, and to develop additional items of relevance.

The content validity is ensured by the literature review and thorough analysis of the existing theoretical and empirical research on student mobility prior to coding the dimensions of the research into the survey items. The participants involved in the pilot survey differed from the participants involved in the formal survey, in order to provide the external validity of the research.

The internal validity for questions with multiple sub-question sections is ensured by measuring the Cronbach's alpha for these survey items.

11.2.6 Limitations

The research has several limitations. First, the participants of the survey are those who only plan to study abroad; these students' express attitudes related to their plans, and during or after studying abroad, their opinions may change due to various factors they do not take into consideration yet. While this research intentionally covers only this group of students, in order to comprehensively understand the realities of outbound student mobility in Russia, similar research among current students and graduates of foreign institutions is required.

Second, students from certain regions of Russia may be underrepresented in the survey, and that may affect the results. For example, if the respondents are mostly from Moscow and Saint- Petersburg, the survey may reflect their attitudes more than attitudes of students from the peripheral regions of Russia.

Third, due to the particular focus of the research, the attitudes of undergraduate Russian students were not considered in the research. Their motivations may differ from motivation of graduate students, and for development of comprehensive policies and initiatives in this field, they should be considered as well.

Fourth, due to the format of the survey, there was no opportunity to acquire detailed information about students' motivations related to civil liberties and democratic freedom. Those types of questions might have been considered politically incorrect or provocative by the education agency that assisted in the survey implementation, or by the participants of the survey, and were therefore excluded from the survey.

11.3 Results and Discussion

11.3.1 Students' profiles

The analysis of respondents' profiles shows that almost half of the prospective students have excellent GPAs and more than 88% of students have high English language proficiency. These data can serve as evidence of the fact that those who consider studying abroad and

become potential emigrants are high-performing students. There is a significant group of respondents (23.4%) who, in addition to high grades and strong English language proficiency, have five or more years of job experience and possess professional competences. This also indicates the potential loss of the human capital, given the intention of the majority of students to remain in the host country after immigration. The two largest groups of students majored in FAME (34.8%) and STEM (22.8%), which are considered as the cornerstone professions for development of the knowledge economy (OECD, 2000).

The statistics on gender of the respondents shows that the absolute majority of the prospective students are female (78.8%). This can be partially explained by the overall demographic statistics in Russia, which show that the male to female ratio in the country is 46%: 54% (Rosstat, 2016b). However, according to Rosstat (2016b), for the age groups below 50 years old, the gender discrepancy in the population is not so significant in Russia; further analysis can be implemented to understand the gender gap in the prospective student population.

11.3.2 Students' motivations to pursue higher education abroad

More than half of the respondents indicated that they do not consider higher education in Russia to be as advanced and modern as higher education abroad. These data contradict other statistics from the literature. For example, Chirikov (2015) indicates that 80% of Russian undergraduate students feel positive about their educational experience at home. Considering that Russian higher education has many factors that serve to limit its quality, such as passive learning environments, limited student-faculty interaction and tolerance for cheating, Chirikov (2015) underlines that the high satisfaction rate may be related to the fact that students feel satisfied because they are not challenged by the university, nor do they consider the higher education as offering a transformational environment. In any case, this reveals that "with such an attitude it is difficult to expect that students would become change agents in Russian higher education" (Chirikov, 2015, p. 11). The contradiction between data from the present study and from the literature can be explained by the fact that the significant share of prospective international students (and therefore, potential emigrants) who do not consider Russian higher education challenging and modern enough, are the potential "change agents" and look for development of their potential abroad while lacking this opportunity at home.

At the same time, the share of students who would prefer a double degree from a Russian and

a foreign university to a full degree abroad, is quite significant (45.6%). This may be explained by the wish of prospective students to avoid or reduce the most relevant challenges they expect to face during their study abroad experience, such as financial burdens, the complexity of the application process to a foreign university and organizational issues. In addition, dual degrees may provide a smooth transition from Russian to foreign education methods and teaching styles. However, the detailed reasons behind students' positive attitudes towards dual degree programs were not investigated in this research.

Students' specific motivations to pursue a degree abroad vary and can be explained by different theories described in the theoretical section of the research. The most relevant responses are related to the capability approach (such as wish to obtaining a new life experience), neoclassical economics of migration (such as intention to get access to a foreign job market and human capital theory (such as improvement of specific professional skills).

Some of these rationales can be explained by several theories: for example, the intention to become an internationally competitive professional can relate to the capability approach in the sense that it is connected with developing a student's potential; at the same time, human capital theory considers development of professional competences as the best investment for the economic rationales, which can serve as an explanation for this motivation, as well.

11.3.3 Attitudes of Russian students towards choice of study destination

The results from this study on students' preferred study destinations do not differ much from the results obtained by other researchers: traditionally, the UK, the USA and Germany were the top destinations for Russian students ("Russia: Education agents", 2017, January 25).

The prospective students involved in this study indicate that English as the language of instruction is the most significant factor for them when choosing a country and an institution for study outside of Russia. On one hand, this reveals their motivation to be a part of the global economy, which uses English as a primary language of communication; on the other hand, these results show that students do not have access to quality English-taught programs in Russia. The second popular factor that affects students' choices is the international accreditation of a foreign university, which also shows the eagerness to be a part of a global economy.

Another interesting finding is that students demonstrate more trust in the reputation of the university rather in than various university rankings. The most popular rankings among students are QS University Ranking (40.2%) and Times Higher Education Ranking (35.5%). However, 37.5% of students have not heard about these or other rankings mentioned in the survey.

Among the economic factors that affect the choices of prospective students, the most significant factor is the availability of scholarships, which corresponds to the most popular challenge indicated by the respondents – financial difficulties. However, only 9.8% of respondents plan to seek funding from the Global Education scholarship, which shows that this scholarship program does not satisfy the requirements of many prospective students; in addition, almost half of the respondents do not know about the program, which reveals poor communication and marketing of the scholarship program. Another important economic factor that affects students' choices is related to the visa regulations for work in the host country after graduation. These data can be interpreted as additional proof of the intention of many prospective students to look for employment opportunities in the host country.

According to the findings of the research, safety in the host country is the most important social factor that affects students' choice of study destination. This factor is followed by the importance of a good attitude towards foreigners in the host country. These findings may be explained by the growing concerns regarding instability, nationalism and related social issues in the international arena (Altbach & de Wit, 2017). At the same time, network theory does not play a significant role in students' choice of destination; this is demonstrated by the relatively low importance of such social factors as popularity of the destination among Russian students, and personal factors such as having friends or relatives in the study destination. The significance of other personal factors that affect students' attitudes towards different study destinations is comparatively low.

Stability in the host country is indicated as the most relevant political factor. This factor is placed in the center of discourse of the new economics of migration, which makes this theory particularly relevant for the analysis of the students' attitudes towards choice of study destination.

The data show that prior study and travel experiences in the host country have limited effects on students' choice of study destination. However, cultural factors, such as proficiency in the language of the host country and attractiveness of the culture at the study destination are important motivations for the prospective students.

11.3.4 Attitudes of Russian students towards emigration after graduation

The results of the survey show that more than half of students plan to stay in the host country after graduation. The two most significant groups that do not plan to return are those who want to find a permanent job (42.4%) or pursue an academic career (17.9%) in the host country. The significant factors that encourage students to stay in the host country are mostly related to economic and professional rationales (such as high quality of life, high salary, and better career opportunities in the host country) and can be explained by the theories of economic migration and capability approach. Meanwhile, factors that encourage students to return to Russia are related to the family circumstances (67.9%) and patriotic feelings (38.5%).

11.4 Recommendations

Based on their motivations and plans after graduation, the students can be divided into three groups: those who will return to Russia, those who are undecided on this question and those who plan to immigrate and consider education abroad as an avenue for immigration. The percentage of students for each group is shown in Figure 1. In order to prevent brain drain and involve all three groups of students in the Russian economy, each group may be considered separately and addressed by different policies.

As Figure 1 shows, the share of students who plan to return right after graduation is comparatively low. In order to increase this number, government and industry can provide additional scholarship opportunities conditioned with the obligation to return to Russia. While the Global Education program is addressing this issue to some extent, the additional requirements of the scholarship may be not suitable for some students (for example, the list of future employers or priority fields of study.

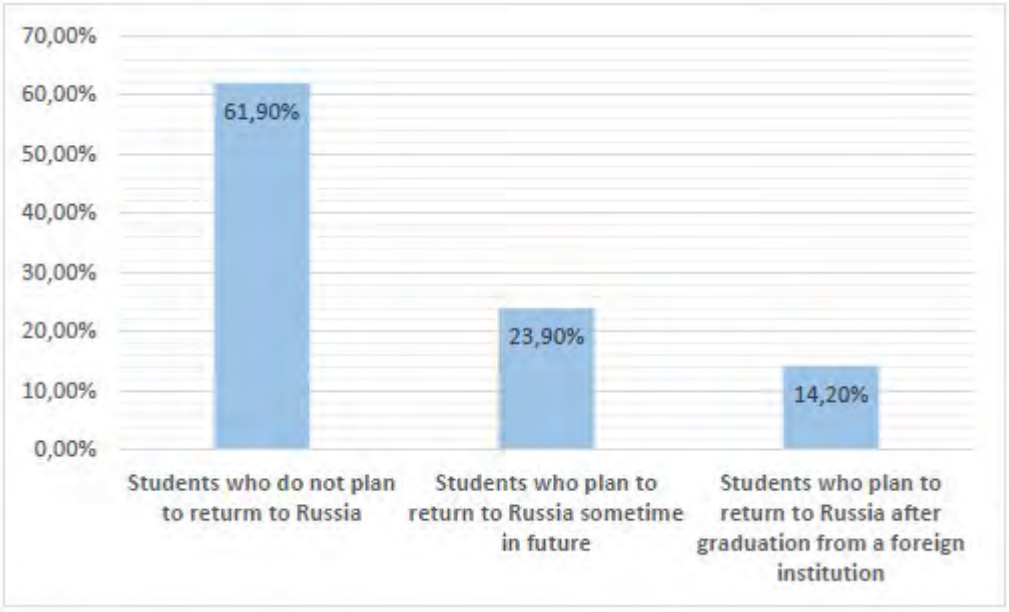

Figure 1. Distribution of the respondents by groups according to their plans towards emigration after graduation form a foreign institution.

For those who have not yet made their decision about returning versus staying broad, initiatives of a different nature can be considered. For example, the government can offer partial or full compensation of tuition expenses for those who return home, or offer other economic motivations, such as better conditions for the housing loans. Another set of measures can be connected with providing job opportunities and ensuring employment for these students while they are still studying abroad, which would prevent them from seeking employment in the recipient country.

There is a significant group of students who have a clear intention to stay abroad (42.4%). While they may seem to be lost entirely from the Russian job market, it is still possible to involve them in an indirect way and consider brain circulation as a solution. To keep these students connected to the Russian job market, one option can be the launch of an internet portal that would connect Russian employers and students who stay abroad. Students can be hired on short-term or distant, “outsource” bases, and in this way provide their expertise to Russian businesses, industry and governmental sector.

The research reveals several trends that can be applied for improvement and development of the existing policies at the national level. The study indicates that almost 50% of students have not heard about Global Education program, and therefore do not consider applying. Active promotion of the federal scholarship program, better communication with those who

consider it as the way of funding their studies and widening of the list of employers can have a significant positive effect on the development of intellectual potential in Russia.

The second direction of initiatives can be related to the development of a clear message for those who still are not decided about their immigration or return plans, in order to demonstrate that these graduates are welcome, and their expertise is required back home. This can be done through social media, through career fairs for these students, or through providing beneficial economic conditions. The share of students who consider contribution to their country as one of the major reasons to return to Russia is quite significant (38.5%).

On the institutional level, a wider range of double-degree programs may be one of the ways to address brain drain. The share of students who would prefer double-degree programs to the full degree abroad is significant (45.8%), and these students could be required to return home for graduation. In addition, institutions may consider cooperation with industry and businesses to provide partial funding for those who want to participate in these programs and provide further employment for these students. This approach may extend the number of participants, address the issues of economic inequality and provide employment for students after graduation. In addition, these measures can help to involve more students in outbound student mobility as well as secure their return to Russia.

While the existing policies on retention and return require improvement, the engagement policies are currently not implemented in Russia at all. This reveals a significant gap in the Russian policies, as the majority of prospective students consider emigration after graduation as the most possible option. The most popular reason for emigration for these students are related to economic considerations, which cannot be changed in the short-term. However, the experience of other countries shows that it is possible to stimulate brain circulation and engage these students in the Russian economy (Gribble, 2009). The summary of the initiatives which can be implemented on the national and institutional levels is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Possible policies and initiatives for decreasing the risk of the student brain drain from Russia

Type of policy	Level	Improvement of existing policies	New initiatives
Retention	National	Improvement of quality of higher education	
	Institutional	1. Developing more programs taught in English 2. Development of programs that meet the requirements of the modern economy 3. Meaningful internationalization at home	
Return	National	Scholarship program “Global Education”: 1. Increase of funding for the program 2. Marketing and communication, making program “visible” for prospective students	1. Partial or full compensation of student’s tuition expenses 2. Providing job opportunities and ensuring working places 3. Providing beneficial financial offers for Russian students with the international degree
Return	Institutional	Increase of number of dual-degree programs in cooperation with foreign institutions	Beneficial conditions for academics with foreign qualifications
Engagement	National	-	1. Development of Russian diaspora abroad 2. Development of networks between Russian students and graduates abroad and

Engagement	Institutional	-	Russian economy Enhanced cooperation with Russian graduates abroad

11.5 Concluding remarks

Multiple reforms and substantial funding of higher education and internationalization projects in Russia reveal the commitment of the government to bring meaningful improvements to the Russian higher education system and to foster the development of human potential.

However, the historic pattern related to underdeveloped understanding of outbound Russian student mobility remains relevant, and many gaps in research, policies and practices are yet to be addressed.

This research reveals several trends that can be considered for development of outbound student mobility and decreasing the risk of student brain drain. First, the number of students who plan to come back to Russia after graduation from a foreign institution is comparatively low.

Thus, one of the strategic tasks for improving the return rate is to implement policies encouraging them to return, such as conditional scholarships, double-degree programs with Russian institutions, financial and other motivations. In addition, detailed research of students' attitudes towards study destination and further career perspectives by region can reveal specific trends that can be considered for successful policies at the regional level. Additional concerns from the literature review are related to the fact that the number of students participating in the outbound student mobility is comparatively low. Implementing smart, student friendly policies may encourage more students to participate in outbound student mobility without the risk of losing them from the Russian economy.

Second, the largest group of internationally mobile Russian students, i.e., those who plan to stay abroad after graduation, remains overlooked, and there are no clearly articulated policies that address this group. While the quality of life, level of salaries and other important factors that affect students' decisions not to return to Russia after graduation cannot be significantly changed in the short term, these students can still be engaged into the Russian economy and

society by keeping the connection with them without expectation for them to return immediately.

The research shows that students' motivation to contribute to the Russian society is statistically significant and this commitment should be supported by various measures, such as development of feelings of community and connections with those who stay abroad after graduation. Further research on attitudes of Russian employers, Russian students and graduates abroad, and other stakeholders is a helpful and necessary step for development of a successful strategy which would address this opportunity.

11.6 Acknowledgements

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12 Exploring the Organizational Culture of Public Higher Education Institutions in Vietnam and its Impact on Faculty Turnover Intention from Faculty's Perspective

Thien Nguyen

12.1 Exploring the Organizational Culture of Public Higher Education Institutions in Vietnam and Its Impact on Faculty Turnover Intention from Faculty's Perspective

12.1.1 Problem statement

The departure of lecturers is a concern of many higher education institutions around the world. In Vietnam, the turnover of faculty in institutions is increasing and tends not to decrease as the media revealed (Nguoi Lao Dong, 2010; Vietnamnet, 2014). Although no official reports on this theme are available nationwide, case studies used by some researchers when examining this phenomenon almost always provide data supportive of the general trend reported by the media. For instance, Tan and Hoa (2018) found that faculty turnover has increased over the past decade in the research on "Factors Influencing Work Motivation of Lecturers at Vietnam National University of Forestry." Conducting a survey on a larger scale, institutions in a whole province in Vietnam - Lam Dong, Hang and Trang (2013) also revealed a similar trend.

There are many reasons for this phenomenon; but this diversity, in general, can be categorized into at least three groups of factors that cause employees to quit their job or intend to leave it. The first group is individual characteristics that show background-related factors such as age, gender, educational level, and job characteristics such as working hours and rules. The second group is contextual variables, which represent employees' status, for example, wages and positions as well as the individuals' fitness for the work environment. The last group is external conditions such as labor market trends and social situation (John, 1990).

Compared to the amount of research on turnover in developed countries, there are not many studies on the issue of academic staff attrition and retention in developing countries like

Vietnam documented in the literature and the topic of turnover in these countries tends to be put into the general category of "brain drain" (Wisdom, 2006). Moreover, while the number of studies on this subject in Vietnam is so limited, they primarily explore work characteristics such as salaries or working time (Tan & Hoa, 2018; Hang & Trang, 2013). They ignore and pay scant attention to factors related to the contextual variables especially organizational culture even though many scholars such as Kerr and Slocum (1987), Kopelman & colleagues (1990), Aarons & Sawitzky, (2006), Ellett (2009), Ellett & Rugutt (2003), Ellett, Ellis, Westbrook, & Dews (2007), Lee et al. (2010), and Strand et al. (2010) showed that culture of the organization has various influences on turnover and turnover intention of faculty.

As these matters at higher education institutions have been on the rise, and there is little research on this issue, which can provide a comprehensive picture of organizational culture's contributions to this phenomenon in Vietnam, it is necessary to conduct a research study on the impact of organizational culture on faculty turnover in a particular context, Vietnamese higher education institutions. In this research, turnover intention is examined instead of actual turnover. This is because it is not easy to locate leavers and their response rate is often low (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). In addition, many studies showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between leaving intentions and actual leaving behavior (Bluedorn, 1982; Lee & Mowday, 1987).

As a response to the lack of research on this topic in the context of Vietnamese higher education, this research strives to shed light on the impact of organizational culture on university faculty members' intention to leave their workplace. The research is expected to provide the scientific basis for institutions and relevant stakeholders to devise appropriate interventions so that turnover intention can be reduced. Future faculty members also have reference information to choose the suitable working environment. The study also attempts to enrich existing literature on matters relevant to the research topic such as turnover/turnover intention, organizational culture, and the relationship between organizational culture and turnover/turnover intention.

12.2 Research question

Research questions are built as a guide to the set objectives. The main research questions of this thesis is "How does the organisational culture of Vietnamese public higher education

institutions influence the turnover intention of the faculty members in these institutions?".

In order to answer the major research question, there are a few more relevant subordinate questions which need to be addressed:

- What is the organizational culture of public higher education institutions in Vietnam?

- How to theoretically elucidate the impact of organizational culture on turnover intention of university faculty members?

- In what ways and to what extent does organizational culture impact faculty members' intention to leave public higher education institutions in Vietnam?

12.3 Theoretical background

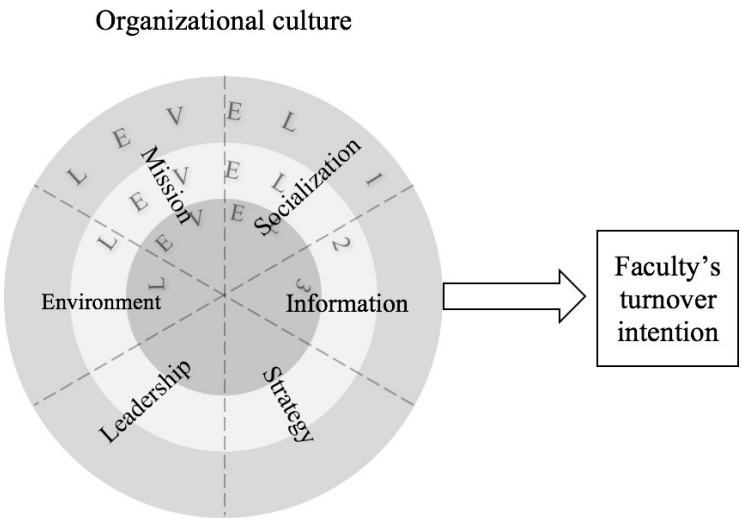
In this study theories of organizational culture are chosen to investigate faculty turnover intention under the impact of university culture. The use of these theories instead of others derives from the fact that they provide a comprehensive and profound understanding of various problems of organizational culture - one of the focuses of this research. Other theories do not look into culture of organization or only mention it as a small part among the factors that affect turnover intention of employees. From a comprehensive analysis of organizational culture through the use of organizational culture theories, the research explores whether organizational culture affects faculty turnover intention. In this process, organizational culture theories help identify what causes the possible impact as well as provide theoretical bases for finding ways to reduce or prevent this phenomenon.

Compared to other theories about organizational culture, so far Schein's three-level theory (Schein, 2010) has been considered as the most useful classification in which aspects of organizational culture have been put into usable groupings (J.Steven Ott, 1989). Many researchers such as Siehl and Martin (1984) and Sathe (1985) have applied this theory to their projects on matters related to organization. The use of Schein's theory is so common that it can be seen as an indication of the start of "a badly needed movement toward general agreement on a conceptual definition of organizational culture" (J.Steven Ott, 1989, p. 61). Another reason for the use of the theory by Schein (2010) to examine the impact of organizational culture on faculty turnover intention is that the inclusion of different levels in doing research on this topic

helps to develop more appropriate and effective ways for organizational enhancement. Specifically, the elements of level 1 (artifacts) cannot create the development strategies or measures to change the basic orientation of an organization. Likewise, the use of level 2 (espoused values) and level 3 (basic assumptions) as a guide to creating organizational change requires “entirely different targets in an organization and a very different arsenal of change tools and approaches” (J.Steven Ott, 1989, p. 56). Plus, measures that prove effective in changing factors in level 1 are likely to fail when used for changing patterns of shared beliefs, values, attitudes, and assumptions (J.Steven Ott, 1989).

I specifically chose the framework by Tierney (1988) to analyse organizational culture, which is built based on a case study of a higher education institution and has been commonly applied by various research studies with the context of higher education institutions (Bartell, 2003). There is no emphasis on conflict or irresolvable tensions of different dimensions of organizational culture in this framework. Instead, it explores this type of culture from the integration approach in the hope that it is easier for leaders to make and to implement their decisions once having a complete and proper understanding of the organization’s culture. In Tierney’s view, the awareness of organizational culture “is to minimize conflict and help foster the development of shared goals” (Tierney, 1988, p. 5). The framework indicates how culture is utilized in this framework, as an “umbrella concept” (Hirsch & Levin, 1999) where the concepts of the framework are identified under the umbrella of culture.

There are six dimensions in this framework named environment, mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership (Tierney, 1988). According to Tierney (1988), each of these dimensions examines different core issues in an organization’s culture from a variety of perspectives. The analytical framework used in this research is illustrated in figure below. It is worth the attention that since culture is an interconnected web of relationships, its dimensions usually overlap and connect with each other (Tierney, 1988). This is why dimensions in the analytical framework are separated by broken lines, which symbolizes the blur boundaries of the dimensions.



Analytical framework of the study

12.4 Methodology

Taking the research objectives of this thesis, characteristics of the research and typical features of research methods into account, the research decided to choose qualitative methods to explore the research topic for a number of reasons (Wisdom, 2006). Since this study aims to understand the opinions of individuals, it is necessary to have a wide range of opinions, which quantitative methods are difficult to examine but qualitative methods can help. When it comes to the characteristics of the research, the important feature of this research that cannot be ignored is the sensitivity of the topic especially in the context of Vietnamese culture. This means that it is very difficult to ask the departments or people in charge to help deliver the questionnaire. Having the enough number of responses to ensure the validity and reliability to conduct quantitative research is, therefore, almost impossible. Another unique characteristic of this research is that according to many researchers, organizational culture is very complicated and values or basic assumptions as representatives for organizational culture are hard to measure. Like organizational culture, the theme of turnover intention is not simple. Quantitative methods almost fail to reveal the reasons why some factors have impact on employee turnover intention while others do not. Besides, there may be intermediate elements between cultural aspects and employee's intention to leave the organization that multiple-choice questions usually used in quantitative methods cannot disclose. The level of influence is also so varied that multiple choice questions can hardly provide accurate reflections. However, many scholars admitted that in the qualitative analysis these claims would come in handy (Cui & Hu, 2012). To be specific, Schein (1990) emphasized that culture is always dynamic and includes all aspects of human functioning; therefore, he recommended using

interview and observation to understand basic assumptions, which are very abstract. For these reasons, this study chose qualitative methods to facilitate the comprehensive understanding of different levels of organizational culture, especially level 2 and level 3 and their impact on turnover intention of faculty members.

When exploring the topic qualitatively, a research design acts as a blueprint to help the data collection and analysis be conducted in a way that can help answer the research questions appropriately (Yin, 2014). Key research designs in qualitative research include case studies, ethnography, and phenomenology, each of which gives a different approach to solving research questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Having compared different research designs in qualitative research, Adelman et al. (1980) pointed out advantages of case study research. Some of them are the ability to create an archive of material on a topic with information and analysis for re-examination in the future for certain purposes and the ability to help a wider audience to have an access to the research. In Yin's view (2014), case studies are appropriate when researchers intend to understand how and why a phenomenon occurs and to examine a phenomenon with contextual impacts, or when the research problem is a phenomenon in a natural context. In addition, case studies are well suited to studies seeking personal insights into a complex phenomenon (Morse & McEvoy, 2014). In this research, turnover intention of faculty members as a result of the impact from organizational culture is a phenomenon in need of investigation, the context is a specific university, and faculty's ideas about the relationship between organizational culture and their turnover intention are collected. Taking these typical aspects of case studies and unique features of this study into account, this thesis found that case study research is a right choice. In spite of the complication of this research topic, case study research is believed to be a suitable method since it allows the complexity of a particular situation to be taken into consideration (Stake, 1995).

12.5 Key findings

To respond to the main research question, the study presented the three sub-questions which were fully answered. Regarding sub-question 1 - "What is organizational culture of public higher education institutions in Vietnam?", through the analysed data, it is clear that the organizational culture of public universities in Vietnam, in particular of teacher training

institutions, is made up of many different dimensions and that all three levels of these dimensions reflect certain features of organizational culture. Since level 3 is the most profound layer of organizational culture, the study tried to reveal it based on some criteria. The research selected elements mentioned by the majority of the interviewees as the representatives for their organizational culture and the bases for explaining the existence of other cultural elements. The comparison between these elements and what is regarded as core/fundamental values of the organization is also used as a criterion. Apart from that, the research based on key words which show how faculty members do in reality to be able work and develop in the university to find basic assumptions. Level 3 is considered to reflect the core of organizational culture and in this case the basic beliefs, values and perception include:

- Morality, professional knowledge and teaching methodologies of faculty are placed on the top in a teacher training university;
- Faculty members follow hierarchical order;
- Faculty members comply with the rules and decisions made by the university.

When it comes to sub-question 2, "How to theoretically elucidate the impact of organizational culture on turnover intention of university faculty members?", the study explored whether six different dimensions of organizational culture affect faculty turnover intention or not. The influence of these dimensions is examined through the theory of three levels of organizational culture by Schein (2010). Among six dimensions of the university's organizational culture analyzed in this research, five were proven to have certain effects on lecturers' intention to quit their organization. They include mission, socialization, information, strategy, and leadership. As for the dimension of environment, it was said to have impact on the work of faculty members, yet most lecturers said that this aspect does not affect their work attitudes. In other words, it makes no impacts on faculty turnover intention.

In finding the answer to sub-question 3, "In what ways and to what extent does organizational culture impact faculty members' intention to leave public higher education institutions in Vietnam?", the research found that the influences of organizational culture on faculty's intention to quit their organization is indirect with varying degrees depending on each element of each dimension. This means that organizational culture causes the formation of factors that are precursors to lecturers' intention to leave the university. Time acts as a catalyst for the change of these precursors into the intention to leave the organization.

Despite the fact that the study only looks at the organizational culture of the whole university instead of going into the culture of each department or discipline, in many respects the lecturers interviewed provided data showing the culture of their department in relation to the university's common culture and the influence of departmental culture on lecturers' intention to leave the university. In particular, when it comes to the dimension of socialization, the majority of the interviewees believed that the department has a major influence on the socialization of the faculty members while the university has only minor influences. Also, the same thing is found in the leadership dimension. Leaders in the department, dean and vice dean, have a direct and strong influence on lecturers' intention to leave their university while the university leaders have influence to a lesser extent.

The difference in culture of the two types of higher education institutions is also reflected in the comparisons between behaviour of lecturers in public and private settings. In particular, lecturers of public institutions are expected to pay attention to hierarchy when they communicate or work with ones having age and position different from them. With regard to lecturers in the private sector, the relationship between and the patterns of behaviour toward each other are thought to be quite equal. Besides, lecturers of private institutions are believed to be able to dress more "freely" and less formal than lecturers in public ones.

The way the higher education system is governed is also proven to have influences on the organizational culture of the university. This is reflected in many aspects. To be specific, that the university rarely shares information with external audiences is said to be a common feature of many Vietnam institutions according to various researchers. This is also showed through the fact that the university must implement regulations set by the state and the Ministry of Education and Training even though they may not be associated with the university mission. In the process of leadership, the leaders of the university are also subject to leadership and under pressure from the state and the Ministry.

Another discovery, which has not been revealed by other studies on the relationship between cultural aspects and attitudes and behaviour of staff, worth being mentioned is that successful socialization of staff may be a cause of their intention to leave their current organization. In this study, it is the faculty' intention to leave their university after they successfully socialize with others in the environment. Faculty members may intend to leave the university after they

succeeded in socializing with others because socialization helps them recognize “unbearable” aspects which they were unaware of before.

12.6 Recommendations

Future studies may choose different scopes to have different perspectives on this topic. The first thing is the choice of examining turnover through the people who have actually left the job to see the exact problem affecting this decision.

Although striving to explore three levels of organizational culture and mention the effect of level 3 on the other two levels, the study did not highlight the relationship among these three levels. This is because the focus of the research is the influence of organizational culture, which is considered from many dimensions with multiple levels on the university faculty members’ intention to quit their organization. In other words, the study explores three levels and acknowledges their relationships but does not have a detailed analysis. Therefore, future studies, depending on the purpose of their research, may consider emphasizing the relationship among the three levels.

While the interview data of this study are gathered from only one public university in Vietnam, other studies can be broadly scaled up and directed to other university groups. Cultural exploration can also be done through investigating other subjects in the university such as leaders, administrative staff and students to create a more comprehensive picture of organizational culture of Vietnamese higher education institutions besides understanding organizational culture and its impact on turnover through only faculty’s perspective. Selected dimensions of organizational culture can also be changed based on the unique features of the research to have different angles of organizational culture that are very diverse and complex. Based on the preliminary findings of this research, other studies may consider using the mixed methods if they can meet the requirements in terms of time and finance to be able to explore this theme comprehensively and profoundly.
Since culture of an institution is also shaped and influenced by a national context and a national system of higher education such as the division of higher education institutions into research universities and applied science universities (Smerek, 2010), major studies may examine the influence of these aspects on the organizational culture of higher education. In addition to looking at the broad picture, future studies may also focus on comparing the views

of faculty members with those of administrative staff about organizational culture in the same university to see if there are any cultural clashes. Cultural conflict, if understood and solved, will help the organization operate more effectively and efficiently.

Based on the findings of this research which explores organizational culture of universities in Vietnam and its effects on faculty's intention to leave their organization, other studies may study policies and measures to create organizational culture aspects that help faculty stay connected with the organization and reduce their intention to depart from it. Studies on the evaluation of cultural-related measures to increase organizational effectiveness including the attachment of faculty members can be conducted as well.

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13 Exploring Professional and Intercultural Capabilities of Finnish Fulbright Returnees in the Development of their Fields of Specialization in Finland

Catherine Nsame

13.1 Background of study

13.1.1 Problem statement

Finland, like many other countries in the world have been involved in international student mobility since the late 1980‘s, whereby Finns travel to other countries for academic exchanges and vice versa through bilateral agreements and institutional partnerships with the respective nations. Despite that the Finnish language could stand as a hindrance to attracting international students in Finland, the country had established measures to address the condition; with higher education institutions teaching courses in foreign languages especially English (Garam, 2012).

While Finland is more interested in boosting its education and promoting diversity in cultures and languages (Finnish Ministry of Education and culture, 2017), international study mobility programs could be an advantage in this context. Studies on internationalization (See e.g., Teichler, 2002; King & Ruiz-Gelices, 2003; Bracht et. Al., 2006) have shown that benefits of international studies are multifarious, ranging from new knowledge and skills acquisition, linguistic improvement, intercultural experiences, etc. acquired as the students interact with persons from various countries and cultures.

In response to education export and internationalization, the Finnish government intends to make Finland an open and international country that is rich in languages and cultures by 2025 (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017). In this light, focus has been to increase knowledge and skills by emphasizing the internationalization of higher education and research. While Finland has been for a long time involved in exporting its education and research, through several international and mobility programs, including government partnership programs, bilateral programs with several countries in various continents, with

different foreign institutions and more, a very common bilateral program between Finland and the United States is the Fulbright. Finland had entered into partnership with the U.S. Fulbright program since the 1960s. A significant number of Finnish students and researchers have participated in this program by enrolling into U.S. universities in America. In the same way, American students and researchers have been enrolled into Finnish universities through this medium. The program has enriched the participants in terms of knowledge and skills acquisition.

Driving out of the human capital context, internationalization has become apparent as a force for advancing constructive and peculiar indicators to employers in a globalized context (Fong, 2011). Thus, Fulbright graduates holding skills in different fields, knowledge of some languages, competencies in cultures, and values, achieved during their term in the United States, have a prospective for employment in or out of their home country. Nonetheless, how the returnees utilize those skills and knowledge in their work practices and in promoting the development of their field of specialization in Finland, is unknown.

13.1.2 Research Questions

Given that the purpose of the research is to determine the significance of Fulbright program to the Finnish society by looking into the practical processes by which the graduates transfer professional skills and intercultural competences to their work, it become vital to examine the transmission factors that facilitates the practical utilization of their professional skills and competences to promote growth in different sectors in Finland. This was done by answering the following research questions;

1. How corresponding are professional skills and intercultural competences acquired by Finnish Fulbright students during their Fulbright term in the U.S. to their field of specialization?

2. How do the returnees transfer those skills and competences to advance growth in their fields of specialization in Finland?

3. What are the challenges encountered by the returnees when utilizing and transferring skills to fields of specialization?

13.1.3 Theoretical background

The study employed the capability approach of Sen (1985) to convey a better understanding of how Finnish Fulbright returnees transform their professional and intercultural skills acquired in the United States during their Fulbright term, to contribute to the development of their field of specialization in Finland. It guides the author to understand the transformation potentials of skills and competences (Professional and intercultural), to the society. Therefore, it is concerned with the process of transforming inputs into out puts, and out puts into outcomes.

13.2 The Capability Approach of Sen (1985)

The Capability Approach (CA) of Sen was developed in 1985, in the fields of economics and philosophy. The theory is mostly used in the context of human development, and is concern with the importance of a person‘s moral ability of achieving the kind of lives they have reason to value. The capability approach stress that every human being possesses unique capabilities to transform goods and services into valuable achievements because of personal, social, and locational arrangements in their lives (Sen, 1985).

The CA is a normative framework for the evaluation of individual well-being and social arrangements, and proposals about social changes in society (Robeyns, 2003), it also adopt forms of capabilities, which could be applied in various contexts (Sen, 1985). As this approach refers to human beings as ends of development process and not means of development (Sen, 1999), its application in this study will provide a better understanding of internationalization of higher education and its role in development. Furthermore, Sen (1999) asserts that development is the proliferation of a person‘s freedom or capability. That is, the ability of a person to do and to be what he/she values (Pham, 2016). Amartya Sen, maintain that the emphasis of the CA on human development, and economic outcomes are useful if they can supply individuals the possibilities to live, and do things the way they value (Sen 1999).

13.3 Concepts of the Capability Approach

The CA is comprised of the following concepts;

13.3.1 Functioning

Clark, (2006) while conceptualizing the terms of the CA, defined functioning as ―an achievement of a person‖ (Clark, 2006, p.4), referring to what a person is and has done. To achieve a functioning, one has to possess a number of commodities that depends on factors such as personal and social. A functioning is how useful individuals make of the commodities at their disposal (Clark, 2006). In her work, on measuring the CA and well-being for public policy, Alkire(2015, p. 3) describes functionings as ‖beings and doings that people value and have reason to value‖. Therefore, functionings can refer to accomplishments that are beneficial to people in different ways.

13.3.2 Capability

While a functioning refers to the end product of what a person does, the ability used to achieve the outcome is called capability. Therefore, capability refers to human ability to achieve a functioning (Saith, 2001). Furthermore, Capability refers to available real opportunities in a particular context or need, thus indicators of development. In this study, commodities signify available resources that facilitate the conversion process to capabilities. Therefore, in the context of how Finnish Fulbright returnees utilize and transfer of skills to promote development of their fields of specialization, resources or commodities would stand for financial resources, environmental factors, and educational facilities. The Fulbright Student Program and research programs provide a given amount of grants to students and researchers for the duration of their term abroad. The incoming Fulbrighters are enrolled in such Universities in the United States that specializes in their field of expertise. This means that the students hold the financial, environmental, and educational resources. The concept of Capability is applied to this study to represent the various kinds of skills, knowledge and attributes gained from studies abroad by the Fulbright graduates. These are categorized into professional skills, intercultural competences, and social values. Functioning in this context refers to the further utilization of the acquired knowledge, skills and competences. Functionings would only happen in the field of work. For instance, when one is employed. It should be taken into consideration that employment on itself is not a functioning; this means that the duties and work performed when employed are what represents functioning. Nevertheless, functionings are not only achieved as a result of employment but they could be carried out by anyone whether employed, self-employed or unemployed, as long as work is being done.

13.4 Methodology

The qualitative research method was used in this study, as an approach to provide answers to the above research questions. The author chose semi structured interviews as an instrument for primary data collection. In accordance with the private schedules of participants, the interviews were collected in the months of August and September 2018. A total of eight interviews were done on Skype and were being audio recorded using iFree Skype recorder software. The interviews were transcribed and coded using QDA Miner 4 Lite software. The study adopts the Capability Approach of Sen (1985) in analysing results. A detail on the CA of Sen (1985) is discussed in Chapter three of this study. The theory is also used to describe the manner by which returnees utilize capabilities acquired from their studies abroad in the U.S., and how this goes further to cause progress in their field of specialization in Finland.

13.5 Key Findings

Answers for research questions were derived by linking informants‘ responses, with the literature review, and the Capability Approach. The results illustrate that the Fulbright returnees have utilized their resources (*commodities*) and exerted the professional skills and intercultural competences *(capabilities*) which they gained in the U.S. at the time of their studies, in promoting growth in Finland through their work (*functionings*). The returnees have done this by utilizing and transferring skills through various activities including; in the Academic milieu that encompasses teaching and research where knowledge is being transferred to students, and new perceptions and skills being introduced and imparted.

Researchers used their skills in carrying out research, in writing articles and opinion pieces. Also, networks with professors and colleagues in the U.S. contributed to enhancing their research. For the industry domain, professional skills and competences are utilized in performing work related to the field in a number of ways, and also transferred to colleagues, trainees, and to other companies. In the industry domain new skills and ideologies were said to be a greater factor contributing to sustainable development in fields of engineering and power system in Finland. As the study used the Capability Approach as framework, results are being analysed in accordance to its concepts of *commodities or resources*; *capabilities; and functionings* (Sen1985). As such, it can be said that the Fulbright program is a

transformative force that turns commodities (which in the literature review are available resources provided to Fulbright grantees that facilitate their learning process in the United States), through conversion factors (teaching, research, and social activities), which aid the achievement of capabilities (professional and intercultural skills and competences), which they further utilize to achieve their functionings. The Fulbright program is considered one of the prestigious international study programs worldwide. It is often believed by some people that the reason has to do with most Fulbright graduates holding higher positions within the society. The study proved that ideology wrong and recognized that there are more benefits of the Fulbright program to the society than just high power positions and status; the sample of participants in this study is a good example, because there was literary no body with a higher position in the society among the eight respondents. Yet, the responses prove that the returnees have done a lot of work to see to the development of their fields of specialization.

According to the findings, the Fulbright returnees‘ skills are higher valued by their employers, meaning that they possess outstanding skills than most of their colleagues who did not take part in the Fulbright studies abroad. This can be seen for instance, in the response of a participant in Chapter 5 of the thesis, who explained that his employer often assigns him to carry out front duties like in transferring skills to other companies, and in training interns, amongst others. Not only in the industry domain but it can also be recalled that a respondent in the academic domain boldly attest to have impacted the lives of several of her students and gave an example of her student taking a lead in a reputable university due to her input. According to the returnees the cultural attitudes, skills and knowledge which they possess have enabled them work and interact effectively with foreigners in Finland.

Respondents such as lecturers who teach foreign students; and others who are involve in consultancy and work with foreign clients out of Finland greatly valued the intercultural competences gained from the Fulbright program. In line with the response of an informant who is a lecturer, it is a difficult process to identify the contribution they could make to promote development in their field of specialization, especially if they do not work as policy makers.

Nevertheless, the lecturers as well utilize skills and expertise in carrying out research activities in the university. At most times, returnees are appreciated for their research activities. In addition, the fact that most returnees in the academic milieu are able to make use

of intercultural competences, including communication and fluency in English during lectures is beneficial.

Furthermore, as the returnees considered their professional skills very beneficial to their fields of specialization, there is therefore enough opportunity for the Fulbright returnees to employ their *capabilities* directly at work in the context of Finland. This could explain why a majority of returnees in the industrial sectors agreed to have had a smooth transition from studies to employment. Concluding from the interview results, it also seems that the Fulbright returnees enjoyed common values with work colleagues, but it was quiet challenging to readapt to the values of Finland immediately after they returned from the U.S. Most informants made it known that they had become accustomed to the norms and values of the U.S. especially when they had lived there for a number of years. Nevertheless, they have readapted to their culture as time went on. Moreover, most returnees believe the American culture and lifestyle have been beneficial to them in Finland; for instance, the Fulbright returnees recount that they were able use the American tactics in searching for jobs in Finland, which was a success. Others admitted that the cultural attitudes of being open and confident to approach people of higher personality enabled them create networks with their managers and leaders as a measure to build chances for future collaboration and opportunities for promoting solution and positive changes in their field. More also, as being analysed from interviews in the transfer of skills in the socio-cultural milieu, the Fulbright returnees to Finland interact freely with internationals living in Finland. They have further recommended their fellow Finnish citizens to create friendships and associate with foreigners in Finland, in order to become more international and multicultural.

The analyses of the findings for this study on the professional and intercultural capabilities of Finnish Fulbright returnees, in the development of their fields of specialization in Finland are presented in chapter 5. The results demonstrate the ability of international graduates to apply professional and intercultural skills acquired abroad in the development of their fields of specialization, through their work.

These findings are to some extent contrasting to available literature on the impact of internationalization, given that most of such studies are limited to the contribution of international studies to employability and monetary values. But this study have proven that employment is not the end to the impact of internationalization, but rather, the contributions

towards development of society at large or different areas like fields of specialization. I will illustrate here, how the findings meet the following aims of the research questions; *i. The relevance of professional skills, intercultural competences and values acquired in the U.S. to the works of the returnees in Finland.* It seems that in line with literature on the factors that attract international students to study abroad, (like universities, quality and availability of adequate resources), the Finnish Fulbright graduates attest the worth of such facilities in meeting their study needs. Thus, their ability to achieve knowledge and skills in their area of study and even interculturally. The returnees as well affirm that those skills facilitated their employability. Besides, they were able to utilize the skills practically in their works. General professional skills other than field related were developed during the Fulbright studies in the United States.

Examples of those mentioned by the respondents are; an innovative spirit, determination, ability to take risk, and leadership skills. Graduates involved themselves in social and cultural activities during their studies, that enabled them to learn some new languages and improved on their English language skills. Accordingly, the Fulbright program improved the language skills of the graduates as already seen in literature in chapter two that international studies contribute to the acquisition of new language skills. Also, building on the intercultural competences model of Deardorff, it seems that Fulbright returnees indulge themselves in socio-cultural activities, and with foreign friends while in the United States, and were able to achieve variables of intercultural competences which Deardorff refer to as; attitudes, knowledge, skills, internal outcomes, and external outcomes (Deardorff, 2006; 2009).

The transformative potential of Fulbright Program in fostering development in the field of specialization of Fulbright returnees, in Finland. Although the Finnish Fulbright returnees are employed in Finland, employment alone is not the outcome of their international studies. As such the study sought to examine the functionings of the returnees, which can be determined by the things they do and what they are. Alkire (2015) termed this as valuable functionings. The results of this study show that functionings were in the area of academics and industry. Returnees were lecturers and researchers in the academic domain, and they utilize skills in lecturing, researching, publication and others, in fostering development in the academic sphere. It could be challenging to identify the activities put in to bring about development in this domain, as seen in the challenges above. This is necessarily because the returnees who were respondents to this study, and working in the universities, do not hold power positions to

enact practical changes in the academic domain. Therefore, their freedom to achieve what they value is limited. In the industry domain returnees exhibit their functionings in several ways including; mentoring and training of interns, and tutoring some university students specialized in their field; transferring of skills and knowledge to other companies (also assisting in solving their practical problems); transferring of skills to work colleagues; and executing sustainable projects related to the field. Here, one can see the practical utilization of professional skills in developing fields of specialization. In that, industry-based activities and sustainable projects are a physical representation of benefits of professional skills achieved by the graduates in the Fulbright program.

The results of this study present, that studies abroad contribute to enhancing the skills and knowledge of students. It shows that international education programs like Fulbright provide students an opportunity to develop their skills internationally. Even though most people measure the outcome of education by employability and economic benefits, the benefits of international education are beyond these; it is seen from this research that Fulbright returnees exert their skills and potentials in any situation where need be, sometimes regardless of being employed.

Nevertheless, it would be necessary that the Fulbright program work in collaboration with some companies and institutions to arrange for immediate placement (could be temporal) of returnees in their home country. With fresh skills and knowledge, returnees can do a lot to promote development in their fields of study. But when returnees are unemployment and there is no place to practice their skills upon graduation, the knowledge and skills evaporate with time. Creating such temporal placement opportunities could curb brain drain.

Although some students after studying abroad are employed in the host country, it would be better that the Fulbright program creates professional links between graduates working abroad and local companies and institutions. If the graduates and local companies can collaborate and work together on projects, there is bound to be some kind of knowledge and skills transfers to the home country. It could be very challenging for graduates who live abroad to transfer knowledge and competences to their country of origin when there is no network between the graduates and local sectors of their field of specialization. However, the graduates on their part are recommended to build connections with such local companies in their area of specialization, and not necessarily depend on another party. This is because, if there is

willingness to participate in developing their sector, then every little effort to achieve the will can be relevant. Furthermore, employers should make available room for graduates to put into practice their skills and knowledge at their workplace. They can open doors for internship and restrictively give preference to returnees. This would be a learning process for both parties; on one hand, the staff of the company will be opportune to gain such new skills and knowledge brought in by returnees. With these their work performance would be improved. On the other hand, the returnees would be taught new field changes in their country. This will help them adapt to the environment.

13.6 Recommendations for further research

Given that the scope of this study is limited to the views of the returnees, it would be interesting to find out from the employers how they can rate the performances of Fulbright returnees against those of locally trained employees in terms of professional skills utilization at work. Only then would this point be backed up with scientific findings. Despite that this study is one attempting to determine the after-employment impact of Fulbright returnees to their fields of specialization in their home country, further research could be done from this study, by conducting a qualitative study on the perspectives of employers regarding Fulbright returnees 'application of skills at their job. This could be a comparative study, finding out what are the differences between locally trained employees and Fulbright trained employees in respect to skills and competences utilization and transfer at work. Another study deriving from the topic of this research could be done quantitatively, with a large group of participants to find out what powers and positions do Fulbright returnees hold in their work. It could be interesting to elaborate on this, by pinpointing the activities carried out by the returnees in high power positions to know their contributions to their country. For instance, a study could be done on how Fulbright returnees working in the Ministry of Education have impacted higher education policies in Finland.

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14 Benefits from Internship: Perceptions of Stakeholders and Conceptualization of an Internship Program in Cambodia

Sopheak Peou

14.1 Introduction

Work experience is increasingly seen as an important complement to traditional higher education (Rowe, 2017). Its significance has provoked attention in postgraduate educational setting, stimulating higher education institutions to integrate practical work experience into academic curriculum. Such an integration forms a type of learning known as the Work Integrated Learning (WIL), an overarching term encompassing a number of programs such as internships, sandwich programs, field work and cooperative education (Rowe, ibid.). With the shrinking graduate labour market and a growing pool of graduate labour, individual students are pressured to develop employability skills that allow them to compete with other job seekers in the hierarchy (O'Connor & Bodicoat, 2016). Work experience gained through WIL, thus, becomes one of the significant competitive edges for students.

For the past 25 years, internships, as a form of WIL, has been increasingly recognized as a common feature of the labour market in industrialized countries (McHugh, 2016). As temporary, short-term work placement, it is still very popular nowadays with many employing organizations, educational institutions, and students (Coco, 2000; Hall et al., 1996; Sides and Marvica, 2007; as cited in Maertz, 2014). With considerable anecdotal and diffuse empirical evidence, internship is reported to have significant benefits (Maertz et al., 2014). It has been documented as win-win situations for both employers and internees (Coco, 2000; as cited in Binder et al., 2015). Meanwhile, it has also been claimed to benefit the participating educational institutions (Maertz et al., 2014); (Beard, 1998, 2007; Teed and Bhattacharga, 2002; Burnett, 2003; as cited in Maelah, 2013).

Nonetheless, the topic of internship has yet received sufficient attention from the academic community. Despite the number of publications pertaining to this topic throughout the years, these extant studies are mainly dominated by the examinations on the benefits of internships, leaving other issues at the margin of attention. Plus, a majority of current studies focus on

elaborating the issues of internship through empirical study methods, but they still lack theoretical explanations. Also, the literatures tend to skew toward the practices in developed countries, whereas those in developing countries remain very limited.

For instance, despite the global prevalence, internship practice has a different implication in Cambodia. As a developing country in Southeast Asia, Cambodia has managed to acquire a stable economic growth for the past decade, at a rate of 6.8% in 2017 and an expected 6.9% in 2018 (World Bank, 2018). This trend of economic growth coupling with the country's membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has paved the way for the rising demands for skilled workers in the market. Interestingly, although there is an increasing number of Cambodian graduates recently entering into the local job market, it has been reported that employers view the students as yet to possess sufficient qualifications for the positions. The World Bank (2012) and the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, for instance, reveal that that Cambodia has encountered the issue of mismatches between market demands and skills of the graduates. Internships, which play an important role in preparing students for prospective employment in the market (Gerken et al., 2012) and which could contribute to the employability of university graduates, however, are not prevalent nor accentuated among stakeholders. At the same time, scientific research and publications pertaining to internship in the context of Cambodia is almost non-existing.

Delving even deeper in the case of Cambodia, it is apparent that academic internship has received disproportionate practices in higher education institutions. In the case of this study, the Department of International Studies, belonging to the oldest university in Cambodia, the Royal University of Phnom Penh, has also provided academic internship to its students. Despite the existence of the internship program since 2011, the program is still confronted by a number of challenges such as the mismatches of expectations among stakeholders, the limited capacity to offer adequate placements to its students, and the mechanism that could ideally propel it toward better results.

In response to this issue, this study fundamentally addresses these concerns. First of all, it aims to complement the gaps in literatures of internship through discussing and consolidating a wide array of issues such as benefits, challenges, motives of participation and internship design from the perspectives of different stakeholders. Secondly, it introduces the new conceptual model entitled the "Cogwheel Model" which has been established on the ground

of resource depend on theory and particularly for this study in order to explain the phenomenon of internship from theoretical point of view. Thirdly, it ascertains to contribute to the scarce academic publication on internship in Cambodia. Eventually, it seeks to conceptualize an ideal internship program based on the inputs of the three stakeholders, specifically for the Department of International Studies, the results of which could be used to compare with the existing model and to reform for the betterment of the program. In order to achieve these aims, this study employs two main research questions backed by several sub-questions since some questions are broad and contain multifarious terms requiring certain emphases.

14.1.1 Main Questions

1. What are the perceptions of the stakeholders on academic internship programme?

2. What is the ideal design for the internship program at the Department of International Studies (DIS) as framed by the stakeholders?

14.1.2 Sub-questions

1. To what extent are the stakeholders (students, universities, and industries) aware of academic internship?

2. What are the benefits and constraints of internships program on stakeholders?

3. What are the factors that drive stakeholders to participate in internship program?

4. What are the common elements of an ideal internship program suggested by the stakeholders?

14.2 Previous Studies on Internships

Academic internship is by far not alien to higher education context. As a form of work-integrated learning, it has been increasingly recognized as a common feature of labour market in industrialized countries (McHugh, 2016) and has to date become ubiquitous in higher education (Gardner & Barktus, 2014). Leonard (2013, as cited in O'Connor & Bodicoat,

2016), nonetheless, maintains that the knowledge of internship remains scanty and unsystematic. Weible (2010) and Maertz et al. (2014) also suggest that there are many names and practices of internships and that there is a necessity that stakeholders clearly identify the type of internship they are referring to.

For the purpose of this study in particular, the term internship and academic internship shall be used interchangeably, and they should be defined comprehensively. Inkster and Ross (1995, as cited in Garder, 2014) suggest that an internship refers to structured and supervised professional experiences in an approved organization or agency where students earn academic credit upon completion of the experiences. Feldman (2016) views internship as a type of work taking place off-campus and are discipline and career-related. Taylor (1988) further adds that these work experiences shall be obtained by students prior to graduation from an academic program. Narayanan and Olk (2010, p.61) delineate that an internship is either paid or unpaid, with faculty and company advisors.

14.2.1 Benefits of Internship to Students

Previous studies on internship suggest that doing internship benefit students' academic development. Maertz et al., (2014) suggest that internship serves as a bridge between the theory of classroom and the world of practice, helping the classroom knowledge become clearer and more practically meaningful to students, thereby allowing for better transfer of classroom training into the workplace. Meanwhile, internship has been reported to improve the learning results of the students (Lee et al., 2010). Binder et al., posit that the net effect of an internship experience amounts to an increase of 3.3 percentage points in the final marks of the students and undertaking internship increases the odds of attaining a high degree classification over a large range of academic courses. Knouse et al., (1999), based on the studies of Dennis (1996), Healy and Mourton (1987), Kane, Healy & Henson (1992), and Taylor (1988), assert that internship can help students to gain immediate skills such as better time management, communication skills, self-discipline, increased initiative and better self-concept, leading to more confidence and less anxiety in the students and the enhancement of specific academic skills.

In addition to advancing academically, internships are also believed to contribute to personal development of the students. Feldman (ibid.) describes internship as contributing to the higher

self-efficacy of the students (Baartman & Ruijs, 2011; Bates et al., 2013; Bullock et al., 2009). Maertz et al., (ibid., p.127) also confirm that the potential benefits of internship include the increase in personal and social efficacy. Citing the results from Gavigan (2010), O'Neil (2010) and Wilton (2008), Feldman further elaborates, that students also benefit from the increase in the ability to reflect, to manage and to lead. Gault et al., (2008; as cited in Weible, 2010) delineates that internship could improve creative thinking of students. Internship programs can reinforce technical competencies, improve analytical skills, and most important foster an awareness of the constant need for adaptability and creativity in a changing world (Coco, 2000).

Another advantage of internship derives from its positive impact on social skill development of the internees. Internship as a delivery form of work-integrated learning program has been reported to influence the positive growth in interpersonal or social skills of the intern students. Feldman (ibid., p.135) indicates through the studies of Bullock et al., (2009), Smith et al., (2007), Wilton (2008) and Simon et al. (2012) that doing internship leads to the improvement in communication, higher ability to work in a team, and improve multicultural skills.

The last but not least benefit of internship is evident in professional development, the area which has been constantly reiterated in literatures. Maertz et al., (ibid. p.127), Taylor (1988, p.393) and Coco (2000) remark that participating in internship could assist in reducing entry shock and increasing comforts a well as efficacy for post-graduation work transition; meanwhile, it also deepens the students' knowledge of industry and possible career options. Also, students can use internships as their own probationary period to check out a potential employer or even their compatibility within a potential career (Coco, ibid.). Furthermore, it can also increase the attraction of the potential employers (Taylor, 1988). Coco (ibid.) shows that after interning with a company, many individuals will be invited to become a part of the permanent staff. As cited in Weible (ibid.), Gault et al., (2008), Taylor (1988), Thiel and Hartley (1997) found that intern students obtained job offers sooner than non-interns, while Coco (ibid.) and Devine et al., (2007) revealed that they would get more job offers than non-interns.

14.2.2 Benefits of Internship to University

As an organizer for the experiential learning for students, university also reaps the benefits

from students' internship as well. In general, students make their journey toward expertise in numerous contexts, and internship and placements can be embedded within formal higher education as forms of apprentice-type learning (Virolainen et al., 2011). By becoming more familiar with the desires of employers, higher education institutions can be responsive to the needs of the marketplace through enhanced preparation for students (Martz et al., 2014; Water and Gilstrap, 2012; as cited in Rothman, 2017). Plus, Weible (ibid.) through different findings in literatures describes the benefits to university as improving reputation, increasing in student recruitment, obtaining smarter students, receiving new scholarships and other forms of funding, establishing networking with the local community, acquiring external curriculum assessment and obtaining practitioner inputs. In his work, furthermore, Weible found through the research with faculty members that students were perceived more likely to enrol in at the institutions with internship programs, and that these programs could increase the reputation of the universities.

14.2.3 Benefits to Employers (Internship Hosts)

The last but not least beneficiary of internship program is the employer, or in other words, the internship host. First of all, internship offers low-cost labour for the organizations (Maertz et al., ibid.). Ward, 1991, as cited in Stone & McLaren (1999), mentions that internship offers the host a talented pool of temporary workers at bargain rate, which in most cases, the students are paid in academic credits and job references rather than cash. Stone and McLaren (ibid.) further add that normally even if they are paid, the cost is minimal compared to that of employing new employees. Secondly, Coco (2000) believes that the intern students have the skills and time to implement special projects for the agency which would often remain undone. By allocating these tasks or other routine, administrative ones to the interns, the host can increase work capacity by freeing full- time employee so that can perform more critical or core tasks (Maertz, ibid. p.127). Plus, internship also renders the benefit on the human resource planning for the company. Through the program, the hosts are able to gain competitive edge in hiring the best and brightest job candidates (Lauber, Ruh, Theuri, & Woodlock, 2004; as cited in Capka & Fotlin, 2017, p.2). For one thing, employers find it easier to assess potential employee from their interns than from the one-hour interview with someone off the street who is an unknown entity (Coco, ibid.). Plus, the conversion rates among interns to permanent has also been high (Griffitts, 2016, p.109). Also, interns could also bring in potential new ideas and approaches to the organizations (Maertz, ibid.). Fourthly,

Schaefer (1996; as cited in Stone, ibid.) remarks that existing employees at the host organizations also refresh their ideas and attitudes as a consequence of mentoring interns. Last but not least, through internship, the hosts could also improve their public images both within and outside the organizations (Stone, ibid.).

14.3 Challenges to Internship

On the other hand, whereas the merits of internship have been widely pronounced, internship has also been the subject of criticism and hindrances. In their study, O'Connor and Bodicoat (2016) reveal that internship programs have also been viewed, particularly by students, as a form of exploited work, a job for students desperately in need of employment, and as an uncertain factor contributing to their future careers. Holyoak (2013) describes four types of experiences that could arise from the program such as optimal conditions for learning, intern non-development, supervisor frustration and mutual dissatisfaction.

In their study, Maertz et al. (ibid. p.128) further elaborate the costs and pitfalls for students and other stakeholders. For the student interns, the issues are often associated with the vaguely defined and communicated expectations between the students and the employers, which could lead to frustration. In addition, unchallenging, routine, or irrelevant tasks also constitute the problem. Plus, other factors including the inadequate training, supervision and feedback from the employers and the potential costs such as transportation, time, other opportunity costs and credits also constraints the impact and participation of the students.

Apart from the intern students, university is by no mean excluded from the costs incurring during the internship. Maertz et al., (ibid.) list four main constraints to the faculty members as well as the university as a whole such as (1) increase administrative oversight, (2) the loss of productivity of the faculty internship supervisor, (3) the involvement of staff and faculty as time consuming and under-appreciated and (4) potential legal liability.

On the host's side, Griffitts (2016, p.110), suggests that with the nature of internship as a short-term program, the dissatisfying program could be modified or discontinued without critical disruption to the business. Nevertheless, like Maertz et al., (ibid.), Griffitts also maintains that issues such as the legality regarding the payment to interns can be a concern. Maertz et al, further explain that sometimes, interns may provide little return to the hosts, lack

certain skills such as time management, dependability, taking initiative, criticism and other job skills. The programs are also time and resource consuming and difficult to design meaningful assignment (Maertz et al., ibid.), which could result in negative experiences for interns, and which will be shared to other students and affect the reputation of the hosts (Griffitts, ibid., p.111).

14.3.1 Stakeholders' Motivation to Participate in Internship

Unlike the benefits of internships, which has concentrated a lot of emphases from scholars, the issue of stakeholders' motivation in internship has been left at the fringe of attention. For this study particularly, it has been seen that as few as two academic papers discussing this issue, one focusing on internee, while the other on internship hosts.

For the student, Blomquist (2013), found that interns would have felt more motivated to do the work if there had been rewards for them. 8 out of 14 respondents suggested that rewards would have motivated them to perform better. Besides, other factors such as the working conditions, equipment, cooperation with colleagues, personal relationship with supervisor had been agreed by the interns to have motivated their performance.

In the study on the involvement of employer in school-to-work transition programs, Bailey (1995; as cited in Bailey & Hughes, 1999) identified three types of motivation that may affect the employers' decision to participate in such programs – philanthropic, individual, and collective benefits. As described by Bailey (ibid.), the employers may participate in the program in order to reach out to community or helping youth. Plus, the program could also bring benefits to the companies such as positive public relations as contributing to the education, inexpensive labour and long-term human resource planning for the companies. Moreover, the participation in the program could generate quality human resources for the collective market.

14.3.2 Internship Design

Coco (2000) believes that successful internship program depends on the competency and motivation of all the parties involved. Nonetheless, in order to achieve the maximum results that satisfy all stakeholders, they have to come together to design the program. Divine et al. (2008 as cited in Maelah, 2014, p.484) established a particular framework that explained the

involvements of university, students and employer through some certain roles.

To maximize the internship experience, Ball & Wallcott (ibid.) imply the necessity to assess the purposes and characteristics of the study program. For the purpose of this study, these elements of internship designs will be used to frame an ideal internship program among stakeholders, and these include:

1. Duration
2. Placement time
3. Participants (Academic Years and Performances)
4. Internship tasks
5. Assessment
6. Compensation

14.4 Theoretical Framework

Previous studies have employed very limited theories to explain the phenomenon of internships. As Narayanan et al. (2010) point out, literature on business school internships is scant, lacks a dominant theoretical perspective, and is largely descriptive in most empirical studies. Plus, the theories having been used in the studies on internship so far, according Narayanan (ibid.), revolve around three topics: socialization, learning and human resource theories. Furthermore, to date, the studies on internships tend to be predominated by the learning theories concerning students than other theories pertaining to the other two stakeholders. In addition, a theory which reflects a broader phenomenon of internship remains missing. To bridge this gap, this study offers a different len for viewing internship. The study introduces a novel “Cogwheel Model” as an alternative theory to explain the phenomenon of internship.

14.4.1 The Cogwheel Model

Based on the existing theories of internship such as the experiential learning theory and the resource dependence theory, The “Cogwheel Model” is derived. Unlike the learning theories which describe the phenomenon of internship from one aspect, the Cogwheel Model presents a comprehensive knowledge about internship touching on different aspects such as the benefits, motives of participations of the stakeholders and the need for inputs of from the

stakeholders in internship design.

Traditionally, students, university and employee are connected, and there is no exception to this status quo when it comes to internship. Building on the perspective of Resource Dependence Theory, the Cogwheel Model perceives that each of the stakeholders in internship (students, university and employing organizations) represents a single entity which wields the power over particular resources. This perception surpasses the existing boundary of the resource dependence theory, which only studies the relationships between resources and organizations. Yet, in reality, individuals are the constituent of the organizations, and like organizations, they also possess invaluable resources and meanwhile the constraints of resources as well.

As individuals, students are endowed with innate and acquired resources such as their knowledge, skills, personalities, intelligence, and financial capacity, just to name a few. For the universities, these resources can be channelled to sustain the university's existence and operations through a number of ways such as admission, tuitions fees and/or achievement which influence the university's reputation. Meanwhile, employing organizations see them as potential human resources which could be economical (contingent workers), competent, and competitive future employee.

On the second hand, as a knowledge-based institution, universities generate, preserve and transmit knowledge as their core missions (Sam & Dahles, 2015, p.3). They impart knowledge to students through teaching and learning experiences. They also provide a conducive learning environment and opportunities for students to develop their skills. Simultaneously, they comprise of a pool of talents (faculties and students) and research capacity that the employing organization may desire for. In addition, they perform as entrepreneurs, provide governance and support firm formation and technology transfer (Sam & Dahles, ibid.).

Different from the university where theories are often strongly emphasized, employing organizations are more practically oriented. As Sam and Dahles (ibid.) describe, industries (employing organizations) produce goods and services, provide high level of training in their area of expertise, and undertake research and development activities. They have the capacity to supply practical learning experiences to students; meanwhile, they serve as a source a

finance and knowledge which is potentially useful for the university.

Internships, as well as other work-based types of learning, is a critical instrument. In the "model" below, it is represented by the two cogwheels which lie at the heart of the triangle of connection among students, university and employer. The function of the cogwheels is to circulate the resources from one stakeholder to another.

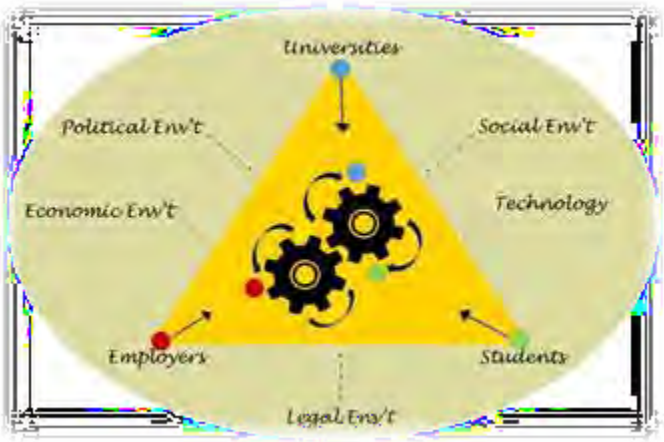
During these circulations, certain resources are absorbed by different stakeholders. Nonetheless, it is important to bear in mind that the two wheels trigger the movement of each other, but the movements are in the opposite directions. The rationality behind this is that resources from the university are absorbed in by students, who through internship, will pass on the resources within themselves and what they have acquired on to the internship hosts. Yet, simultaneously, the resources such industrial expertise, work experiences and so forth will be passed on to the students and the university in the opposite direction. Hence, the movements of the two wheels suggesting that the circulations of resources are not a one-way process.

The Cogwheel Model postulates that the force is emanated from at least one of the stakeholders who seeks to obtain the resources from others. Once the force is imposed onto the wheel, or in other words, internship begins, the resources will start circulating. Moreover, to ensure the smooth movement of the resources, there is a necessity that the wheels could move correctly and sustain each other. This metaphor implies that the three stakeholders have to come together to design the ideal wheels (internship) if they are to obtain optimal benefits from them.

Although the wheels are propelled and/or sustained by the forces projected from employing organization, university, and students, these forces are barely exclusive to these three stakeholders. Like resource dependence theory, the Cogwheel Model employs the perspective of open system. In other words, the interactions among the three stakeholders in internship are also embedded in context or environment; therefore, they cannot be free from environmental forces such the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal influences, which are normally known to be focused on in the PESTEL Analysis. The Cogwheel Model also maintains that all of these external influences are important, yet in internship, the factor related to environment (as in environmental protection, for example) is less relevant. This is not to say that it is not important at all and should be discarded, but the model would rather

that the other five factors constitute the major forces.

With all of the power supplies from the three stakeholders as well the external environments, the wheels of internship will continue to spin and sustain. These constant movements prescribe the internship as a dynamic system. Plus, the continuity and the movement patterns create the “Circle of Infinity”, which implies the sustainability of internship as work-based learning program. Last but not the least, the Cogwheel Model is not limited to internship; rather it can also be used to explain other delivery programs of work-based or work-integrated learning.



14.5 Methodology

This research study was conducted specifically at a higher education institution in Cambodia known as the Department of International Studies. This department provides two undergraduate studies programs in International Relation and International Economics. While thriving for excellence for the students, the department also offers an internship program, yet there are still several areas to make the program better. This study, hence, probed into the internship program of the department, involving the current students and faculty members. Plus, it also sought for perspectives of potential internship hosts for these study programs, specifically this target HEI.

The study employed a mixed method, cross-sectional, study design. As indicated by Creswell (2014), mixed method design is a hybrid model built on the strengths and limitations of its predecessors: the quantitative and quality methods. Of the existing models, this study focuses on the “Convergent parallel mixed methods”, which involves collecting both quality and

quantitative data almost at the same time and then converging or merging them to derive the interpretation of the comprehensive analysis of the research problem (Creswell, ibid., p.44).

For this study, the interviews were conducted with four international non-profit organizations which deemed related to the study majors (international relations, economics and politics) of the target university. The interviews were conducted under a prescribed guideline comprising of a set of questions. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structure way, focusing on two major sections: (1) the perceptions of the interviewees on internship and (2) and their inputs on conceptualizing an internship program.

Questionnaires were used in order to collect data from the students pursuing their study at the target HEI. Designed particularly for this study, the questionnaires comprised of certain characteristics. First, they were created using Khmer (Cambodian) language in order to facilitate the understanding of Cambodian students (the respondents) and to avoid unnecessary confusion in term of the language use. The questionnaires were divided into five main sections: (1) The knowledge on internship, (2) The advantages and disadvantages of internship, (3) The factors motivating participations of the respondents in internship program, (4) The conceptualization of an ideal internship program for the Department of International Studies, and (5) The personal information of the respondents. Within these 5 sections or subsets, there are 27 questions, taking various forms such as the multiple choice and Likert scales.

The procedure of data collection was conducted between April and May, 2018. For the qualitative part, the interviews were conducted with representatives from four international non-governmental organizations in Cambodia, which had been providing internship as a part of their operations and which were deemed to be potential internship partners for the target university. The interviews were conducted through Skype between the interviewer (in Germany) and the interviewees (in Cambodia), with average durations between 40 to 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted in two different languages, Khmer (Cambodian language) and English in order to accommodate the convenience of the interviewees, half of whom were Cambodian and the other half were foreigners currently working and residing in Cambodia.

For the surveys with the students, out of 150 questionnaires disbursed, 126 questionnaires

were return, with the rate of response was 84%. The number of questionnaires returned for year one amounted to 19, year two 32, year three 42, and year four 32. The analyses of the data were conducted according to the types of instruments and the methodology. The qualitative data from the interviews were analysed through the qualitative data analytical method known as the framework analysis, whereas survey questionnaires were analysed using the analysed using the IBM SPSS statistical platform.

14.6 Findings

14.6.1 Knowledge and Awareness on Internship

Having been described earlier in the literature review section, internship has been understood differently by different stakeholders, and there is a necessity to ensure that the stakeholder is one the same par when it comes to discussing the issue of internship. Using the data collected from the respondents, the study has been able to detect the familiarity of the stakeholders with the concept and practices of this work-integrated learning.

For students, internship was viewed mainly as an extracurricular activity untaken in a part-time manner and usually associated with their fields of studies or skills. Also, only a small percentage of students perceived that an internship was a paid job. Moreover, on average, the students reported that their level of awareness about internship program provided to Cambodian students was limited, at the level of 2.98 on the scale from 1 to 5 (1 denoting the absence or very little knowledge about internship, 3 moderate knowledge and 5 very good knowledge). More specifically, 69.8% of the surveyed students claimed to have been aware of the internship program provided by the target HEI, but almost 88.1% had never participated in this internship. Past participants were students whose academic performances were scored between fairly good and good.

From the target HEI side, the interviewed faculty members unanimously agreed that internship was a type of job whereby intern students would acquire practical, real-life work experience related to their fields of studies. In general, Interns were reported to be current students, fresh-graduates and/or postgraduate students, but more particularly for the target HEIs, interns were junior students still pursuing their studies. Meanwhile, faculty members also maintained that the knowledge and practices of internship in Cambodia remained quite limited and fragmented especially among HEIs.

The interviews with the internship hosts further added more profound understanding on the issue. From the perspectives of the host, internship was not seen as a mean to full- time employment, or in other words, doing internship with the host did not promise a later employment opportunity. Rather, the hosts saw it as an opportunity for the interns to learn and to receive mutual benefits between the interns and the hosts themselves. In addition, the interviewers further claimed that interns would not be considered as replacements for full-time position; they would offer add-on value to the organizations. The current practices of internships at these organizations also demonstrated that internship was a paid job, to be undertaken by undergraduates, fresh graduates after two years, and postgraduates in a period of minimum 6 months and maximum 12 months. In term of practices, the hosts also revealed that the application of internship in the context of Cambodia was limited. There has been a small number of participants, and women and minority groups' participation were still not prevalent.

14.6.2 Benefits of Internships for Students

In addition to the knowledge and awareness of internship practices in Cambodia as well as the target HEI, the study also illustrated that the benefits were evident across the stakeholders. The surveyed students from the target university perceived that internship benefitted or would benefit their academic development, personal skills, social skills and prospective career. As much as 73.8% of the students believed that internship helped them bridge the classroom concepts with the real-world practices. 62% perceived that doing internship could help them to increase their class participation and sharing. A large number of the students (80%) thought that they could deepen their understanding and knowledge after participating in an internship program. Meanwhile, the majority of students, in average, thought that participating in the internship would increase their self- efficacy, enhance thinking skills, leadership, creativity and problem-solving skills. The data also pointed out that 88% of the students were also convinced that they could increase their communication skills, while roughly more than 76% thought that it could help them to nourish their ability to work in team and to work in diverse environments. Furthermore, in term of professional development, the top three benefits cited by the students were that internship helped them to understand the industry and future career options, reduced their entry shock and rendered them experiences demanded by the market.

14.6.3 Benefits to University

Like the students, the interviewed faculty members and internship coordinator at the target HEI also claimed that the university would be able to reap benefits through internship. They believed that internship linked to the reputation and enrolment at the target HEI. Internship was said to boost the reputation of the institutions, leading to the growth in enrolment rate. Simultaneously, the target HEI could build networks with the public institutions such as ministries and also with industry, which could result in future assistance and funding as well curriculum reform at the target HEI.

14.6.4 Benefits to Internship Hosts

There were also added value of interns for the internship host organizations. In all of the interviewed organizations, the interns helped to perform some administrative tasks and conducting research or other tasks related to the organizations. The internship hosts were positive in describing interns as young and enthusiastic forces that brought in skills that may or may not be readily available in the office. One of the interviewees, the HR manager, suggested that interns could also help spread the words of mouth regarding the quality of the organization as a potential employer, and for some certain groups of interns such as female students, they could also be encouraged to become staff in the organization currently having shortage in this area.

14.6.5 Challenges to Internship

In spite of the perceptions that internships were beneficial, barriers have also been cited among the stakeholders as deterrence to participate in internship program. From the perspective of the students, doing internship required intensive investment on time and resources. It could further increase anxiety among the students, particularly for those who were also studying and interning at the same time. Almost one-third of them suggested it was often not paid and may not be relevant to their study majors.

Similar to the students, the faculty members also commented on the challenges facing the university in implementing the internship program. One issue was that interns would represent the HEI in front of the internship hosts; hence, they could present either positive or negative image of the HEI based on their performances. Yet, the internship coordinator also described

that many interns under-prioritized the tasks, thinking that what had been assigned to them had been trivial. Their shortage of knowledge, commitment and punctuality was also described as a key challenge. In addition, the unstable demand for interns, the shortage of hosting capacity, the provision of unrelated tasks and the heavy bureaucracy were also mentioned as challenges from the hosts. Last but not the least, the constraints within the university itself lied in its capacity to offer the placements to students and also the bureaucracy involved.

The interviewed hosts also demonstrated that they had faced several challenges. First, they were quite concerned with the performances of the interns. Such issues as lack of maturity, discipline, and attention on tasks were cited as the drawbacks from interns which could be challenging to the host organization. Plus, the hosts themselves also perceived that they still had low hosting capacity, particularly in the quantity and also the preparation of the tasks assigned to interns.

14.6.6 Motivation to Participate in Internship

In addition to the benefits and challenges identified by the stakeholders, the study found that there were also factors which had motivated and demotivated them to participate in an internship. The study on motivation and demotivation of the students and university was rather particularly related to the target HE, while those of the hosts deemed more general.

As reported by the surveyed students, they perceived that their participation or intention to participate in internship program at the target HEI was driven by the perceived benefits of internship on personal development, future careers and academic development. Having sufficient resources necessary to participate in the program was also cited by slightly more than half of the students. Financial motivation and encouragement from the surround were found to have less impact on the decision of the students to participate. In addition, two main factors that demotivate them not to participate was lack of time since they were doing their undergraduate studies at two universities at the same time and that they feared that it could negatively affect their studies.

In addition, the target HEI's motive to offer internship program to their students was sparked from the perceived benefits of this program. The provision of internship was said to facilitate

the application of classroom knowledge and the acquisition of work experiences. The nature of the study program, the motive to encourage social contribution and community services, and the vision of the head of department were suggested as other motivators.

For the internship hosts, two main reasons were responsible for the host involvements. First, the interviewed organizations were driven by the philanthropic reasons, such as to help nurture human resources in Cambodia via equipping with knowledge through working in authentic environments. Secondly, the motivation was also influenced by their human resource planning and strategies, as internship would serve as additional, temporary human resources.

14.6.7 Conceptualization of Internship Program for the Target HEI

The sought for an ideal design for internship program at the target HEI was significant as it could help to benchmark with the existing program and to reform for better results. Through the surveys and interviews with the stakeholders, no ideal design was exactly reiterated by the respondents. Nevertheless, there were some common ideal elements of internship which could be used to structure the ideal program.

The data indicated that the ideal internship duration should be between 3 to 6 months and having more or less could diminish the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Internship program should be offered as an extracurricular, voluntary option, and should be given to junior students. The stakeholders also expected that internship tasks should be relevant to the majors and skills of the interns. The outcomes of internship should be assessed by the internship supervisors and through internship report. Plus, all of the surveyed stakeholders unanimously consented that internship should provide some monetary benefits to the interns.

14.7 Conclusion and Future Research

This study on the perceptions of stakeholders on academic internship program in Cambodia and on the conceptualization of an ideal internship program has managed to shed light on certain issues. First, the study has been conducted under the framework of a novel conceptual model “The Cogwheel Model”, within which the benefits, motivation and internship designs have been considered critical elements. Second, the study has found that academic internship benefits all stakeholders involved in spite of the fact that there have been some factors hindering their participation. One interesting finding from the study which also elaborates the

current practices in Cambodia is that students have been reluctant to partake in internship program due to the fact that they have been doing two undergraduate studies at the same time. The shortage of knowledge, capacity and low research culture in the country were also cited as barriers to internship. Third, although no exactly the same ideal design has been obtained from the three stakeholders, ideal elements for the program have been found. These findings shall contribute to the reforms of the program at the target HEI and also contribute to the literature on internship design.

Future research studies should address the difference in perceptions regarding the benefits, challenges, and motives of participation of as many diverse groups of respondents as possible. Doing so will allow for more understanding about the issue from comparative points of views. Plus, the newly established model, which is built on the resource dependence theory, can be further explored and/or applied to address more issues such as internship designs or even other delivery programs of work-integrate learning.

14.7.1 Acknowledgement

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15 The Perception of International University Rankings Among Prospective Students in Russia

Nikolai Shmelev

15.1 Research Background

International university rankings have become a global phenomenon in the recent decades, affecting individual student decisions, academic practices and priorities, university strategies, and government policies in many countries. As evidenced by numerous expert reports and national studies, the role of global educational rankings is on the rise (Hazelkorn, 2009, Rauhvargers, 2013, Rauhvargers, 2014). Hazelkorn offers two main causes for this trend: on the one hand, governments see university rankings as an instrument that promotes knowledge-based economy and helps achieve an edge of international competitiveness; on the other hand, students (and their parents) are becoming savvy customers who relate their employment prospects with educational quality through rankings (2009: 3).

In Russia, the quality and reputation of universities as measured by their ranking positions have been reported to be among major factors that shape students' opinions and determine their decisions in relation to selecting a place to study (Efimova, 2011, Ryabokon, 2016).

At the same time, some observers argue that the perception of international rankings by students may not reflect their real value and purpose. Rankings can be flawed, confusing and misleading (Anowar et al., 2015). This is especially dangerous since students tend to see rankings, almost unanimously, as legitimate sources of public information on higher education quality (Hazelkorn, 2007; Usher & Savino, 2007; Sadlak et al., 2008).

15.2 Problem Statement (Research Gap)

If one conceives of university rankings as a market instrument, if not a commodity, then it is only reasonable to apply to rankings those theories that seek to explain the perception of economic agents in relation to this instrument. The consumer perception theory is a well-developed conceptual framework that has been widely used in academic research and for

practical purposes. The theory aims to determine why consumers chose to buy certain products and services by exploring the mechanisms through which consumers perceive not only product and services, and the benefits and risks associated with their acquisition and consumption, but also consumers' expectations, intentions, and behaviors. With certain reservations, it could be hypothesized that this theory is applicable to university rankings.

It remains curious why the consumer perception theory has not so far gained popularity in higher education research. The theory appears to provide powerful conceptual instrumentation that could be employed to analyse student perception of specific elements and features of the higher education reality, including university rankings. Given its practical relevance in the management and behavioural studies, the application of the theory to the study of student perceptions of university rankings may have interesting practical implications for students, universities, policymakers and ranking publishers.

15.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this research is to investigate the potential and limitation of applying the consumer perception theory to explaining perceptions of university rankings by Russian students. Specific objectives are as follows:

1. To conceptualize the relevance of the consumer perception theory to the university ranking perception context

2. To identify specific elements of the consumer perception theory and related concepts that could be useful in the investigation of student perception of university rankings

3. To test the applicability of these elements on samples of Russian students using qualitative and quantitative research methods

4. To identify limitations of the applicability of the theory

5. To suggest conceptual and practical implications of using the theory in the investigation of student perceptions of university rankings

15.4 Research Question and Sub-Questions

The main research question can be formulated as following:

What is the potential and the limitations of applicability of the consumer perception theory to the investigation of the perception of university rankings by Russian students?

The following set of research sub-questions will be addressed in this study. In the formulation of the sub-questions and in further discussions any reference to “students”, “applicants”, or “candidates” should mean a reference to prospective and actual students in Russia.

1. Does the perceived value of using university rankings by prospective students in university selection situations relate primarily to the expectation of utility maximization or psychological and emotional factors? This question seeks to explore the perceived motivation of students behind their decisions to consult university rankings. This motivation is most probably a combination of rational and emotional mental drivers, as predicted by the consumer perception theory. Prevailing and secondary drivers will be identified.

2. Can stages of perception as offered by the consumer perception theory be used to explain why prospective students select to consult a particular ranking? This question explores whether sensation, selective attention, selective distortion as stages of perception of consumer goods could be applied in the university rankings context and what could be made of it. Specifically, the question seeks to establish how stages of perception guide a ranking selection decision.

3. Are prospective students subject to perceptual risk and perceptual overload as suggested by the consumer perception theory? This question expands on the previous one by exploring specific aspects of selective distortion as an important stage in consumer perception process.

4. What are the elements of university ranking quality as perceived by prospective students? Which quality cues have the most effect on students’ perception? This question seeks to establish whether university ranking methodology (intrinsic cue) or ranking popularity, country of origin, and brand (extrinsic cues) have a higher role in

forming the perception of university rankings quality.

5. To what extent do the matrix (table) or list format of a ranking and the organization of its content in the form of relative (numerical) attributes facilitate its usage and influences its perception? This question is aimed to investigate whether students are helped by the matrix (table) format and numerical presentation of the rankings content. Using this format and content presentation, students may choose between two information processing strategies: by category or by university entry. Identifying the prevailing strategy not only will help to establish the focus in ranking perception but will also help understand the relationship between information processing strategy and other aspects of consumer perception in the university rankings context.

15.5 Methodology and Research Design

This research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative methods, an approach known in academic literature as “the mixed method.” Combining qualitative and quantitative methods has become a recent trend in the social sciences (Kelle, 2006), with education-related research being one of the pioneers (Creswell & Garrett, 2008). It is believed that capturing the complexity of some educational and social issues is much more doable by utilizing the mixed method, rather than relying solely on qualitative or quantitative research. (Creswell, Shope, Plano Clark, & Green, 2006).

Sandelowski (2000) conceptualizes seven distinct templates for mixed method research design options. These templates differ based on whether they use concurrent or sequential design, the order of qualitative/quantitative method application in the sequential design, and relative weights of methods. Of the proposed templates, this study will follow the first template, identified as “QUAL > quan” (sequential, qualitative research is emphasized and is followed by quantitative research). The logic behind this template is to make use of qualitative research phase to explore the issue in depth and to collect insights which could be used to develop and calibrate a measurement instrument to be applied during the quantitative phase. The quantitative phase is aimed to conform or to disprove inferences made based on the qualitative phase findings and to determine their generalizability.

15.5.1 Phase 1. Interviews

By conducting a series of interviews, this phase was aimed to explore aspects of student perception of global university rankings as formulated in research sub-questions. Interviewees were asked open-end questions that would prompt them to respond on issues of their choice of rankings, rankings' perceived value, the process of perception, their motivation, justification and emotional state, their perception of rankings' brands and reputation, among others. A preliminary list of interview questions (Appendix A) was prepared in advance but was used only as a guidance aid in the interview process. The exploratory nature of the interviews allowed responders to deviate from the central theme of questions and to bring in any insights that they deemed important or relevant. Each interview lasted from 40 to 60 minutes and was carried out in the form of an informal conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee following a general interview plan (a semi-structured interview). Time and resource limitations of this project did not allow for a full-scale application of the interview technique (with recording, transcribing and coding stages). However, to ensure a degree of validity and reliability, careful notation of each interview was conducted. Interviews were conducted in Russian.

15.5.2 Phase 2 - Surveys

The data collected during the interview phase were analysed (See chapter "Data presentation and analysis"), and the main findings were used to design a survey instrument for the quantitative phase (Appendix B). The objective of this phase is to validate the findings obtained during the quantitative phase. The survey instrument utilized the standard Likert scale format questions in the main party, with 0 meaning "strongly disagree with the statement" and 10 meaning "strongly agree with the statement". The survey instrument also included introductory questions aimed to collect additional data on responders' age, academic interests and social background. The survey was made in English.

Survey questions were formulated in a way as not to push responders to reveal their personal views on controversial issues in a direct way. Such an approach could be uncomfortable to some responders, prompting them to give biased answers. Instead, questions were formulated as to inquire about responders' opinions on what other people like them might think regarding the issue.

15.6 Key Findings

The present study was designed to investigate the relevance and limitations of the consumer perception theory in explaining Russian students' perception of university rankings. Data collected during interviews and surveys point to the potential of the theory in offering a powerful conceptual framework for the analysis of how students view rankings, why they use rankings, and what factors drive their choice of rankings.

One of the main takeaways of the current study is the confirmation of the hypothesis that students' perception of university rankings as expressed in their expectations, attitudes, and opinions concerning various ranking attributes and their assessment of rankings' value can deviate from the objective properties of rankings and their purported objective value as manifested in rankings' methodology. Furthermore, the consumer perception theory can provide insights as to why different groups of students perceive rankings in different ways.

One should be aware, however, of limitations of the consumer perception theory applicability in the higher education context, and to examining the perception of university rankings in particular. Because rankings are not a tradable commodity, the theory should be applied with discretion. Nonetheless, many of its constructs—perception stages, perceptual risk, perceptual overload, perceptual defense, perceived quality cues, consumer information procession—can be used to produce meaningful conceptual insights and practical results.

Empirical data indicate that irrational factors play a significant role in students' perception of rankings as an instrument of university selection. Furthermore, we can cautiously conclude that the role of emotions and psychological factors is greater than that of strictly rational considerations. Specifically, students often perceive rankings as a way to achieve a more convenient and less onerous way to choose a good education program, to follow established conventions (the crowd effect) or to confirm their preconceptions. Not surprisingly, older and more experienced applicants (MBA candidates) appear to have a greater awareness that their decision to use rankings is impacted by irrational factors. At the same time, when asked directly about the value of using rankings, students would almost universally produce a utility maximization rational response.

Based on available results, it is reasonable to hypothesize that although psychological and emotional factors have more weight in students' perception of rankings, student tend to

rationalize their use of rankings.

Data collected in interviews and surveys point out that on average older and more experienced students (MBA candidates) are less likely to consider ranking selection to be a difficult task, which means that for this group of students selective attention may have less relevance as a perception stage than for younger and less experienced students. Similarly, older and more experienced applicants may have a better understanding of the features of a good educational program, and they may be guided by a preconceived image thereof in their selection of rankings. These results, however, should be taken with a grain of salt, as empirical data are not sufficient to validate them conclusively. On the other hand, students tend to agree that their choice of rankings is influenced by what they think well fits their objectives and what is endorsed by the educational community or by the media. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that students try to relate their perception of rankings to their internal mental frame of reference and therefore are subject to selective distortion.

The study demonstrates that students have a relatively high level of risk awareness when it comes to university rankings. Response data suggest that students perceive the risk of not meeting their expectations of rankings, and this perception guides their attitude towards ranking selection. This observation is in accordance with the perceptual risk hypothesis as it is formulated by the consumer perception theory. In other words, students choose rankings in an attempt to minimize the negative consequences that they associate with not using them. At the same time, students are also aware of the risk of using rankings. However, these results could be interpreted to indicate that students realize the cost of making the wrong decision and therefore they consider choosing the right rankings to be very important.

The perceptual overload as a theoretical concept is also applicable to university ranking perception. Overall, students tend to minimize perceptual overload as demonstrated by their tendency to regard conflicting information in rankings in a negative light.

The study demonstrates that students' perception of rankings could be analysed through the theoretical lenses of quality cues. Judging from conclusions to previous research questions, it is possible to assume that students would demonstrate a strong leaning towards using extrinsic quality cues, such as ranking reputation, popularity or country of origin. In reality, student responses suggest that intrinsic quality cues (as reflected in ranking methodology) are

employed nearly as often. It is reasonable to conclude that students indeed use both intrinsic and extrinsic cues to assess ranking quality, or they wish to think that they use intrinsic cues whereas their judgments of ranking quality are mainly guided by extrinsic cues.

Students appreciate the convenience of the list or matrix (table) format of ranking presentation. Students believe that this format of content presentation facilitates consumer information processing. Furthermore, students tend to process the matrix (table) format content by comparing data on universities in separate categories rather than analysing data in categories for a single university.

15.7 Recommendations

Practical and conceptual implications of the study are presented in this chapter. Based on the results, the following recommendations can be made.

Students should be aware that their perception of rankings is driven in large by emotional and psychological factors. Thinking that using rankings is a purely rational behaviour may be self-delusory. Furthermore, students must realize that their behaviour may be guided by a desire to accommodate their internal frame of reference (preconceived images of what makes good education, a good university or a good ranking). Cognizant of risks associated with precepting rankings based on factors of various nature, students can develop a more critical attitude towards rankings and make better university selection decisions.

University administrators wishing to attract students by promoting their positions in rankings should account for the fact that applicants tend to perceive rankings emotionally or as a means to avoid uncertainty and discomfort in making a difficult choice. Furthermore, university administrators should realize that in many cases students do not devote substantial time to study rankings weighting criteria and do not make their decisions based on this analysis. It could be said that in general students do not perceive rankings results as the representation of a specific ranking methodology. On the other hand, students often seek to confirm their pre-existing opinions by referring to rankings because they consider rankings as a credible and reliable instrument. Therefore, achieving an overall higher-ranking position may prove a more effective strategy than attempting to improve university standings in individual categories. Moreover, promotion efforts should be planned towards highlighting a ranking position rather

than the specific strengths of a program.

The study is only the first attempt to investigate the applicability of the consumer perception theory in relation to Russian students' perception of international ranking. Nevertheless, the study can contribute to the development of the theory as it highlights some new areas of theory application and identifies the potential of using the theory to analyse the perception of non-commodity market entities. The contribution of this study to higher education research lies in its attempt to bridge a well-developed and widely practiced management concept with international university rankings as an important element of the higher education reality. Because this study has a regional focus and is limited in scope, further research in this direction is necessary.

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16 Financial Autonomy of Foundation Universities in Lower Saxony: Perceptions of University Managers and Ministry of Science and Culture

Kateryna Suprun

16.1 Background of the study

Institutional autonomy is one of the central topics in the current higher education research (de Boer et al., 2010; Kehm, 2006; Maassen, 2017; Verhoest et al., 2004). The freedom "…to set strategic direction, manage income streams, reward performance, set admissions policies and introduce new curricula" (de Boer et al., 2012, p. 12) is reported to be conducive to more efficient and effective governance (Aghion et al., 2007; Estermann, 2015). It is precisely this reasoning that has led to recent legislative changes aimed at granting extensive autonomy to German universities. One of the most enticing research gaps in this regard at the time of writing consists in the unique approach to conceptualizing and implementation of institutional autonomy that originated at the beginning of the 2000s in the German state of Lower Saxony.

In consequence of the 2001 Bill that had outlined political objectives for the prospective foundation universities *(Stiftungshochschulen)*, the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony *(Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kultur)*, hereinafter – the MWK, has set to let a number of state universities *(Universitäten)* and universities of applied sciences *(Hochschulen)* become public bodies with legal capacity, or foundations under public law, in accordance with the Higher Education Act of Lower Saxony *(Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz)*. In that, the MWK has committed itself (NHG, § 55, Section 2) to lift bureaucratic constrains from the novice foundation universities and let them increase effectiveness and efficiency of managing available public resources, boost amount of private and social funding, and refine their corporate identity in order to improve the quality of teaching and research activities (Palandt, 2003; Pautsch, 2006).

Despite the seemingly comprehensive autonomy of Lower Saxonian foundation universities, certain concerns regarding excessive state intervention and insufficient legislation

enforcement that undermine institutional competitiveness have been reported (Friedrich, 2013; Hener, 2010; Klockner et.al, 2010; Ziegele F., personal communication, October 15, 2015). In particular, the scope of autonomy is noted to be limited by the public authorities in the realm of introduction of new innovative study programmes, structural reorganizations, rigid appropriation of study quality funds, etc. Thereto, little is known about how exactly the reforms aimed at increasing decision-making powers at specific higher education institutions are translated into practice. In addition, the existing sources of evidence on the topic of institutional autonomy focus their analysis mainly on the formal autonomy that has been institutionalized by the legislation. Last of all, the existing up to the present moment studies on institutional autonomy of Lower Saxonian foundation universities have solely invoked the perspective of the central management of these higher education institutions. For these reasons, "[a] genuine in-depth investigation of how [different stakeholders in the system, including] bureaucrats, regulators or politicians understand the concepts of autonomy and independence" (Magetti & Verhoest, 2014, p. 245) has to be undertaken.

In compliance with this research purpose, the research question to be scrutinized is the following:

How is the formal financial autonomy granted to foundation universities in Lower Saxony translated into their living financial autonomy?

Building on the abovementioned research objectives such research sub questions are to direct the study:

1. What are the formal financial autonomy rights granted to foundation universities in Lower Saxony?

2. How does the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony perceive the current level of financial autonomy at the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim?

3. How do university managers on the central level at the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim perceive the current level of financial autonomy of their universities? And

4. How do university managers on the decentral level at the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim perceive the current level of financial autonomy of their units?

The study addresses the research question from two theoretical perspectives – that of the principal-agent theory and the living autonomy framework (see Fig. 1).

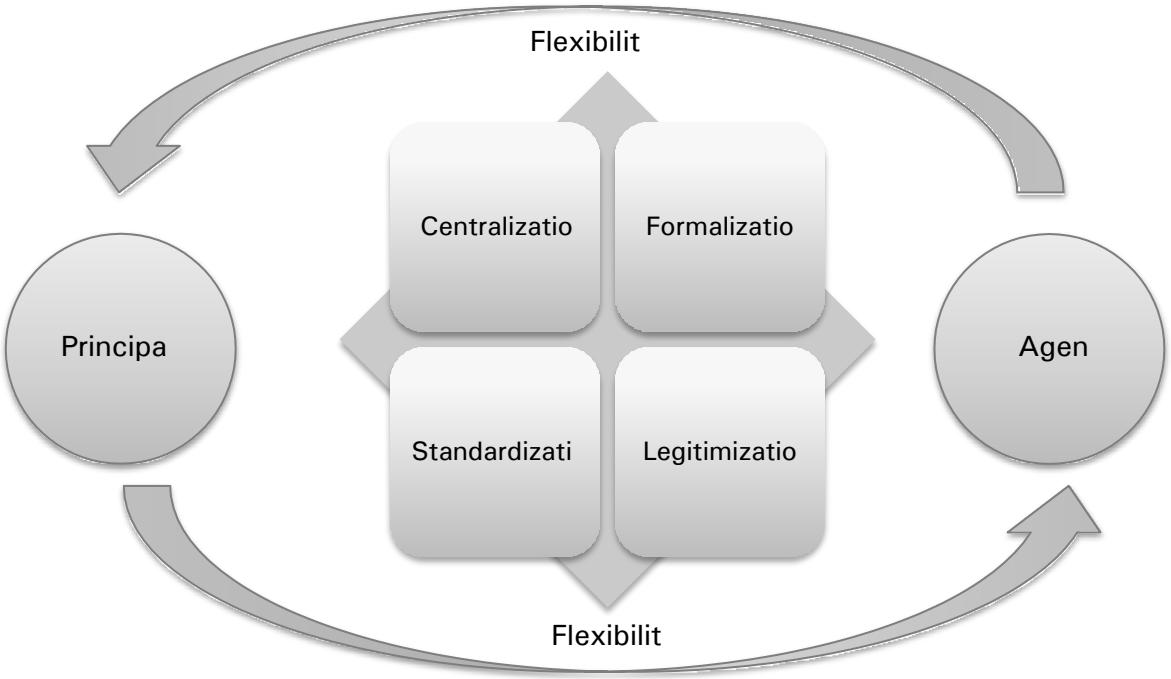

Figure 1. Analytical framework. Adapted from Kivistö, 2007 and Maassen et al., 2017.

The propositions of the principal-agent theory serve as an umbrella framework for institutionalization of the relations between the higher education stakeholders under analysis – the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim, on the one hand, and the MWK, on the other hand. The nature of the relations between the principal, who "considers entering into a contractual agreement" (Moe, 1984, p. 756) and the agent, who commits itself, under the contractual agreement, to "[choosing] actions that produce outcomes desired by the principal" (ibid.) is fundamentally grounded in information asymmetry and goal conflict which constitute the essence of the principal's problem. The expanded liability of the agent to align with the principal's goals and expectations lies at the heart of the living

autonomy framework developed by Maassen, Gornitzka and Fumasoli (2014, 2017) for studying internal institutional changes. Its dimensions – centralization, formalization, standardization, legitimization and flexibility – complemented, in the given case, with the information asymmetry and the moral hazard aspects of the principal-agent problem, embody the subjective perceptive nature of autonomy and allow for comprehensive investigation of the congruence of the institutional autonomy,

16.2 Methodology

The study is underpinned by a social constructivist philosophical worldview, whose ontological nature emphasizes "subjective meanings" (Creswell, 2009, p. 8) that individuals develop, and hold based on their experiences and interactions with others in specific contexts. In that, a case study has been chosen as the principal strategy of inquiry, since it focuses on "a contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). The current research is of the descriptive and exploratory nature, for it centers on gaining new insights into a phenomenon of the living financial autonomy of Lower Saxonian foundation universities while also providing its detailed and precise account. The given case study pertains to the embedded multiple-case study type that "allows to examine the operation of generative causal mechanisms in … similar contexts" (Bryman, 2012, p. 74). The cases and documentary sources selection has been based on the convenience and the purposive sampling approaches, whereas the study participants were identified via the generic and the maximum variation methods of the non-probability purposive sampling (ibid.).

Building on the perceptive nature of the research question, in-person semi-structured open-ended interviews have been carried out for they are generally regarded to be a good practice when "interviewees' views [are] … important in explaining and understanding events, patters, and forms of behaviour" (ibid., p. 471). The interviews were structured around 6 themes that originated from the review of the policy papers and research analytics: Public Funding, Private Funding, Assets, Teaching and Learning, Building Management, and Research. The total sample size encompassed 14 respondents and met the data saturation requirement on reaching "a reliable sense of thematic exhaustion and variability within data set" (Guest et al., 2006, p. 65). The respondents' opinions on the research problem have been elicited in a knowing, voluntary, and anonymous way and analysed by means of the framework approach

to thematic analysis with the aid of the software programme for computer-assisted qualitative analysis MAXQDA.

Limitations of the study include inability for high-order scientific generalizations due to a small number of subjects, non-native German language proficiency of the researcher and her previous scant knowledge on the research topic that might lead to neglecting certain nuisances of the policy papers and the interview data, the non-response rate of 26%, and the researcher's potential bias that has been attempted to be overcome by analytical approach to data triangulation.

16.3 Findings

The thematic analysis of the obtained empirical insights has allowed for eliciting a number of conclusions as to the mid-term developments in the implementation process of the NHG at the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim.

First, the formal financial autonomy rights granted to foundation universities in Lower Saxony encompass, among others: the right for annual-based financial support from the state allocated in the form of global budget with a view of securing operational activities in the areas of teaching and research; the right for increasing institutional assets from the not appropriated state financial support starting from the year 3 since its allotment as well as third-party contributions; the right for placing performance-oriented funding from the state in the context of institutional strategic development; the right for competing for additional innovation funding; the right for having institutional expenses in the area of teaching activities covered with study quality funds; the right for acquiring and administering institutional assets, etc. At the same time, the accountability demands placed on foundation universities under public law can still be regarded as rather prominent. These include, for instance, liabilities institutionalized in target agreements in regard to achieving the predesigned performance objectives and reporting needs as for appropriation of a wide range of state financial means. Finally, the yet lingering inability of foundation universities to reimburse their operational activities from the institutional assets substantiates the formal restrictions the MWK is heretofore tapping into. Nonetheless, the level of formal financial autonomy Lower Saxonian foundation universities have been granted with in the course of the 2003 reform can be estimated as considerably high.

Second, largely pursuant to the legislative provisions of the NHG, the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony, perceives the current level of living financial autonomy at the OUAS and the University of Hildesheim as high. For one thing, the principal is reported to fully adhere to the prescriptive order of the allocation of powers stated in the Higher Education Development Agreements and not to misuse the formally established level of its control over institutional financial resources. In that, it is worth noting that according to the ministerial respondents a part of liabilities is imposed onto foundation universities by other public agencies, such as, for example, Higher Education Rectors Conference or Household Legislator. Moreover, the span of communication between the MWK and foundation universities is reported to have shortened considerably, allowing for increasing the speed of decision-making. In addition, the interviewed civil servants have strongly opposed the possibility of shrinking manoeuvring of academics that might stem from explicit preferences given to the STEM field disciplines, although did acknowledge the high amount of advocates for the latter. Therewith, the Ministry is of an opinion that the success of the foundation reform implementation has resulted from the personal involvements of the respective institutions' managers and their cultivation of the favourable organizational culture for long-term changes to take place. Perhaps, the only field of institutional activities the MWK would envision foundation universities being more proactive in is attraction of the third-party funding, especially in the context of contract research projects.

Third, a number of discrepancies between formal and living financial autonomy have been discovered in the course of the interviews with the central university managers. To start with, institutional leaders perceive their both respective foundation universities as extensively underfunded owing to historical injustices rooted in the mechanisms and principles of core funding allocation. Moreover, in the view of the central managers these funds are too tightly linked to the ministerial vision of the strategic developments of foundation universities, which induces conflicts of interests. Next, one of the most crucial deficiencies that have been brought up in the context of the mid-term results of the foundation reform is the institutional freedom in establishing new study offer. Although admitting the necessity of a certain degree of state supervision in this realm, the excessive micro-managing and detailed control on the side of the MWK has been widely condemned by the majority of university respondents. The stance of the state in regard to reporting demands in the matters of special funds also draws criticism from the institutional leaders, for it limits the leeway of foundation universities from

the principal. Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn that the central university managers estimate the current level of financial autonomy of their foundation universities as satisfactory.

Fourth, in a similar way, from the standpoint of the decentral university managers the level of congruence between formal and living financial autonomy at their higher education institutions is rather debatable. First, despite the seemingly objective instrument of internal funds allocation – the calculation key that is based on the system of indicators – there is a feeling it is only special funds over whose distribution faculties have control, with the central management being at the helm of the rest of budgeting operations. Furthermore, the stipulated in the literature sources contentious relationships between, on the one hand, researchers from various fields and, on the other hand, research and teaching areas of institutional activities, that have been largely rejected to be the case by the central university management, did find support from the foundation universities' employees of the decentral level. Lastly, such variation of the narration has been established between the foundation universities' managers at the two levels as the positioning of trust in the context of institutional adaptations to new funding regulations. Although the interviewed decentral managers did admit the importance of the "personnel continuity", they did not seem to focus their attention so much on the faith rhetoric as the top management did. In view of the foregoing, the decentral university managers determine the current level of financial autonomy of their units as satisfactory.

As is evident, the study has revealed several systematic discrepancies in the perceptions of financial autonomy at the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and the University of Hildesheim by three groups of stakeholders: the MWK civil servants, university managers of the central level, and university managers of the decentral level. Inconsistencies and tensions in the matters of core funding volumes, education offer, reporting demands, stakeholder representativeness in internal funds distribution, research microclimate, and balancing teaching and research institutional profiles constitute the specific vulnerability areas of Lower Saxonian foundation universities that require further reflection and elaboration.

16.4 Recommendations

Drawing on the potential development areas delineated earlier, a number of evidence-based recommendations have been formulated for the stakeholders involved in the foundation

reform process in the state of Lower Saxony.

First, it is suggested to prepare and enact subordinate acts to the Higher Education Act of Lower Saxony that would present an umbrella framework for establishment of new study courses and programmes by foundation universities and would clearly define rights and responsibilities of all parties involved. In that, the preferable operation mode of the development of these legislative provisions would be the format of a working group that allows for high representativeness of stakeholders.

Second, it is recommended to relieve the Ministry of Science and Culture from the duties of programme accreditation and fully authorize external national and / or state accreditation bodies and quality assurance agencies with respective rights and obligations. This should enable Lower Saxonian foundation universities to quicker respond to students' demands and contribute to time-sensitive socio- economic transformations in the region. This said, a particular attention should be given to the sources of funding that are to cover operational expenses of the newly introduced study courses and programmes.

Third, it is urged to revisit the calculation key deployed by the state for core funding allocation with a glance to other potentially feasible and relevant indicators for deployment in this context. Since the given study is of exploratory nature with inherently arising restrictions in regard to generalizability of the findings, the specific indicators that would be able to enhance the purposefulness and expediency of the basic state funding are still to be scrutinized in detail.

Fourth, it is advised to conduct a series of training programmes at foundation universities that would equip institutional managers of both central and decentral levels with skills and knowledge on effective conflict resolution and negotiation. In that, these competencies are deemed to be crucial on the way towards mitigating the influence of the identified perceptive disparities among central management and departmental personnel onto operational processes and activities at the higher education institutions under analysis.

On a different note, opportunities for progression of the research on the topic of living financial autonomy at foundation universities of Lower Saxony include expanding the study sample with the stakeholder group of academic personnel; conducting the state-wide and cross-state comparative studies on the topic of living financial autonomy; and approaching the

research problematics from the perspective of the mixed methods analysis.

16.5 Acknowledgements

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17 Exploring the Link between Higher Education Research and Policy in Ethiopia: Contributions of Universities

By Usman Ahmed Umer

17.1 Background

Ethiopia aims to transform the industrialization process as an engine for modernizing and advancing the agricultural sector to join middle-income countries (FDRE, 2010). In this process of poverty reduction and life improvement, the poor are aimed to be among the main stakeholders of the growth and transformation process (Mamo et.al. 2014). However, the transformation processes cannot be materialized without better utilization of knowledge and research in development policy and practice that can help save lives, reduce poverty and improve economic performance. Court (as cited in Bailey, 2010) argued that all the efforts in the area of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) should be primarily to the benefits of the poor and there should be scientific tools in doing that.

The government of Ethiopia also in what seems understanding of this reality devised strategy to implement the above-mentioned broad vision, emphasizing the increase in the number of universities with particular focus on science and technology (ESDP, 2010). Post graduate students are to be trained in a research-intensive manner and high level of professionalism (ESDP, 2010). Mentioning those facts, Mamo et.al, (2014) concludes that, the country‘s strategic directions regarding education is that, all efforts of universities should lead towards national development.

Though the history of scientific research in Ethiopia goes back to the establishment of first university, the national research capacity in the country has not given results as to the expectations (Mamo et.al. 2014). A closer look at some evidence shows that not only little is known whether research outputs produced in universities are used in policymaking nor do we have comprehensive information about the main obstacles behind the effective link between HER in Ethiopia and their impact in policymaking in HE. However, there are some general factors that are alluded to the mismatch between HER and policymaking. For example, state politics, the influences exerted from the media and over dependence on consultancy

firms are some of the factors considered to limit to the influence of research in policymaking. Strengthening these points, Locke (2009) presented similar comments emphasizing HE aspects of both research and policy. The HE policymaking is more of the result of the interaction and compromise among government orientations and other pressure groups including mass media and private agencies.

Ethiopia has a number of HEI and researchers and a number of policies and directives keeps on coming from the central authority (MoE) on different aspects of HE. However, it is not clear that whether this policy decisions are made based on research outputs of the HEI of the country. The relationship between research and policymaking has been an important theme in research literature both in the developed and developing countries. Recently, there is increasing demand for evidence-based policy formulation. This led to scrutinizing the knowledge development process up until its usage (Sedlačko and Staroňová, 2015). Both the researcher and the policymakers want to work with one another closely. However, while the policymakers want the researchers to focus on the practical and immediate issues, researcher fear that such a move might negate the efforts in establishing the conceptual and methodological foundation of HER (Teichler and Sadlak, 2000). The scanty research done in Africa in the area of nexus between research and policy, are predominantly carried out by organizations based in west (Bailey, 2010). Similarly, the studies and technical assistance provided the WB and other IOs have influenced the policymaking about HE and its strategic directions too (Molla, 2013; Pillay, 2010; Woldegiyorgis, 2014; Yizegaw, 2005).

Ministry of Science and Technology is (MoST) is established to lead Ethiopia‘s priority in research area and making sure that it relates to the countries development needs (Tesfa, 2015). The government also introduced Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) which puts much focus on research and devised nationwide policies and legal frameworks that guide the research undertaking in HEIs and other research organizations, such as Education Sector Development Program (ESDPs), STIP and Higher Education Proclamation (HEP).

The importance of linking research and national development efforts are also emphasized planning to bridge the gap (FDRE, 2012). Mostly the effort of the government is on devising the policies and programs for research indicating that the importance of research for the development of the country in many aspects. However, there is no clear evidence showing, at least to the researcher‘s best knowledge, how those researches could be used in the process of

policymaking, which is as important as research if not more.

The researcher has never come across any study made on research contribution to the development of policies in the area of education in general and HE in particular and the efforts made to strengthen the link. The contribution of HER to the policies and policy directives of the country is not clearly known. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between research and policy making in Ethiopia.

Therefore, the central research problem is formulated as follows: What is the link between HER and HE policy making in Ethiopia, especially the contributions of universities? To be able to address the main research problem, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What is the current status of higher education research in Ethiopia?
2. To what extent higher education research is contributing to the higher education policy making process of the country?
3. What are the challenges of using higher education research outputs in the higher education policy making process of the country?

There have been several attempts to come up with conceptual representation of research-policy relationship. For example, Bailey (2010) mentioned that research in the past three decades produced a number of models depicting the relationship between research and policy. However, those models were short of showing the full picture of the relation rather points to factors that impacts the take-up. This sparked others to focus on linking the two systems while maintaining the unique features for both of them. The problem here is that there were misunderstanding of the relation between policy and research as directly linked to one another before the situation of the two-environment started to be considered (Lester & Wilds as sited in Bailey, 2010). This study used the RAPID framework because it found it be comprehensive and at the same time simple for use (Jones, 2011) in trying to look into the current situation of policymaking in Ethiopia.

The RAPID framework includes three spheres. These are context, which is the politics and institutions situations that have influence on both research and policy process; the evidence, containing the methodology used in producing knowledge and its dependability; the links, in which many of the beneficiaries and the influencing process is entertained. On the top of

these, the framework also adds another external sphere that includes global pressures with its different aspects (Bailey, 2010). The framework gives extra focus on the links among different parts concerned including those who have interest in creating relation between research and policy and those who have capacity in influencing the policymaking process. The interaction depends on the conducive and smooth conditions created between the two systems to benefit one another. Moreover, the external forces especially IOs and their influences through finance and expertise need to be considered and give due attentions (Court & Young 2006).

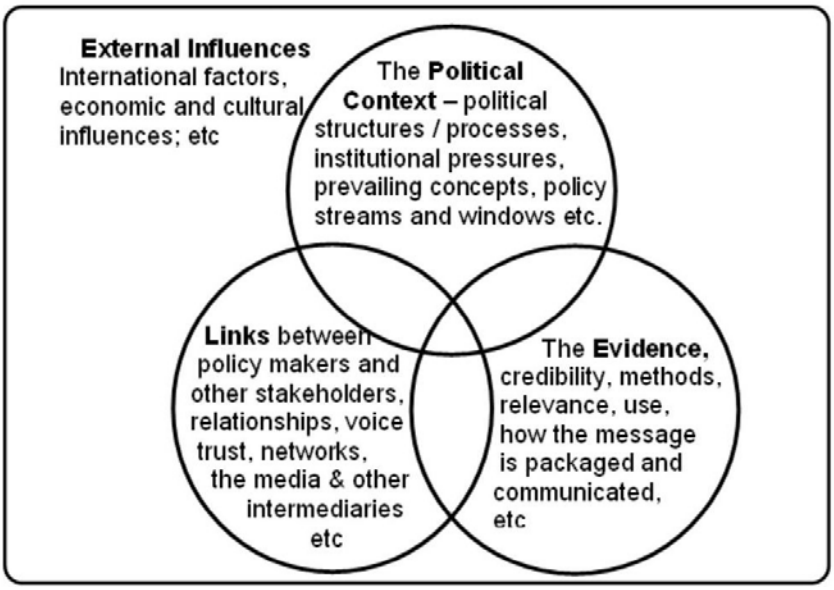

Figure 1: The RAPID Framework Source: John Young (2007, p. 74)

Source: John Young (2007, p. 74)

17.2 Methodology

The study employed a qualitative research methodology. To select the qualitative approach a number of reasons were there among which the need to have descriptive data on specific issues and to look into details. Obtaining data from the grassroots was aimed without imposing a predisposed idea regarding the situation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Cresswell, 2014). The specific research design picked was the case study. Moreover, case study deals with in-depth data collection and interpretation of a specific case. The focus is on an intensive examination of the setting (Bryman, 2012). Creswell (2014) suggests using case study when the study deals with understanding of a process, activities and events. Similarly, this study has seen the process of policy-makings and different activities and events in research and policy process.

Two cases were selected to investigate the single concern, which relationship between research and policy in HE. Addis Ababa University (AAU) was selected to be the case pertaining to the research part of the study. The second case was selected MoE and particularly Education Strategy Center (ESC) which semiautonomous branch of the ministry. This institution is responsible for preparing education related policies in Ethiopia. As to selection of the participant in the interview, purposive selection method was used due to the access they have to the issue understudy. A total of 6 persons were engaged in the interview process out of 10 persons planned. That happened because of the similarity of answers from the informant which led to the decision to stop the interview on the sixth informant. Accordingly, 1 person from the MoE, 2 from ESC and 4 people from AAU (2 researchers and academicians, 2 office directors and academic staff as well were included.

The sources of data for this research were both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from high level experts under state minister for HE of ministry of education (deputy), the officials and high-level experts of ESC (former higher education strategy center) and researchers under the research vice president of the case university i.e., AAU. Besides, secondary data was collected from policy documents and policy decision focusing on HE under the current government. Data gathering tools employed in this study was interview and document analysis. Because the study is on research-policy relationship, it must include policy document analysis and the idea of the people in charge of those issues.

The interview and document analysis data was analysed qualitatively. Pertaining to the qualitative nature of the research, qualitative techniques of data analysis was used in the study. As described by Anderson (1998) qualitative data are analysed through meaning making out of the textual data along the specific situation in which the data found. The general process of analysis that was followed throughout the analysis and interpretation process is represented by the following diagram.

Thematic analysis was used. Theme is a group of codes joined together to form a major idea in the research findings in line with the main issues of the study or research questions. These themes provide the base to situate the findings in the general body of knowledge regarding the problem understudy (Bryman, 2012). Hence, an analysis based on coding and creating category of code to form themes and present its finding accordingly is thematic analysis.

The data gathering was given utmost care to the accuracy and credibility of the data. In order to do that, multiple validity strategies were followed as per the recommendation of Creswell (2014). First, triangulation was used as an approach to keep the accuracy of the data gathering process. This include using data gathered through document analysis with the one gathered through interview. Repeatedly assuring the transcript for accuracy and seeing the code against the data (Gibbs, 2007). Once more as recommended by Creswell (2014), it is important to use multiple approaches to validity to check the accuracy. Accordingly, Member checking strategy was also used.

17.3 Key Findings

The purpose of the study was to explore the link between the HER and policymaking in Ethiopia and the contribution of universities. Accordingly, a summary of the discussion is presented as follows:

17.3.1 The current status of higher education research in Ethiopia

The finding of the study shows that currently there is an understanding about the importance of research in HE. There are also improvements in many areas especially in an effort to capacitate HER in universities.

17.3.1.1 Research as a mission in HEIs

The ETP and HEP have given much emphasis to research in HE and the possible linkage to the development needs of the country, including solving development problems, building capacity and acquisition of scientific knowledge and strongly forwarding a need for research that have practical societal impacts, promoting on knowledge and technology transfer in line with country‘s priority, publications and dissemination of the result to end users.

17.3.1.2 Reason for Engaging in Research

The major identified reasons are the need to have social impact, publications for the purpose of promotion and monetary rewards. However, the efforts of the academic staff to engage in research activity are hampered by, lack of commitment, over occupied with personal life

commitments, and absence of adequate incentives. At institutional level, the case university made it clear that, the reason for engaging in research is to provide solutions to the problems in society and cope up with changes as well as opportunities at international level in various fields though all of that is at its infant stage.

17.3.1.3 Research Capacity in HEIs

The ETP provide priority on creating appropriate nexus between education, training and research, research of practical social impact. In addition to this, the HEP inquires HEIs to build their capacity in research, set necessary infrastructure, and define research priority area based on the country‘s needs. Similarly, the provision in HEP, STIP and ESDPs focuses on building the capacities of universities in research so that they contribute to the national development. Regardless of all the above efforts, it can be concluded that, universities are not playing a leading role in research productivity and are lagging behind in having proper relation with industry.

17.3.1.4 Methodology and Credibility of Research

Closer look at the evidences show that, the issues of methodology and credibility of research activity and the general quality of research are seriously compromised. The methodologies used in the case university used to carryout research are mostly descriptive, which do not provide comprehensive solutions to problems and not applicable researches. In addition, it is safe to conclude that not enough work is being done to strengthen the methodological rigor of research.

17.3.1.5 Research Financing in HEIs

Financial shortages in HEIs continued to be the main problem. In addition to financial shortages, very long and boring procedure and bureaucratic administrative route to go through for securing fund for research in HEIs was seen as a major problem. This is due to the research funding models that is ‘research award’ which is creating a bottleneck.

17.3.2 The extent of HER contribution to the policy making process of the country

17.3.2.1 HE policy process: How HE policies are made?

The policymaking sphere is controlled by the government in HE area as stated in HEP. As to general policies related to HE, the ESC is solely responsible to provide policy briefs based on the problems facing HEIs for approval to the MoE. The research mission of universities in Ethiopia is politically defined. The government develops HE policies to fit its political, social and economic goals that aspire to eradicate poverty and achieve good standard of living to the society. Evidence shows that, the participation of stakeholders was simply a kind of consultation on the already made policy not on the importance and making of the policy from the beginning.

17.3.2.2 The link Between HER and Policy-Making Process

The study shows that there is no link between the HER and policymaking process in Ethiopia. Some of the reasons are: the fragmentation of research efforts in HE and a wide gap between the actors who control the policy decisions and the academia. Generally, there are problems of using research outputs in a way that could bring social impact.

17.3.3 The Challenges of Using HER in Policy Making of the Country

17.3.3.1 Research Management Challenges

A number of problems are prohibiting the using/up-take of research outputs in meaningful ways. The research activities have no clear beginning and ending, many sponsored researches are not submitted on time, and the absence of organizing body for research output are the problems. In addition, there is no system of evaluation for research results. From the academic's side, researchers put priority to other works than research due to personal reasons and lack of commitment is also another difficulty here. Moreover, duplications of efforts are there due to lack of research data base and poor networking.

17.3.3.2 Challenges Posed by international organizations Influence

The influence of IOs especially the WB on Ethiopian education is highly manifested. Among the indicators, ETP and the consecutive programs devised to implement it were primarily focused on primary education. However, with the change in the WB policy regarding HEs

importance in economy, the countries policy and program started to shift indicating the direct influence of the Bank. The influences were exerted through different mechanisms like policy prescription, technical assistance, agenda setting through publication etc.

17.4 Recommendations

Though all policies reviewed like ETP, ETPI, STIP and ESDPs urge for strong relationship between HER and the societal development need, the practice of utilization is at its infant stage. Hence, it is important to work on narrowing the gap between the focus in research activity in HEIs and national development needs.

To overcome this problem of weak methodological, it is required for the institution to work on improving the research undertaking capacity of academic staff in consistently. This might need the establishment of a specific unit for this purpose and specific program where experienced staff will share experience with the novice ones.

In a way to deal with financial shortages and boring procedure of securing it, the implementation of government‘s commitment in policies and programs about the reasonable increment of the finance for research is very important. Moreover, there should be also a funding model that reduces the long bureaucratic procedure that discourages the scholars from engaging in research. Proper level of remuneration for the academic staff who engages in research should be also considered accordingly.

It is also very important to depoliticize the policymaking as much as possible and seek high level of participation for stakeholders specifically knowledge producers in the area i.e., universities and their academic staff who engage in relevant research. This process is required to increase the legitimacy and ensure the implementation.

A multi-layered solution approach should be followed regarding the absence of link HER ad Policymaking. Internally the case university should restructure itself so as decrease fragmentation of the research activity and thereby provide relevant research output for policy use. The government, from its side and particularly ESC which is entitled to prepare policies in HE, should act as or establish a liaison body that collect, organize and rewrite the research output in a usable manner for policy-maker or use the ESC for this purpose.

The attempts at digitalizing research work in case university and developing HE management information systems (MIS) by MoE is needed to be functional to reduce unnecessary duplications and poor networking. These functions should be in place as so as possible, and it should be scaled up to national level so as to get better results.

With regard to influence of IOs, it is good to set a unique national purpose for Ethiopian HE sector which will go in line with the social, economic and political problems the country is facing and sticking to that is very important. However, we can also deal with IOs as long as they are ready to help on those purposes that the country set for itself.

17.5 Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Yohannes Mehari for his guidance and constructive comments and my wife Zebiba for carrying all the responsibilities in my absence to study abroad to raise my children and keep the family.

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18 Latvian Students' Perceptions of Higher Education Access, Quality and Outcomes in Latvia and other EU Countries

Anete Veidemane

18.1 Background

18.1.1 Research Problems

The focus of this study is Latvian higher education system in the context of the European Union (EU). Joining the EU in 2004 granted Latvian citizens the rights to study in other EU countries under the same conditions as local citizens (EC, 2014). Multiple EU member states offered good quality tuition-free tertiary education to all EU citizens (MasterPortal, 2018). At the same time fees in Latvian HEIs varied considerably and financial assistance besides merit-based scholarships was limited.

Soon after joining the EU, the number of students in Latvian HEIs started dropping. In a bit more than a decade (2005/6-2016/17) the number of students decreased by more than 35% (CSB, 2017). Between 2005 and 2016, on average, around 74% of all Latvian emigrants chose to go to other EU countries. Young adults aged 20 to 29 represented the largest number of emigrants – on average constituting more than 30% of all emigrants between 2012-2016 (CSB, 2017; 2016; 2015; 2014; CSB, 2013). Given that Latvian students can enter HE systems in other EU countries with relative ease, this research intends to explore what factors motivate Latvian students to pursue their education in other EU countries.

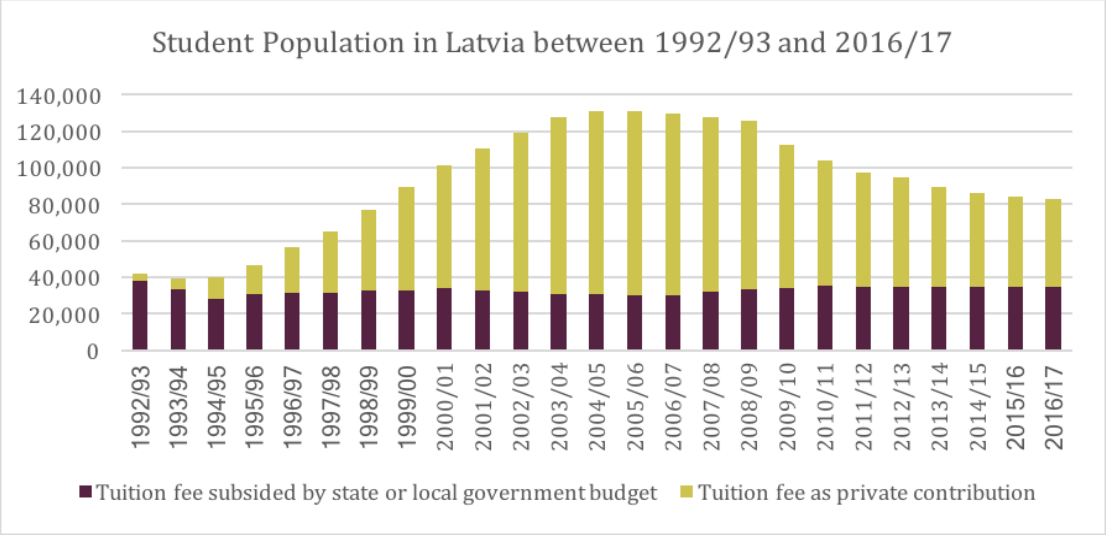

Table 1: Student Population in Latvia between 1992/93 and 2016/17
Source: (CSB, 2017), Matrix - IZ0260

18.1.2 Research Question & Hypothesis

The goal of this research was twofold. First, it aimed to understand Latvian student perception of HE access, quality and outcomes in Latvia and other EU countries, and whether they are significantly different. Secondly, it explored to what extent students' perceptions affect their intentions to study in other EU countries within one to two years after completing high school. It is important to note that there are significant differences in economic and social development across EU countries. Thus, when evaluating HE in other EU countries, students were inquired to list 3 to 5 EU countries which they would consider as their potential study destinations. Aligned with the goals of the thesis, following research questions were proposed:

- Q1: To what extent do Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE access, quality and outcomes in Latvia** as significantly different when compared to **other EU countries?**

- Q2: To what extent do perceptions of HE access, quality and outcomes in Latvia and other EU countries influence students' intentions to pursue their studies in other EU countries?

Higher education access, quality and outcomes are all relevant when selecting tertiary education. As this was an exploratory research, these three concepts were only identified and operationalized after conducting the focus groups. Based on insights obtained in focus groups, eight variables emerged – two for HE Access, four for HE Quality and two for HE Outcomes. The three concepts were operationalized in the following way. HE Access was measured as *information availability* and *financial assistance*. HE Quality was categorized as *teaching methods, learning outcomes, internationalization, student life*. HE Outcomes were operationalized as *labour market relevance* and *higher education prestige*. This operationalization was necessary to formulate the hypothesis and develop a conceptual model. Based on operationalized variables, I proposed the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis I related to perception of HE Access:

- H1-1: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Access – *information availability*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

- H1-2: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Access – *financial assistance*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

Hypothesis I related to perception of HE Quality:

- H1-3: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Quality – *teaching methods*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

- H1-4: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Quality – *learning outcomes*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

- H1-5: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Quality – *internationalization*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

- H1-6: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Quality – *student life*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

Hypothesis I related to perception of HE Outcomes:

- H1-7: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Outcomes – *labour market relevance*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

- H1-8: Latvian final year high school students **perceive HE Outcomes – *HE prestige*** in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries.

Hypothesis II related to student intentions to pursue their HE in other EU countries:

- H2-1: **Positive perception of HE** Access, Quality and Outcomes **in Latvia** has a **negative influence** on students' **intentions** to pursue their studies in other EU countries.

- H2-2: **Positive perception of HE** Access, Quality and Outcomes **in other EU** countries has **a positive influence** on students' **intentions** to pursue their studies in other EU countries.

In total, ten hypotheses were formulated. The first eight hypotheses were related to research question one while the remaining two hypotheses were linked to research question two.

18.1.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research is based on push-pull factor analysis. The push-pull model was originally employed by Lee (1966) to explain the factors influencing human migration. Over time its application was extended to investigate international student flows to higher education study destinations abroad. One of the earliest studies was performed by McMahon (1992) who looked at international student flow from 18 developing counties to the US between 1960s and 1970s (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b). Nowadays push-pull factor theory is widely used to analyse student motivations when choosing their study destination abroad (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b; Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012; Chen L. H., 2007; Chen J. M., 2017; Lee S. W., 2017; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; McCarthy, Sen, & Garrity, 2012). Yet so far, most research on student mobility has focused on the movement of

students from non-English-speaking countries to English speaking countries (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017a) and from developing countries to OECD countries (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b).

"Push" factors are understood as the domestic factors that motivate students to leave their home countries such as a poor economic situation, political turbulence, lack of academic freedom, and/or limited access to desired programs. "Pull" factors are reasons which attract students to specific countries abroad such as the reputation of the higher education institutions, career opportunities, favourable immigration policies, culture, and lifestyle (Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012). Selected push-pull factors vary across literature, depending on the research interests of the authors, chosen methodology and related theories. Moreover, some research focuses on factors influencing international student choice without specifically using push and pull factor terminology (ITA, 2016; OECD, 2015; QS, 2014; OECD, 2013). This section provides an overview of "push & pull" factors identified in the reviewed literature. The tables below indicate selected pull and push factors (Table 2a, 3a) and how frequently they appeared in the relevant literature (Table 2b, 3b). Each factor can be further split in multiple dimensions when more nuanced view is needed.

Nr.	Pull Factor	Nr.	Pull Factor
1	Academic reputation	11	Governmental (host countries) incentives and collaboration schemes
2	Available information	12	Historical/Political/ Socio-cultural links between countries
3	Available specialisations	13	Internationalization of the program
4	Campus facilities	14	Language considerations
5	Career opportunities	15	Personal contacts living in the host country
6	Cultural and social capital of the city	16	Prior recommendations from friends, family, professors
7	Degree duration	17	Reputation for open-minded and tolerant society
8	Ease of admissions process	18	Safety considerations
9	Financial considerations	19	Visa and immigration process
10	Geographical considerations		

Table 2-a: A list of selected Pull factors

Source: (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b; Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012; Chen J. M.,

2017; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; McCarthy, Sen, & Garrity, 2012; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015).

Pull factors/ Article/	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Ahmad et al, 2017	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x
Altbach, 2004	x		x		x	x													x
Becker et al, 2012	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x		x			x	x
Chen, 2007	x				x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Lee, 2017	x				x				x							x			
Li et al, 2007	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x				
Mazzarol et	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x
al, 2002																			
McCarthy et al, 2012																			
OECD, 2013, 2015	x								x					x					x

Table 2-b: Overview of the pull factors appearing in the reviewed literature
Source: (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b; Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012; Chen J. M., 2017; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; McCarthy, Sen, & Garrity, 2012; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015).

As can be seen from Table 2-a and Table 2-b, an extensive list of pull factors can be found in the relevant literature. The pull factors with the highest frequency were “academic reputation” (8 out of 9 sources identified), “career opportunities”, “financial considerations” (7/9), and “visa and immigration process” (6/9). The least frequently mentioned factors were “degree duration” (1/9) and “government incentives and collaboration schemes” (1/9).

Nr.	Push Factor	Nr.	Push Factor
1	Access to desired programs	5	Lifestyle considerations
2	Economic situation	6	Personal development
3	Financial considerations	7	Political situation
4	Government incentives	8	Safety considerations

Table 3-a: A list of selected Push factors

Source: (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b; Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012; Chen J. M., 2017; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; McCarthy, Sen, & Garrity, 2012; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015).

Article/Push Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ahmad et al, 2017								
Altbach, 2004	x				x		x	x
Becker et al, 2012	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Chen, 2007	x	x					x	
Lee, 2017	x	x						
Li et al, 2007	x					x		
Mazzarol et al, 2002	x							
McCarthy et al, 2012	x	x				x		
OECD, 2013, 2015								

Table 3-b: Overview of the push factors appearing in the relevant literature

Source: (Ahmad & Hussain, 2017b; Altbach, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2012; Chen J. M., 2017; Li & Bray, 2007; Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; McCarthy, Sen, & Garrity, 2012; OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015).

As can be seen from Table 3-a and Table 3-b, the number of push factors mentioned in the literature was considerably lower than the number of pull factors. The most frequent push factors were “access to desired programs” (7/9), “economic situation” (4/9) and “political situation” (3/9).

18.2 Methodology

18.2.1 Research Design

The researched followed sequential exploratory strategy (Creswell, 2009) consisting of three

phases. In the first phase focus groups were conducted to understand the factors that influence student choice to study in Latvia or in other EU countries. A draft research instrument, Likert type of survey based on available literature review, was prepared in advance and discussed in the focus groups. During the focus groups, students were asked to discuss if the items included are relevant, questions are clear, and if any items are missing. In addition, one of the focus groups were asked to pilot the survey to obtain approximate time it takes to complete the survey. In the second phase, the feedback from the focus groups was evaluated and the instrument was updated. In the third phase, the surveys were conducted with final year high-school students in nine schools. In total, 174 paper based surveys were collected from 5 schools while 50 complete surveys were obtained digitally from 4 schools, most located in the countryside.

18.2.2 Statistical Analysis

The statistical methods selected for this research were descriptive statistics of the main variables followed by Cronbach's alpha analysis to measure reliability of the sixteen composite indicators. Dependent t-test (also called paired samples T-test) was used to answer the first hypothesis– whether there is a significant difference in student perception about HE in Latvia and other EU countries. Regression analysis was used to test the second hypothesis – how students' perceptions influence their intentions to study in other EU countries.

Dependent t-tests can appear in several different research designs. It is commonly used to measure the same participants at two points in time, for instance for before and after treatment. Thus, it is also sometimes called a repeated measures design. However, a dependent t-test can also be used when participants are naturally matched, for instance twins or couples, or when participants are matched on certain criteria such as IQ or age (Rietveld & Hout, 2017), (Xu, et al., 2017), (Field, 2005). I selected paired samples t-test rather than independent t-test, because the same person provided opinions about Latvia and the EU, and therefore these measures cannot be considered independent. For normally distributed data, t-tests are some of the most commonly used statistics methods for comparison of differences between two samples to understand if they come from the same population (Xu, et al., 2017).

To test the second hypothesis, regression analyses were used. Multiple regression analyses are a set of statistical techniques used to assess the relationship between one dependent variable

(DV) and several independent variables (IVs). It is important to note that while regression analysis reveals relationships among variables, they do not imply causation (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). Moreover, in multiple regression a mix of continuous and categorical independent variables can be included to simultaneously assess the combined effect on the dependent variable (Pandis, 2016). The hypothesis stated that students' perceptions of HE in Latvia and other EU countries are likely to influence their intention to study abroad. More specifically, the higher the student's perception of HE in Latvia, the less strong would be their intention to pursue their studies in other EU countries. On contrary, the higher the student's perception of HE in the EU, the stronger their intention to pursue their studies in other EU countries.

18.3 Results

18.3.1 Quantitative Results – Descriptive statistics

In this section, I summarize preferred study destinations listed by students. This information helps to interpret the results associated with the perception variables on other EU countries. Students were asked to select their top 3 to 5 potential EU study destinations. Their top 10 choices are discussed below and available in table 7. Each country could be selected only one time and the sequence in which the countries were written down did not matter (see table 5). This information helps to interpret the results associated with the perception variables on other EU countries. Students were asked to select their top 3 to 5 potential EU study destinations. Their top 10 choices are discussed below and available in table 7. Each country could be selected only one time and the sequence in which the countries were written down did not matter

Top 10 countries	# of respondents	% of respondents
The UK	127	59,3
Denmark	119	55,6
Netherlands	112	52,3
Germany	108	50,5
Sweden	73	34,1
France	54	25,2
Italy	45	21,0

Spain	43	20,1
Finland	38	17,8
Estonia	24	11,2

Table 5: An overview of TOP 10 destination countries

18.3.2 Quantitative Results – Reliability Analysis

To create composite indexes, a reliability analysis was performed for 16 variables related to HE perception, eight variables for Latvia and eight for other EU countries (see table 8). The number of items for each scale varied between 4 to 9. Cronbach's alpha value was above 0.75 for all scales (#15) except *financial assistance* for the EU countries, where Cronbach's alpha value was 0.688. All composite variables were deemed acceptable.

Variables	alpha for HE variables in Latvia	alpha for HE variables in other EU countries
HE Access		
available information	0.841 (N=9)	0.932 (N=9)
financial assistance	0.788 (N=9)	0.688 (N=9)
HE Quality		
teaching methods	0.809 (N=7)	0.912 (N=7)
internationalization	0.789 (N=6)	0.910 (N=6)
learning outcomes	0.783 (N=4)	0.834 (N=4)
student life	0.841 (N=6)	0.915 (N=6)
HE Outcomes		
labour market relevance	0.851 (N=5)	0.893 (N=5)
HE prestige	0.777 (N=4)	0.846 (N=4)

Table 6: An overview of Cronbach's alpha values for 16 composite variables

18.3.3 Quantitative - Hypothesis

Dependent T-tests were used to test the first hypothesis. The alternative hypothesis stated that there is a significant difference in students' perceptions of HE in Latvia when compared to other EU countries. Dependent tests were used to compare students' perceptions on eight

variables for Latvia and the other EU countries. A significant difference was found for all variables except *financial assistance*. Essentially, the mean values for HE Quality and HE Outcomes in other EU countries were higher than corresponding variables in Latvia. Latvia received a higher mean value on HE Access - *available information*. Listwise deletion (default in SPSS) was used for all variables. More detailed explanation for each variable is available below.

Variables	Mean LV	Mean EU	SD LV	SD EU	T -stat	DF	Sig. (2-tailed)
HE Access							
available information	3.94	3.64	.657	.893	5.425	221	.000*
financial assistance	2.91	2.89	.636	.530	.569	221	.570
HE Quality							
learning outcomes	3.70	4.25	.736	.660	-10.006	223	.000*
teaching methods	3.28	4.09	.668	.699	-15.118	223	.000*
internationalization	3.44	4.17	.683	.755	-12.213	223	.000*
student life	3.52	4.16	.728	.726	-11.170	222	.000*
HE Outcomes							
labour market relevance	3.71	4.29	.828	.669	-10.203	222	.000*
HE prestige	2.76	4.37	.810	.672	-22.507	223	.000*

Table 7: An overview of paired-samples T-tests to test Hypothesis I

The first concept examined was HE Access, consisting of two variables – *available information* and *financial assistance*. Students reported a significantly higher perception of *available information* in Latvia (M=3.94, SD=0.657) than in other EU countries (M=3.64, SD=0.893), t (221) =5.425, p<0.01. Students, however, did not report significant differences in their perception of *financial assistance* in Latvia (M=2.91, SD=0.636) and the other EU countries (M=2.89, SD=0.530), t (221) =0.569, p=n.s.

The second concept examined was HE Quality, consisting of four variables – *learning outcomes*, *teaching methods*, *internationalization* and *student life*. Students reported a significantly higher perception of *learning outcomes* in other EU countries (M=4.25,

SD=0.660) than in Latvia (*M*=3.70, *SD*=0.736), *t* (223) = -10.006, *p*<0.01. Similarly, students also indicated a significantly higher perception of *teaching methods* in other EU countries (*M*=4.09, *SD*=0.699) than in Latvia (*M*=3.28, *SD*=0.668), *t* (223) = -15.118, *p*<0.01. Also, students' perceptions of *internationalization* in HEIs in other EU countries (*M*=4.17, *SD*=0.755) was significantly higher than in HEIs in Latvia (*M*=3.44, *SD*=0.683), *t* (223) = -12.213, *p*<0.01. Moreover, students' perceptions of *student life* were significantly higher for HEIs in other EU countries compared to HEIs in Latvia.

The third concept examined was HE Outcomes, consisting of two variables – *labour market relevance* and *HE prestige.* Students' perceptions of *labour market relevance* of HE in other EU countries (*M*=4.29, *SD*=0.669) was significantly higher than in Latvia (*M*=3.71, *SD*=0.828), *t* (222) = -10.203, *p*<0.01. Finally, students also reported a significantly higher perception of *HE prestige* in other EU countries (*M*=4.37, *SD*=0.672) than in Latvia (*M*=2.76, *SD*=0.810), *t* (223) = -22.507, *p*<0.01.

These results suggest that Latvian students generally perceive HE Quality and HE Outcomes to be better in other EU countries, while HE Access, specifically, *available information* is perceived as better in Latvia. The obtained results do not show significant differences in students' perceptions regarding *financial assistance.* These outcomes allow to reject null hypothesis for *H1-1, H1-3, H1-4, H1-5, H1-6, H1-7, H1-8* and accept the null hypothesis for *H1-2.*

18.3.4 Quantitative Results - Hypothesis

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the second hypothesis. The H_1 of second hypothesis stated that students' perceptions of HE in Latvia and other EU countries is likely to influence the extent to which they intend to pursue HE in other EU countries within 1 to 2 years. Students' intentions to study in other EU countries within 1 to 2 years was the dependent variable while 16 index variables related to student perception of HE in Latvia and other EU were independent variables. Additionally, five control variables were included in regression analysis containing demographic information. These variables were gender, first language in family, urban/rural school, mother's highest completed education and father's highest completed education (see table 8 below)

	B	SE	β
(Constant)	2.145	.999	
HE Access LV			
information availability in Latvia	-.337	.182	-.166
financial assistance in Latvia	-.034	.157	-.017
HE Quality LV			
teaching methods in Latvia	-.180	.183	-.090
international environment in Latvia	-.287	.178	-.146
learning outcomes in Latvia	.004	.172	.002
student life in Latvia	-.136	.165	-.072
HE Outcomes LV			
labour market relevance in Latvia	-.017	.153	-.011
HE prestige in Latvia	.020	.144	.012
HE Access EU			
HE Access, information availability in other EU countries	.303	.133	.198*
HE Access, financial assistance in other EU countries	.160	.189	.070
HE Quality EU			
HE Quality, teaching methods in other EU countries	.479	.204	.250*
HE Quality, international environment in other EU countries	.008	.185	.005
HE Quality, learning outcomes in other EU countries	.046	.225	.023
HE Quality, student life in other EU countries	-.146	.206	-.081
HE Outcomes EU			
HE Outcomes, labour market relevance in other EU countries	.149	.192	.075
HE Outcomes, HE prestige in other EU countries	-.061	.170	-.031
Gender	-.124	.180	-.046
First language in Family	-.432	.315	-.093
Urban/rural School	-.070	.386	-.013
Mother's highest completed education	.134	.103	.108
Father's Highest completed education	.082	.090	.076
DV: “I intend to start higher education in other EU countries (besides Latvia) after completing high school within 1 to 2 years.”			
*p<.05; R^2=.232			

Table 8: An overview of regression analysis to test Hypothesis II

The results of the regression analysis indicated that only two out of 16 variables predicted the extent to which students intended to study in other EU countries. It was found that *Information Availability in other EU countries* (β=.198, p<.05) and *Teaching Methods in other EU countries* (β=.250, p<.05) significantly predicted students' intentions to study in other EU countries within the next 1 to 2 years, explaining 23.2% of variance (R^2=.232, F(21,189)=2.715, p<.001). Moreover, none of the five control variables had significant impact on the dependent variable. Additionally, the assumption that errors in the regression analysis were independent was satisfied as the Durbin- Watson statistic was between 1 and 3 (2.184) (Field, 2005).

These results suggested that the null hypothesis should be accepted for H2-1 and H2-2. Hypothesis H2-1 proposed that "**positive perception of HE** access, quality and outcomes **in Latvia** has a **negative influence** on students' **intentions** to pursue their studies in other EU countries". Although most coefficients were indeed negative (*information availability, financial assistance, teaching methods, international environment, student life, labour market relevance*), the impact on the dependent variable was not significant and the null hypothesis could not be rejected. Hypothesis H2-2 stated that a "**positive perception of HE** accesses, quality and outcomes **in other EU** countries has **a positive influence** on students' **intentions** to pursue their studies in other EU countries." Six out of eight variables indeed had positive coefficients, but only two of them were significant. Thus, null hypothesis for H2-2 was also rejected.

18.4 Recommendations

18.4.1 Recommendations & Policy Implications

The first research question aimed to understand "to what extent do Latvian final year high school students perceive HE access, quality and outcomes in Latvia as significantly different when compared to other EU countries". Essentially, students reported perceiving HE Quality (learning outcomes, teaching methods, internationalization, student life) and HE Outcomes (labour market relevance, HE reputation) as significantly better in other EU countries for all variables when compared to Latvia. With regard to HE Access, results indicated that student view information availability as better in Latvia while they perceive financial assistance on

roughly the same for Latvia and other EU countries with no significant differences found.

One of the potential implications of these findings is that if HE Access in other EU countries improve, both in terms of information as well as financial assistance, Latvian students might be even more likely to study in other EU countries. To mitigate this risk, Latvian government should consider evaluating current HE Quality and HE Outcomes and decide upon which dimensions they should improve. Among the eight variables for Latvia *HE reputation* and *financial assistance* received the lowest scores. These might be high potential areas to explore.

The second research question investigated "to what extent do perceptions of HE access, quality and outcomes in Latvia and other EU countries influence students' intentions to pursue their studies in other EU countries". The results of the regression analysis indicated that there are two significant predictors - information availability in other EU countries and teaching methods in other EU countries. Both predictors were positively correlated with students' intentions to study in other EU countries. Nonetheless, information availability, in particular, should be interpreted with caution. It is possible that students who planned to study abroad, had started collecting information about the opportunities abroad early on and thus where more knowledgeable about available information than those not intending to study abroad. Teaching methods are likely to be a significant predictor of students' intention to study in other EU countries. Thus, a potential recommendation for the government would be to focus on one factor that seems to matter to those students with stronger intentions to go to other EU countries. If teaching methods can be further improved and changes communicated properly, more students might be interested to study in Latvia. Other aspects should not be neglected, but it is important to set the priorities.

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